

“The Catholic danger”

Anti-Catholicism and the formation of Scandinavian national identity 1815-1965

Anti-Catholicism is a phenomenon as old as the Protestant church. What makes it into a unique object of study, is its spread and growth during the 19th century, when it was established as a transnational frame of reference articulated all over Europe, as well as in North America. Secular liberals and conservatives, protestants and others, in both predominantly Catholic and Protestant countries all used well-established negative images of the Catholic church to position themselves politically and culturally. Tales about treacherous Jesuits and scheming popes were an important and pervasive part of European culture.

The Nordic region constituted a very particular setting for such conceptions. Also here Anti-Catholic ideas and images were widespread. But why? Until the liberalisation of religious legislation in the mid-nineteenth century, it was illegal for the citizens in the Scandinavian countries to belong to other churches than the established Lutheran churches. In Finland this interdict lasted until 1922 (Werner, 2005). Thus, for a long time the Catholic minority represented a numerically insignificant group of foreign believers. If there were no Catholics, where did the conflicts come from? Whereas topics such as anti-Semitism in recent years have seen increased attention from scholars, the Scandinavian history of anti-Catholicism stands out as a neglected field of study.

International research has emphasised the importance of anti-Catholicism for processes of identity formation across Europe, both within established Protestant churches and national liberal movements. The connection between anti-Catholicism and other anti-movements such as anti-Semitism, anti-feminism and anti-Communism has also been pointed to. Much like these movements anti-Catholicism was a transnational cultural phenomenon, and similar accusations and stereotypes can be found in a number of countries. Anti-Catholic literature formed an international canon, which also spread in Scandinavia (Verhoeven 2005).

The weak Catholic representation in Scandinavia has been explained by the existence of strong anti-Catholic sentiments, part of national cultures ever since the 17th century, when a relentless struggle against ‘popery’ was carried out by Scandinavian Lutherans. But this connection between Lutheranism and Nordic national identity stayed relevant long after the disappearance of religion as an all-encompassing norm in daily life (Thorkildsen, 1997, Blücker, 2000). Anti-Catholicism was not only important in Scandinavia in a religious sense. As many researchers have shown, such sentiments were prevalent also in politics, not the least within the social democratic movement (Stråth 2000, Alvunger, 2006).

In Europe anti-Catholic sentiments grew stronger during the 19th century. Liberals of different shades saw religion as a private matter and considered the Catholic Church as a threat against progress and national integrity. For Protestant believers Catholicism also represented a superstitious and outdated form of religion. Anti-Catholic movements were especially strong in religiously heterogeneous countries such as Germany, Switzerland and The Netherlands, but also played an important role also in France, Italy and other Catholic countries (Drury, 2005). Anti-Catholicism increased further when the Catholic Church strongly condemned

both Protestantism and the modern development towards a secular society. In many countries, in particular those dominated by liberal forces, these controversies resulted in veritable clashes between the Catholic Church and the state authorities. During these conflicts measures such as excluding laws and expropriation, as well as expulsion of Catholic orders and congregations, were used by state authorities (Sorrel, 2003).

Purpose and theoretical framework of the project

What concrete forms did this increased anti-Catholicism take in Scandinavia? How and with what purpose was such rhetoric used in political and church-related debates? What role did anti-Catholic notions play in the development of the Scandinavian state churches? And how were such notions expressed within popular religious literature? These questions form the point of departure for the planned research project on anti-Catholicism as ideology, praxis and identity formation in Scandinavia 1815–1960.

The main purpose of the project is to investigate the role of anti-Catholicism in the construction of Scandinavian identity, how this role was expressed as well as how it changed over time. An important aspect is the relationship between the existence of a common body of European ideas, and the development specific to the Scandinavian countries. To what extent did anti-Catholicism represent an import of pre-conceived stereotypes and modes of conflict, and in which ways did it grow out of local traditions? The project proposes the hypothesis that anti-Catholicism was an important component in the different conceptions of the Scandinavian identity that developed during the 19th century, and that the existence of Catholicism as a counter image was instrumental to the notions of ‘national’ values that emerged in the different countries during the period. The phenomenon of anti-Catholicism will be studied from a range of perspectives:

- opinion formation
- questions of freedom
- Lutheran confessionalism
- popular culture
- debates on foreign policy
- gender aspects

The analysis is centred around the concept of “unifying other” proposed by Linda Colley, which has previously been used to explain anti-Catholic sentiments in English political thought (Colley 1992, Fatovic 2005). We suggest that the immense significance of the Catholic church as a *unifying other* in a diverse range of settings and to a range of actors had two main reasons. First of all, the Catholic church itself constituted a transnational structure, and the influence of the Pope and Rome could be perceived as a potential threat and as an adversary to the very ideas of national sovereignty that grew stronger in the 19th century. Secondly, in the communicative landscape of the 19th century circulation of opinion materials between countries increased rapidly, as papers and publishers copied stories from each other. In Scandinavia this circulation was facilitated by the existence of linguistic similarities between Danish, Swedish and Norwegian. Anti-Catholicism presented a shared symbolic language, which was both understood and perceived as relevant by publics all over the continent, including Scandinavia.

The project aligns this overall framework of transnational symbolic communication to the theories of religious culture and national identity that have been developed in social- and church historical research. The specific role of Anti-Catholicism was linked to internal

religious developments in different countries. Hartmut Lehmann speaks of de-Christianisation and Christian revivalism as two connected phenomena in the Western world during the 19th and early 20th centuries (1997 & 2004). Focusing on Great Britain, France and Germany, Hugh McLeod has pointed to the close connection between confessional culture and national identity. He emphasises that despite a downturn in religious adherence, Christianity continued to provide a normative body of values (2000). Peter van Rooden points to similar tendencies in the confessionally divided Netherlands where Catholics and Protestants formed their own national identity (2003). Olaf Blaschke considers the period as 'a second confessional age', which continues until the 1960's, when the denominational milieus collapsed and a new era began (2000 & 2002). The word 'confession' is here understood in a broad sense, comprising not only a community based on Christian belief but also the cultural context shaped on this ground. The confessional heritage thus influenced the identity constructions also for those who had left Christian faith behind. Also atheism rested on confessional foundations, as did the images of religious enemies.

In Scandinavia as well as in other Protestant regions, the gradual dismantling of the compulsory legislation in religious matters led to a politicisation and medialisation of religious questions. What stands out in this process is on the one hand, the de-confessionalisation of politics, and, on the other, a re-activation of Lutheran confessional currents. These later took on secular forms, and a term sometimes used in research is 'secularised Lutheranism'. In this situation the previous images of religious enemies took on new functions. To a large extent this was the case with the notion of a 'Catholic danger', which time and again surfaced in the media (Werner 2005 & 2006). A central task for the project is to analyse the functions of such images of the enemy and how it changed over time.

The demarcation backwards in time of the temporal scope of the project, is motivated by the new situation arising in Europe after the French revolution and the Napoleonic wars, after which the Westphalian order and its confessionally clear-cut ideology of the state was finally buried. This both reactivated and provided new conditions for the struggle between confessions that had begun with the Reformation. The Second Vatican Council (1962–65) sets the demarcation forward in time. This important reform council laid out the foundations for a new era within Catholicism. The Catholic magisterium now repudiated the confessional ideology formed in the early 19th century that had provided an impetus to anti-Catholic currents. At present, the Catholic Church is an integrated part of the Scandinavian religious landscape, and although sharp criticism is sometimes raised against Catholic standpoints on some issues, Catholicism as such does not evoke the same fears as it did before the council (Blückert, 2004).

Previous research and the contribution of the project

Most of the studies on Catholicism in Sweden in the 19th and 20th centuries have been done by the leader of the proposed research project. Yvonne Maria Werner's works deal with Catholic missionary and pastoral activities, the work done by members of female religious congregations in healthcare and education, and Catholic converts in Sweden and the other Nordic countries. Also the anti-Catholic polemics is analysed, but always in the form of a reaction to specific Catholic activities (Werner, 2002 & 2005). Bo Stråth and Daniel Alvunger have, who have analysed anti-Catholicism within the Swedish Social Democratic movement, are showing how Social Democratic politicians used the 'Catholic danger' as a rhetorical instrument in political debate (2000 & 2006).

Other project members have also worked with Scandinavian anti-Catholicism in their research. Erik Sidenvall has investigated the reactions in Swedish and foreign media to the expulsion of Catholic converts in 1858 (2007), and Jonas Harvard in his doctoral thesis on conceptions of publicity and legitimacy analyses the anti-Catholic discourse in the debates on religious freedom in the middle of the 19th century (2006). These debates have also been studied by Arne Palmqvist in his 1958 work on the Catholic Church in Sweden until 1873 (Palmqvist, 1958). His focus, however, is the image of the Catholic Church, not anti-Catholicism as such. This topic is however analysed by Bengt Wadensjö in a study on the standing of the Catholic Church in Swedish press opinion in the 1920s (1968). Also Bernt Oftestad is discussing anti-Catholic tendencies in his Norwegian church history (1998).

Internationally, several scholars have studied the historical development of anti-Catholicism in the Western world during the modern era. Regarding Great Britain and the U.S., a number of studies have confirmed the insights presented above, namely that anti-Catholicism was an important aspect of British and North American culture. One example is Denis G. Paz, who in a work which also summarises important parts of earlier research, underlines the impact of anti-Catholicism as a phenomenon of popular culture, and how it came to be used not only against Catholics, but against other religious and political enemies as well. Different groups developed their own variants of anti-Catholicism, which were used as weapons in the political debate (2000). In a study on US-American print culture in the 1910s, Justin Nordström demonstrates how anti-Catholicism became prominent by its 'critical overlap' with discourses of progressivism, masculinity and nationalism (2006). According to Robert Lockwood, Catholicism in the U.S. was portrayed as an antithesis of 'the American way of life', resulting in recurring boycotts and attacks directed at Catholics. Here anti-Catholicism often sided with anti-Semitism and general racism (2000). The transnational character of anti-Catholicism is further emphasised by Susan M. Griffin in her work on anti-Catholic stereotypes in British and North American literature (2004). Another interesting perspective is presented in a study by John Wolffe, who is exploring the cultural and social dimensions of anti-Catholicism in British 19th century society, relating them to the values and impact of evangelicalism at a variety of social levels. British anti-Catholicism has also been studied by Sidenvall. He argues that anti-Catholic discourse continued to serve as an uniting framework for British Protestantism until the 1860's, when the Catholic reform movement disarmed anti-Catholic rhetoric (Wolffe).

Along similar lines, recent German researchers have pointed to the central importance of anti-Catholicism for the development of a German Protestant national identity. In Protestant and national liberal circles, writes Georg Hübinger and Frank-Michael Kuhlemann, Catholicism served as an effective counter image to the modernity these groups claimed to represent (2001 & 1994). The fight against Catholicism reached a culmination with the cultural war (*Kulturkampf*) of the 1870s. Yet, as Manfred Kittel has demonstrated, anti-Catholicism continued to constitute an important element of Protestant national identity also in the 20th century, and it was an important feature of both German nationalist and national socialist propaganda. In the eyes of many Protestants, this made NSDAP seem like a Lutheran party (2000).

An important field of study in the research on anti-Catholicism in Germany has been the *Kulturkampf* and its aftermath. Perhaps the most interesting interpretation is offered by Michael B. Gross, who claims that the proponents of German liberalism not only portrayed Catholicism as an un-German and outdated form of religion, but also as a threat against the masculine Protestant character of the German nation (2004). Similar conclusions are reached

by Manuel Borutta, who outlines a development in which a secular anti-Catholic discourse drew on biology and gender to discredit Catholic religious practices. Catholicism became a formalised counter image to the masculine and national, bourgeois Protestant and future oriented character of German society (2002 & 2009. See also Róisín Healy 2003). Numerous investigations have also directed interest towards the developments in Catholic countries such as Spain, France and Italy, where the Catholic Church continued to be an important power in society. In these countries anti-Catholicism, which here took the form of radical anti-clericalism, appeared as an important factor in the political struggles (Viallet, 1992, Remond, 1999, Chauvin 2002).

These and other works on the role of anti-Catholicism in identity formation in European countries confirm the core assumption of the project, namely that anti-Catholicism constituted a European shared imagery outlining a *unifying other*, but also that the specific functions that these counter images took on varied widely between contexts. The project will make an important contribution to this research by analysing the particular cases of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, and the extent to which the specific anti-Catholic conceptions of the different countries can be said to constitute a shared Scandinavian or Nordic variant. In what ways did the medialisation and symbolic coding of religious and ideological conflicts in Scandinavia contribute to the emergence of a shared value-system and its change over time?

Methodically the project analyses how Catholicism was constructed as a unifying other combining methodological tools developed in conceptual history and the study of stereotypes. Building on the tradition established by Reinhardt Koselleck, Lucian Hölscher has developed a range of relevant explanatory models regarding religious semantics and the history of concepts. Among other things he has pointed to how the meanings and uses of different concepts of *confessions* and *churches* have changed over time (2007). The modern research on stereotypes has shed light on the importance of negative stereotypes for the formation of national identities, and will be used to relate systematic observations regarding concepts to larger cultural fields of ideas (Pickering, 2000, Hahn, 2002).

Works quoted and other important works in the field will be listed in a file uploaded under ‘Other items’, where also our international networks on anti-Catholicism is presented.

Sub projects

Our project consists of six sub projects, that departing from the above outlined theoretical and empirical starting points analyse Scandinavian anti-Catholicism from different perspectives. In studying anti-Catholicism as a historical and transnational phenomenon, we will contribute to a new understanding of the constriction of Scandinavian national identity and Nordic values.

Sub project 1: Catholicism and the emergence of a ‘Swedish’ ideal of public legitimacy

The new Swedish constitution of 1809 with its famous paragraph number 16, which allowed the free practice of religion within the existing order, represented a first step towards the de-confessionalisation of Swedish society. The next was the dissenter laws of 1860, which removed the connection between being a Lutheran believer and being a Swedish citizen. The process was completed with the law religious liberty was passed in 1951. In earlier research

regarding the political debates on religious liberty, the anti-Catholic counter images have not attracted much interest (Hessler, 1964, Brohed 2001). It is however clear, that the discussions over religious freedom activated an old fear of the Catholic Church, deeply rooted in Swedish mentality ever since the Reformation. This image was both new and old at the same time, and the role it played for the notions of opinion formation has not been previously investigated.

This topic is the focus of an analysis of the religious roots of the Swedish ideal of the public sphere that was established in 19th century. Whereas ‘the Russians’ historically symbolised the risk of a territorial invasion, Catholicism represented the threat of an invasion into the minds of the people. The supranational and centralised Catholic Church was accused of immoral proselytising and for using means of persuasion that deprived individuals the power over their own opinions. A hypothesis is that Catholicism was used in the debates as a negative relief against which a specifically ‘Swedish’ ideal of the public sphere, based on the liberal democratic tradition was construed. The question is how this negative relief was construed, how concepts such as for example proselytizing, persuasion, coercion, liberty and religious conscience, were used and the role the responsibility of the individual played in this context. The empirical study will focus on periods when religious liberty was questioned, such as the mid 19th century, around 1900, the period between 1920 and 1930, and the beginning of the 1950:s. The source material consists of parliamentary proceedings, newspaper articles, political tracts and satirical images.

Jonas Harvard is responsible for the investigation

Sub project 2: Anti-Catholicism in Denmark 1800-1850

The absolutist Danish monarchy identified itself as a Lutheran state and the king as a protector and sponsor of the true faith. This was codified in the *Lex Regia* 1665 that had the status of constitution until the democratic revolution 1848-49. The close connection between religion and state relied on strongly on anti-Catholicism. It was – in theory – punishable by death for Catholics to actively proselytise. The constitution of 1849 declared full freedom of religion, but anti-Catholic attitudes were voiced by a strong minority in the constitutional assembly, and also in the media. The aim of this sub-project is to investigate this manifest anti-Catholicism, its character and extent, mainly in the nascent political discussion in the 1830’s leading up to the debate in the constitutional assembly.

This sub-project aims to identify the importance of Catholicism as a counter image in Danish (and partly Norwegian) politics and culture in the first half of the 19th Century, and to analyse the stereotypes and the negative stereotypes used. A starting-point is that the growing interest in the history under the influence of the German *Romantic* not only contributed to shape a strong a strong nationalist movement from 1840 onwards but also represented a menace to traditional Lutheran values. One of the main characteristics of this romanticism was a strong historical awareness with a special positive focus on the Middle Ages, which had been looked down upon by both enlightened philosophers and orthodox Lutheran clerics as the dark ages. A key event was the removing of Catholic objects from the Roskilde Cathedral in 1806 and the debates caused by the finding of precious Byzantine pendulum cross in a wooden crucifix sold for firewood. As these debates provoked both anti-Catholic sentiments as well as strivings to integrate the Catholic past in Danish national culture and memory, they serve as an ideal object for studying the role of anti-Catholicism in the shaping of Danish national identity. Also the theological aspects will be integrated in the investigation (Jens Rasmussen and Martin Schwartz-Lausten). The source material consist of letters – for the most already published – periodicals, minutes of political assemblies, legislation, memories, novels, plays, poetry and paintings.

Anders Holm is responsible for the investigation

Sub project 3. Anti-Catholicism and the “modernisation” of Swedish Protestantism

International research has shown that anti-Catholicism provided an important counter image to the development of a Protestant liberal discourse on modernity and national values in 19th century. There are good reasons to assume the existence of such a development also in Sweden. The global ambitions of the Catholic Church and its strive for political influence, as well as its historically tense relationship to Protestant Christianity, contributed to making Catholicism into a strongly negatively charged symbol in Swedish society. A lot has been written on the construction of Swedishness and the development of a new ecclesiastical self-understanding within the Church of Sweden. However, the role of anti-Catholic stereotypes in this context has hardly been noted. What role did such conceptions play as the role of the established church in society was debated in ecclesiastical circles? To what extent were notions of Catholicism used as arguments in debates on the relationship between state and society? And what importance did notions of Catholicism hold in the debate about relationship to foreign powers?

These questions form the basis of an analysis of the importance of anti-Catholic conceptions for the modernisation of Lutheran confessionality and for the development of a liberal democratic community of values in Swedish society. The study posits as a hypothesis that anti-Catholicism served as an important tool in the efforts to create a unified Swedish Lutheranism and that it contributed to integrating the Church of Sweden into the developing welfare society. An outline of the dominating trends in the Swedish state church reveal a trajectory from enlightenment-inspired theology over conservative High Church ideology and successive liberal theology to a national ideology of the peoples' church. Politically there was a dual dynamic at play, which focused both on liberating society from ecclesiastical influence and to instrumentalise the church for political purposes. Here the anti-Catholic counter images most probably played an important role. The investigation will focus on the role of anti-Catholic arguments and stereotypes used in debates on modernity, progress, freedom, and gender ideology, not least the relationship between gender and confession. The source material consists of protocols from Swedish parliament and the General Synod of the Church of Sweden, ecclesiastical and political journals, memoirs, and anti-Catholic pamphlets.

Yvonne Maria Werner is responsible for the investigation

Sub project 4: Anti-Catholic debates in Norway in the inter-war period

In the 19th century, Norwegian society was transformed in accordance with liberal and democratic ideals. Despite this, the constitutional ban of the Jesuit order remained until 1956. When Norway in the 1950s accepted the Declaration of Human Rights, the Jesuit paragraph had to be abolished, but a rather strong opposition tried to stop a repeal of the law.

The Jesuit question is the starting-point for this sub-project on anti-Catholic debates in Norway in the inter-war period. Excited by discussions in the Norwegian parliament to repeal the ban on the Jesuits, Marta Steinsvik, who was a well-known feminist author, published the highly polemic book *St. Peters himmelnøkler. Litt pavehistorie. (St. Peter's Keys to Heaven. A Short Papal History)*. Borrowing from French and German anti-Catholic literature, the book conveyed a profound criticism of Catholicism and Catholic pastoral care. Before that she had written a series of articles in *Aftenposten*, a major daily newspaper, under the heading 'Jews

and Jesuits', where she agitated against Jewish money power and Jesuit ethical principal – or rather lack of such principals. The case was brought to trial by the Catholic vicar in Kristiansand, and it was in that connection that Steinsvik wrote the above mentioned book, which was published in a second edition in 1930, with an appendix concerning the trial, and it was reprinted two years later. Steinsvik received a strong support from the Norwegian public opinion, and these debates contributed to stimulate anti-Catholic sentiments, which were activated also by Catholic strivings to use the 900-year anniversary of St. Olav's martyrdom in 1930 for Catholic missionary purposes.

Marta Steinsvik left behind a comprehensive literary production, among them a lot of anti-Catholic works, which reflect the anti-Catholic sentiments of the time, and the stereotypical construction of the Catholic "other". The protocols from the trials can also be expected to give evidence of prevalent views on and attitudes towards Catholicism in Norwegian society.

Kristin Norseth is responsible for the investigation

Sub project 5: Finnish Lutherans and the spectre of Catholicism in the 1920s

In the 1920s, many Lutheran Finns came to regard the Roman Catholic Church as almost as big a threat to Finnish independence as communism. One important reason behind the Finns' negative perception of Catholicism and especially Catholic priests was the *Tales of a Barber-Surgeon (Välskärin kertomuksia)*, a five-piece work by the popular Finnish Author Zachris Topelius (1818-1898). The tales in this work range from the days of Gustavus II Adolphus to those of Gustavus III. The Jesuits in particular are subjects of harsh treatment in his work.

In the Finnish civil war of 1918, the Reds had been defeated and the threat of Finland becoming communist had been temporarily deflected. But it was feared that the Russian communists were just waiting on the other side of the eastern border for their chance to jump upon Finland, and along with the Communist threat also a fear for Catholic infiltration was activated. After long negotiations with the Finnish government, the Apostolic Vicariate of Helsinki was established in 1920. Although there were strong forces within the Finnish government that wanted to prohibit Catholic religious congregations to work in Finland, Dutch members of the Congregation of the Sacred Heart took charge of the Catholic mission in Finland. In the press, there were constant warnings about the expansion of the Catholic Church to the Nordic countries. When the first Apostolic Vicar, the Dutch born Bishop Johannes Michael Buckx was installed in Helsinki by Cardinal Wilhelm van Rossum in 1923, hostility and criticism of the Catholic Church reached new heights. It was the first time that a Catholic cardinal had visited Finland. The cardinal's visit, which was part of the Catholic Church's increased activity in Scandinavia, provoked fierce debates in the press, with many conspiracy theories and anti-Catholic attacks. The aim of this sub-project is to analyse these anti-Catholic attitudes, and the stereotypes thereby used, their origins, aims and interconnections as expressed in correspondence and other archival material of people involved in the polemic against the Catholic Church. Further newspaper and journal articles, official protocols of meetings of the Lutheran clergy will be used.

Mikko Ketola is responsible for the investigation

Sub project 6: Radical Anti-Catholicism and the Expression of Class among Swedish Evangelicals

The current literature on anti-Catholicism has revealed how easily notions inherent in an anti-Catholic world-view were used to manufacture unity in the face of real or imagined enemies.

Anti-Catholic rhetoric has also been used to express social and cultural tensions of various kinds throughout the Western world. This sub-project aims to study how the language of anti-Catholicism could be used to express social tensions and social hierarchies. Its focus is placed on Swedish Evangelicalism, inside or outside of the Church of Sweden, as it emerged during the 19th and early 20th centuries. This was a revivalist movement of vast important importance when considering the transformation of Swedish society. Although revivalist Christians were a minority of the population, they reached a large number of people around the country through their active ways of recruiting followers, their social activities and a conscious use of the mass media. Socially Swedish Evangelicalism was diverse. It embraced both an aristocratic and/or bourgeois leadership as well as a working- or lower middle-class following. How social tensions were expressed and negotiated within these groups of Christians has merited little scholarly attention. With inspiration from Anglo-Saxon from several Anglo-Saxon studies, a dominating view suggests that social tensions were muted in the face of a dominating social vision based on bourgeois values.

By focussing on pockets of radically Protestant working-class evangelicalism, this sub-project challenges this view. A preliminary hypothesis is that an anti-Catholic rhetoric and imagery was used to express, contend and undermine social divisions among these groups. The language of anti-Catholicism was used to challenge middle-class hegemony. This investigation will explore how anti-Catholic stereotypes and attacks against the Catholic Church in serial stories, novels, pamphlets and debates of different kinds could become vehicles of social debate. Also conceptions and usage of history will be analysed (Aronsson, 2004). The source material consists of publications (periodicals, tracts, pamphlets and popular literature) originating mostly, albeit not exclusively, within circles connected to the Swedish Holiness Union and early Pentecostalism. Sources of a more private kind, such as diaries and autobiographies, will also be used.

Erik Sidenvall is responsible for the investigation

Feasibility and importance of the project

All participants in the project have directly or indirectly studied anti-Catholicism as a phenomenon, and an inventory of the source materials is already under way. A collection of press clippings from the Catholic episcopate at the Swedish National Archives helps indicate areas of conflict from the end of the 19th century and forward. For the earlier period, registers of parliamentary proceedings are an important starting point. Library databases show that there is a large body of popular literature with anti-Catholic themes.

The planned investigations aim at providing new knowledge about anti-Catholicism as a phenomenon in its own right and its role as a rhetorical weapon. By investigating anti-Catholic stereotypes and Catholic counter images to the heterogeneous constructions of Scandinavian national identity the project seeks to cast new light on the roles notions of cultural and religious “otherness” have played historically. To a large extent, the stereotypes and threatening images prevalent in images of Islam today, are very similar to those previously used to describe and define Catholicism.

We have initiated an international network ‘Anti-Catholicism in comparative and transitional perspective, 1750-2000’, connecting scholars from different European countries and the USA. A first conference was organised in autumn 2010. **See the file uploaded under “Other items”**. Furthermore, we are co-operating with the research project *Protestant-Catholic*

Conflict: Historical Legacies and Contemporary Realities led by professor John R. Wolffe at the Open University, Milton Keynes, UK. An application for a Swedish project on anti-Catholicism is sent to the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation (RBJ), which – if approved – will broaden the Scandinavian project.

The project members will work eight to nine months during three years with the project. Three workshops and an international conference will be organised. The research findings will be presented in a joint monograph, in a number of articles in Scandinavian and international journals, and in two anthologies in English together with the members of our international network. We have already established contact with the publisher Rodopi in Amsterdam. Norseth, Ketola and Werner, who have permanent positions at their respective universities, will encourage master students to write papers on subjects related to the project and develop projects for doctoral future studies.

Important works on the field

Altermatt, U., Metzger, F. (Hg.), *Religion und Nation. Katholizismen im Europa des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, Stuttgart 2007

Altgelt, W., *Katholizismus, Protestantismus, Judentum: Über religiös begründete Gegensätze und nationalreligiöse Ideen in der Geschichte des deutschen Nationalismus*, Mainz 1992

Alvunger, D, *Nytt vin i gamla läglar. Socialdemokratisk kyrkopolitik under perioden 1944–1973*, Göteborg 2006

Anbinder, T., *Nativism and slavery : the northern Know Nothings and the politics of the 1850's*, New York 1992

Anderson, B., *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, London 2006 [1983]

Anderson, M. L., *Practicing Democracy. Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany*, Princeton 2000

Arnstein, W. L., *Protestant versus Catholic in mid-Victorian England : Mr. Newdegate and the nuns*, Columbia, London 1982

Aronsson, P., *Historiebruk: Att använda det förflutna*, Lund 2004

Bar-Tal, D., et al. (eds.), *Stereotyping and Prejudice: Changing Conceptions*. New York 1989;

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- Brewer, J. & Higgins, G., *Anti-Catholicism in Northern Ireland 1600-1998: the mote and the beam*, Basingstoke 1998
- Brohed, I. (ed.), *Kyrka och nationalism i de nordiska folkkyrkorna under 1800-talet*, Lund 1998
- Bruce, S., *God save Ulster: the religion and politics of Paisleyism*, Oxford 1989 [1986]
- Bruce, S., *No Pope of Rome: anti-Catholicism in modern Scotland*, Edinburgh 1985
- Bruce, S., *Sectarianism in Scotland*, Edinburgh 2004
- Cabanel, P., *Entre religions et laicite : La voie franaise : XIXe-XXIe siecles*, Toulouse 2007
- Chauvin C., *La Republique anticlericale XIXe - XXIe siecles*, Paris 2002
- Clark C., & Kaiser, W. (eds.), *Culture Wars: Secular-Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, Cambridge 2003
- Clark, C., Kaiser, W., (eds.), *Culture Wars. Secular-Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, Cambridge 2003
- Claydon, T. & McBride, I., *Protestantism and national identity : Britain and Ireland, c.1650-c.1850*, Cambridge 1998
- Cogliano, F. D., *No king, no popery : anti-Catholicism in revolutionary New England, Contributions in American history*, London 1995
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Network

Anti-Catholicism in a Comparative and Transnational Perspective, 1750-2000

Purpose of the Network

- 1. Intellectual:* To provide an opportunity for closer dialogue between scholars working within the field of anti-Catholicism, and to develop a joint framework for performing comparative and transnational long-term historical studies of anti-Catholicism.
- 2. Publishing:* To communicate this framework and a number of case studies in an edited anthology and to provide incentive for smaller collaborations and comparative studies aimed at co-written journal articles.
- 3. Funding:* To contribute to forming a consortium and develop applications for European research funding, with a clear “added European value”, and to initiate local research projects in the Nordic countries. Whereas there is a growing interest in studying the historical development of anti-Catholicism in international research, Scandinavian anti-Catholicism still stands out as a neglected field of study.

Aim of the network:

During the 19th century anti-Catholic sentiments grew stronger in Europe. Liberals of different shades saw religion as a private matter and considered the Catholic Church as a threat against progress and national integrity. For Protestant believers Catholicism also represented a superstitious and outdated form of religion. Anti-Catholic movements were especially strong in religiously heterogeneous countries such as Germany, Switzerland and The Netherlands, but played an important role also in France, Italy and other Catholic countries. Anti-Catholicism fed upon the strong terms in which the Catholic Church condemned both Protestantism and the development towards a secular society. In many countries these controversies resulted in veritable clashes between the Catholic Church and

the state authorities, and many times the result was discriminating laws directed against Catholic institutions and religious orders and congregations.

International research has shown the importance of negative stereotypes of Catholicism for the formation of Protestant European and North-American national identities. Several studies have stressed the impact of anti-Catholicism on Protestant popular culture and how it was used not only against Catholics but also against other religious and political enemies. Other researchers have underlined the political dimension and the importance of gender. Catholicism was described as a threat to national security and as a counter image to the masculine and bourgeois character of society. This latter aspect can be observed also in formally Catholic countries, where anti-Catholicism took the form of radical anti-clericalism. The connection between anti-Catholicism and other anti-movements such as anti-Semitism, anti-feminism and anti-socialism has also been pointed to. Much like these movements anti-Catholicism was a transnational cultural phenomenon, and similar accusations and stereotypes can be found in a number of countries. Anti-Catholic literature formed a veritable international canon, which spread also in the Nordic countries.

The history of anti-Catholicism provides a view on the role of negative stereotypes in European history that differs from those recovered in studies on anti-semitic and anti-Islamic attitudes. The key factor is the continued importance of Catholicism as a political force, both as a state-bearing religion and as a latent political threat represented by the world-wide Catholic Church and its international organisations. Anti-Catholicism was a transnational phenomenon that gained renewed strength with the communication revolution in the 19th century. The re-confessionalisation of European politics was to no small extent linked to the new possibilities for rapid communication and dissemination of texts and images across national borders.

Whereas 17th and 18th century anti-Catholic sentiments were based on religious convictions, modern anti-Catholicism was closely connected to ideas of progress and modernisation. The rising importance of the perceived values of modernity was thus in numerous Western countries coupled with a consistent anti-Catholic rhetoric. The importance of negative stereotypes for the establishment of values such as tolerance and critical discussion might seem as a paradox. However, as has been shown for example in postcolonial theory, the

existence of an external counter-image can be more important for the formation of cultural communities than a consensus around (secular or religious) values.

These reflections form the starting point for the network, which aims to bring together researchers from different countries dealing with anti-Catholicism in northern Europe and the United States. By highlighting similarities and differences between national trajectories and the migration of anti-Catholic materials and ideas across national borders, the network will contribute to a comparative perspective of the role of negative stereotypes in European history and the factors that have affected their creation, dissemination and reception. A crucial question is how the different national contexts affected the proliferation of anti-Catholic messages. Here factors such as the legal status of various faiths and their opportunities for proselytising, the relation between state and church, transnational cultural relations, and the development of different media and channels for communication, all provide clues to the general patterns governing anti-Catholicism as a societal force.

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