Summary

The main purpose of the conference was to bring together researchers from different countries dealing with anti-Catholicism in northern Europe and the USA with the aim to develop a joint framework for performing comparative and transnational long-term historical studies of anti-Catholicism. A second purpose was to publish case studies on anti-Catholicism in an edited anthology, and to initiate local research projects on this subject in the Nordic countries. The next step will be to develop applications for research funding, and to provide for the publication of some of the 20 papers presented at the conference.

The results of the discussions can be summarised in the following way:

Anti-Catholicism was a transnational phenomenon of modern Western societies. It affected mono- and multiconfessional societies: largely Protestant (such as North America or Scandinavia), pre-dominantly Catholic (such as France, Italy or Spain) and confessionally mixed (such as Switzerland, the Netherlands or Germany) societies.

The different confessional constellations allegedly had an effect on anti-Catholicism. The terms that were used to attack Catholicism varied from country to country and somehow depended on the respective contexts. They ranged from ‘Popery’, ‘Papism’ (USA, UK, Netherlands), ‘Jesuitism’ (Scandinavia), to ‘Ultramontanism’, ‘Romanism’ (Germany) and ‘clericalism’ (France, Italy, Spain). In countries where Catholicism was forbidden or where the percentage of the Catholic population was miniscule, anti-Catholicism strongly depended on the power of imagination and on media transfers and it often referred to a distant national past (e.g. the Reformation) and to conspiracy theories (esp. in the case of anti-Jesuitism).

In countries with strong Catholic minorities or Catholic majorities, anti-Catholicism also reacted to processes within the Catholic Church and religion such as the rise of Ultramontane piety or the organization of political Catholicism. Sometimes Catholics kept still when they were attacked (e.g. in the Netherlands), sometimes they counter-attacked (esp. in Catholic Europe and in Germany) and influenced (radicalized or softened) anti-Catholicism by doing so. Anti-Catholicism was often combined with other categories of identity such as class and confession, age and gender, nation and race. It was not confined to Protestants but also affected Jews, Catholics and atheists and therefore cannot be reduced to a bi-confessional antagonism but has to be conceived as a transconfessional phenomenon. As a synonymy of backwardness, dogmatism and fanaticism the term ‘Catholicism’ was also used for enemies within other denominations such as Protestantism and Judaism.

Anti-Catholicism was a multimedia phenomenon. It was expressed in sacred and secular, political and religious, artistic and scientific, written and visual media, and also in songs. These diverse media addressed different publics (educated and illiterate, believers and non-
believers, man and women) and often had a transnational range. Many of them conformed to particular rules of genre therefore and have to be analyzed with specific methods.

The discursive strategies of progressive anti-Catholicism were yet often similar: Catholicism was excluded from the process of history and civilization and associated with non-European cultures that were perceived as culturally inferior or barbarian. Catholicism was excluded from (secular or confessional) concepts of national culture and often essentialised with another – childish, effeminate or androgyne, mad or perverse – nature. Sometimes Catholics were even excluded from the human species. In this way, anti-Catholicism dealt with categories of space and time, culture and nature in order to distribute power, morality, truth and aesthetics.

Anti-Catholicism had manifold functions and effects. It contributed to the construction of identities, it spread progressive principles and bourgeois values and lead to verbal, legal and physical attacks against Catholics. It was often connected with / similar to anti-movements such as anti-Semitism or anti-communism which were also based on transnational conspiracy theories. Anti-Catholicism was ambivalent since Catholicism produced mixed emotions: fear and anger, fascination and disgust, hate and envy. Anti-Catholics were often impressed by the visibility, the collective character and emotional appeal of Catholic rituals. Sometimes they perceived Catholicism as a lost paradise and an innocent age of earlier stages of development. Catholic priests were admired for their sexual opportunities, Jesuits for their hyperrationality. Nuns and pious women were perceived as victims of clerical suppression that had to be liberated to become housewives and mothers.

The reasons why Catholicism was attacked were manifold: For many Protestants, Catholics just had the wrong confession. Sometimes they attacked specific doctrines of Catholic theology, sometimes they denounced Catholicism as wrong and superstitious. For progressive forces of different denominations, Catholicism also violated the liberal principle of a privatization of religion and of a differentiation of politics and religion: The pope incarnated the fusion of temporal and spiritual power; Catholic rituals and symbols dominated public space. Ultramontanism openly challenged the rationalist project of modernity. The political organization of Catholics appeared as a menace to the hegemony of liberal parties. The transnational organization of the Catholic Church was perceived as a threat to the political sovereignty of nation states.

The relation of anti-Catholicism with tradition and modernity was ambiguous. Progressive anti-Catholicism was always connected to projects of modernity and secularisation. Yet, these projects may also have had a confessional (Protestant) bias. This question needs further exploration. It is especially important for the dialogue between early and late modernists. And it is also important to analyse the change of anti-Catholicism. Can we speak of a secularisation of anti-Catholicism in the nineteenth century?

PAPERS PRESENTED AT THE CONFERENCE:

John R. Wolffe, North Atlantic Anti-Catholicism in the Nineteenth Century – a Comparative Overview
Manuel Borutta, Anti-Catholicism in the Age of the European Culture Wars
Martin J. Burke, Anti-Popery and American Political Culture, 1775-1860
Henrik Stenius, *Scandinavistic radicalism together with or against Rome*

Jonas Harvard, *Catholicism and the Emergence of a ‘Swedish’ Ideal of Public Legitimacy*

Uffe Østergaard, *Politics of Anti-Catholicism in Denmark*

Andrew Newby, *The Insidious and Crafty Work of Propaganda: Scotland and the ‘North Pole Mission’*

Antti Laine, *A Secret Survey on the Missionary Work of the Roman Catholic Church in Finland*

Tatu Kotilainen, *Anti-Catholicism in the Popular Reception of II Vatican Council in Finland*

Edwina Hagen, *Anti-papism and cultural nation's consciousness in the Netherlands around 1800*

Jes Fabricius Møller, *The Catholic Church as a Counter Image to Danish Protestantism in the Early 19th Century*

Yvonne Maria Werner, *Anti-Catholicism and the formation of a Nordic national identity 1815-1965 - Presentation of a planned research programme*

Olaf Blaschke, *Modern Anti-Catholicism and Anti-Protestantism: a Comparison*

Ainur Elmgren, *The Jesuit Spectre – A Metaphor of the Universal Enemy in Finnish Nationalism*

Bernt T. Oftestad, *The Anti-Jesuit Law of 1814 and Norwegian Anti-Catholicism*

Michael S. Carter, *‘A very ill-natured Religion’: Indulgences and the Anti-Catholic Imagination in Early Modern British Print Culture*

Erik Sidenvall, *Protestant and Catholic in the world of music – transgressions and rehearsals*

Clare Haynes, *Wood, Brick, Ink and Paper: the Materials of Anti-Catholicism*

Kristin Norseth, *Female anti-Catholicism in Norway: an Analysis of the Feminist Author Marta Steinsvik’s Anti-Catholic Writings*

Laura Stevens, *The Virgin Mary and Violated Mothers in British Anti-Catholicism*

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CANCELLATION

Anders Jarlert, University of Lund
Paper: Catholicism as a Scape-Goat in the Debate on Various Stages of High Church Development in the Lutheran Church of Sweden
Mikko Ketola, University of Helsinki