

A Jesuit Interpretation of Mid-Nineteenth-Century America

“Mormonism in Connection with Modern Protestantism”

Mark A. Noll

As historians of Mormonism have long since established, Europeans took note of Joseph Smith, the Book of Mormon, and the organization of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints almost from the beginning. Mormon missionaries, converts, and expatriates, as well as European visitors to the United States, put the church on the European map early on. The result was a great deal of animated European commentary on, interest in, and interaction with Mormonism itself. Such engagement was illustrated in 1854 when, after a decade in the United States, the ecclesiastical polymath Philip Schaff returned to his native German-speaking regions and included—though reluctantly (“I would fain pass over this sect in silence”)—an account of the Mormons in his landmark lectures entitled *America: A Sketch of Its Political, Social, and Religious Character*. Schaff did so because so many Germans had asked him about the movement.¹ That interest was also evident when Anthony Trollope, on his fourth visit to the United States in 1872, paid an unannounced call on Brigham Young, “the great polygamist,” but came away “properly punished” when Young refused an interview, since Trollope, in his own words, had been “vain enough to conceive that he would have heard my name.”² Only a few years later, a different kind of European attention was paid in the first of Arthur

1. Philip Schaff, *America: A Sketch of Its Political, Social, and Religious Character*, ed. Perry Miller (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1961), 198.

2. Anthony Trollope, *North America*, ed. Donald Smalley and Bradford Allen Booth (New York: Knopf, 1951), xxvii.

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Professor Noll has written, edited, or coedited thirty-five books and authored numerous professional articles. This corpus of scholarship has done much to forward the understanding of Evangelical Christianity, the symbiotic relationship of Christianity and American culture, and the role of theology in Civil War rhetoric.

He has also argued that higher biblical criticism and rigorous church history are not incongruous with the Christian life of faith and devotion. His life exemplifies such a model. His *Seasons of Grace*, a collection of his poetry published in 1997, reveals him to be seasoned in the things of the soul as well as those of the academy. Because of the respect held for his scholarship and his faith both inside and outside of Christian circles, *Time* magazine listed him as one of the twenty-five most influential Evangelicals in America in February 2005.

Conan Doyle's book-length mysteries featuring Sherlock Holmes where the Mormons and their Utah habitat factored large in the story.³

European commentary on Mormonism was significant for more than just the Mormons, however, since it regularly broadened out into wider consideration of the larger contexts from which the church had emerged. Mormonism, that is, was read by at least some Europeans as a particularly useful indicator of general American characteristics or, even more broadly, of general trajectories in the whole history of Protestantism. While most

3. Arthur Conan Doyle, *A Study in Scarlet*, ed. Owen Dudley Edwards (1887; New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), with much commentary by editor Edwards on Doyle's understanding of Mormonism, 183–200.

Europeans of that period treated Mormonism as a religious and political aberration, not a few also saw the church arising from the labors of Joseph Smith as an exaggerated instance of much larger trends.

A prime example of this larger function was European attention to the American Civil War.⁴ As one instance, the liberal English Protestant Goldwin Smith evoked the Mormons at the beginning of his book-length treatment of American slavery, which was published in 1863. To Smith, much in the United States that Americans defended with moral reasoning could better be explained by material and political interests. He also thought that there were many “strange things” in this new country, including preeminently two phenomena he described as follows: “By the side of the Great Salt Lake is a community basing itself upon Polygamy. In the Southern States is a community basing itself upon Slavery.” Then he asked, “if the Mormonite were equally an object of political interest to a large party,” whether there might not be the same willingness to justify polygamy as there was so much American willingness to justify slavery.⁵ Similarly, an acerbic report on the postbellum United States from a conservative Catholic journal out of Munich referred to the Mormons as one example of American social chaos. To the aristocratic German who filed this story, the United States’ descent into moral anarchy was demonstrated by several realities: the social despotism exercised by northern Congregational and Methodist ministers, the rapid spread of impiety, the mischief (*Unfug*) of camp meeting revivals, and the Mormons: “Only in America, the home of humbug, could such things appear and only here was Mormonism possible, that shameful scandal based on lies, deception, and immorality.”⁶

A few moral judgments worked the other way. In 1863, George Q. Cannon, a Mormon in England, published a lengthy interpretation of the Civil War as occurring because Americans had rejected Joseph Smith when he had offered himself as a candidate for president. To Cannon, Smith’s plans to end slavery through compensated emancipation, cut back

4. General European interest in religious aspects of the war is treated at greater length in Mark A. Noll, *The Civil War as a Theological Crisis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 95–156, which expands upon some of the material presented in this introduction.

5. Goldwin Smith, *Does the Bible Sanction American Slavery?* (Oxford and London: J. Henry and J. Parker, 1863), 1.

6. “Nur in Amerika, der Heimath des ‘Humbugs,’ können solche Sachen vorkommen und nur hier war der Mormonismus möglich, dieser schändliche auf Lüge, Betrug und Unsittlichkeit gegründete Skandal.” Kuno Damian Freiherr von Schütz zu Hölzhausen, “Die Krisis in Washington und die Zustände überhaupt,” *Historisch-politische Blätter für das katholische Deutschland* 59 (1867): 136.

the scope of the national government, and promote peace and national prosperity had been God's way of giving the United States a leader "who possessed a sufficient knowledge of the Lord and his purposes to steer the ship of state out of the troubled sea in which she was then sailing, to a haven of peace." But because Americans had rejected and then killed Smith, the result was national bloodshed: "Dearly indeed have the enemies of the truth in the United States purchased their imaginary triumph over the Prophet Joseph and those associated with him."⁷

La Civiltà Cattolica

The most interesting attention to Mormonism during the era of the Civil War—particularly in connection with broad European interpretations of American experience—came from a notable Italian journal, *La Civiltà Cattolica*.⁸ The journal was a weighty biweekly that in nearly three thousand pages each year provided extensive social, political, and economic commentary, as well as full treatment of religious subjects. It was founded by Jesuits in 1850 at the request of Pope Pius IX (pontificate, 1846–78), who desired learned support in his struggle against the liberal and progressive forces that the pope viewed as a grave threat to the integrity of the Catholic Church. Early on the journal became a champion of the theology of Thomas Aquinas, which it regarded as an effective counterweight to the modern problems of secularism, liberalism, and progressive Protestantism. *La Civiltà Cattolica* soon emerged as a capable champion of the pope and his vision of the church, especially in opposition to the unification of Italy, a goal of Italian reformers that would necessitate the end of the pope's political rule over the Papal States. The journal has continued to be published to this day and continues to contribute important viewpoints within the Catholic Church.

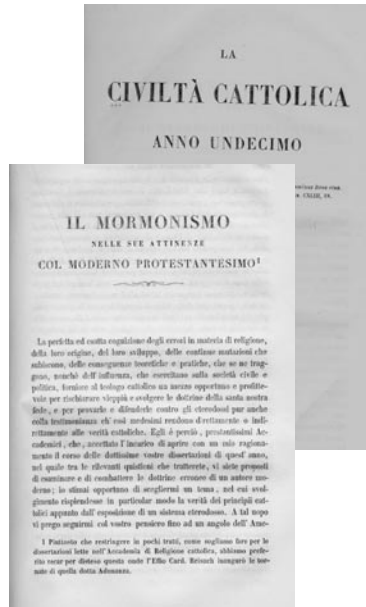
La Civiltà Cattolica's stance in opposition to liberal Italian politicians helps explain its attitudes toward the American situation, since its editors and authors linked the progressive campaign for Italian unification

7. George Q. Cannon, "Emancipation of the Slaves—the Prophet Joseph's Plan—Results of Its Rejection," *Millennial Star* 25 (February 14, 1863): 97–101.

8. For background on this journal during this period, see Giandomenico Mucci, *Carlo Maria Curci: Il fondatore della "Civiltà Cattolica"* (Rome: Edizioni Studium, 1988), 16–20; Francesco Dante, *Storia della "Civiltà Cattolica" (1850–1891): Il Laboratorio del Papa* (Rome: Edizioni Studium, 1990), 57–77; and several articles in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2d ed., 15 vols. (Detroit: Thomson/Gale for the Catholic University of America Press, 2003), including J. Thavis, "La Civiltà Cattolica" (3:757–58) and J. A. Weisheipl/Eds., "Contemporary Scholasticism" (12:772–79).

to the liberal, individualistic, and democratic character of American social development.⁹ To demonstrate how the outworking of democracy and individualism was hurting the United States would also be to show how the same forces would hurt Italy. For its reports on America, the team of Jesuits who guided the magazine drew on correspondence from American bishops like John Hughes of New York and Martin Spalding of Louisville.¹⁰ But it was also obvious from the journal's extensive coverage that it enjoyed an unusually broad grasp of American affairs—at least by comparison with other Europeans of the day.

Throughout the 1860s *La Civiltà Cattolica* offered remarkably full treatment of the American sectional conflict and the question of slavery that it, along with almost all other Europeans, regarded as the decisive issue of the conflict. From 1860 to 1866 it published six major articles on these matters as well as numerous news reports. Four of the articles sought to invert the judgments of nineteenth-century liberals, who called Rome despotic, by arguing that the Catholic Church had always worked to soften the dehumanizing features of slavery, while liberal regimes—in particular, the United States—had promoted slavery in its most inhumane form.¹¹



La Civiltà Cattolica. Courtesy Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University.

9. On the journal's use in or connections to the U.S., with other important background, see especially Peter R. D'Agostino, *Rome in America: Transnational Catholic Ideology from the Risorgimento to Fascism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 19–45; and John T. McGreevy, *Catholicism and American Freedom* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003), 26, 122, and 127.

10. See Anthony B. Lalli and Thomas H. O'Connor, "Roman Views on the American Civil War," *Catholic Historical Review* 57 (April 1971): 21–41. Further research would be required in Italian archives to ascertain the full range of sources used for the journal's article on Mormonism.

11. "Il concetto morale della schiavitù" [The Moral Idea of Slavery], *La Civiltà Cattolica* ser. 6, vol. 1 (February 18, 1865): 427–45; "La Chiesa tutrice della libertà in America" [The Church as Guardian of Liberty in America], *La Civiltà Cattolica* ser. 6, vol. 1 (March 18, 1865): 662–80; "Lo schiavo negro nell' America" [The Negro

Another article, published just as hostilities were about to commence, dealt directly with the war itself. It suggested that admirers of the United States should probably now be having second thoughts as violence tore apart the still-young nation. Its conclusion on religious issues was that America had reached the odd situation where “both parties have become theologians . . . the people of the thirty-three United States, who are eminently and essentially political, cannot discuss a political matter without quoting the Old and New Testaments!”¹² The tragedy was that American confidence in the Bible was wasted since “their independence makes it impossible to find a solution to their quarrel, both because they lack a central religious authority and because they lack moral honesty, which is itself a consequence of not having a central religious authority.”¹³

“Il Mormonismo”

But the fullest article in *La Civiltà Cattolica* on American matters—and the one that provided the deep conceptual background for what the journal said about the war itself—was a substantial essay in May 1860 entitled “Il Mormonismo nelle sue attinenze col moderno Protestantismo” [Mormonism in Connection with Modern Protestantism].¹⁴ This historically informative article is here being published for the first time in full English translation, revealing Catholic attitudes toward the Protestant Reformation, religion in America, and how Mormonism was perceived in Europe to relate to both of those subjects at that time.

The article was presented by an aristocratic cardinal archbishop, Karl August von Reisach (1800–1869) to the Pontifical Academy of the Catholic Religion in Rome.¹⁵ Reisach was a veteran of church-state negotiations in his native Bavaria who had exerted himself in several disputes with

Slave in America], *La Civiltà Cattolica* ser. 6, vol. 7 (August 4, 1866): 296–313; and “L’abolizione della tratta e della schiavitù” [The Abolition of the Slave Trade and of Slavery], *La Civiltà Cattolica* ser. 6, vol. 8 (October 6, 1866): 15–34.

12. “La disunione negli Stati Uniti” [Disunion in the United States], *La Civiltà Cattolica* ser. 4, vol. 9 (February 2, 1861): 317.

13. “La disunione negli Stati Uniti,” 318.

14. [Cardinal Karl August von Reisach], “Il Mormonismo nelle sue attinenze col moderno Protestantismo,” *La Civiltà Cattolica* ser. 4, vol. 6 (May 19, 1860): 391–413.

15. See short articles (with bibliographies) on Reisach by K. G. Steck, *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 3d ed., 7 vols. (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1961), 5:950; H. Rall, *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, 2d ed., 11 vols. (Freiburg: Herder, 1963), 8:1151–52; and V. Conzemius, “Reisach, Karl August von,” in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 12:40.

Pope Pius IX. The pontificate of Pius IX—the longest in history—formed the modern papacy, one stripped of temporal dominion but strong in spiritual dominion. Pius was affable and witty and was seen foremost as a pastor. He wielded steely determination in the face of political and theological threats. Pius convened the First Vatican Council (1869–70), which ratified the constitution *Pastor aeternus*, declaring the pope’s universal primacy and personal infallibility—doctrines first proposed in *La Civiltà Cattolica* earlier in February 1869. Courtesy University of Notre Dame Archives.



German monarchs to secure greater freedom for the Catholic Church. Later he would aid Pope Pius IX in preparing for the First Vatican Council. Reischach’s assessment of Mormonism is striking in itself, but also for how he read Mormonism as exemplifying a last stage in the logic of Protestant and American development. Friends of Mormonism, of Protestantism, and of America could not possibly agree with Reischach’s historical interpretations and evaluative judgments. But they, and all other readers, could have no doubts about what he wanted to say:

If one carefully considers the origin and the development of the doctrine of this pseudo-church and the society of the Mormons, one must recognize that their entire social and religious system is a natural consequence of North American Protestantism, since Mormonism is a reaction against the fundamental errors of the Reformation. Therefore, by considering Mormonism under this point of view and apart from the foolish, exceedingly false and particular doctrines . . . , this very odd system carries a bright testimony to the truth of the principles of the Catholic Church.¹⁶

What Reischach did not say explicitly, nonetheless was probably uppermost in his mind and in the minds of his original auditors. In the contemporary Italian context, Pius IX had emerged as the defender of traditional

16. Reischach, “Il Mormonismo,” 392–93.

autocracy against liberal individualism, of the Papal States against the drive for a new Italy, and of conservatism in general against modern innovation in general. For a high-ranking cardinal to pay such extensive attention to a then-obscure American sect was not, therefore, capricious. In his mind, Protestantism, liberalism, and the American experiment were all of a piece. His not-so-subtle message was to suggest that if Italians followed the path of liberalism at home, they would end up with the problems of the United States (widely recognized as the most liberal as well as the most Protestant country in the world); and if they wanted to understand why American liberalism-cum-Protestantism was such a problem, they should consider “il Mormonismo.”

How and why Reisach supports these contentions are revealed clearly in his essay and do not require elaborate summary here. The crux of his argument amounts to a double-barreled blast: first, that the claim by Joseph Smith to be a divine prophet responds to the chaos of biblical interpretation which is the natural outgrowth of the grounding principles of Protestantism; and, second, that the theocracy of Mormonism in Utah represents an extension of the American propensity for substituting crass materialism for genuine spirituality. Along the way Reisach offers backhanded praise to the Mormons for responding to the debilities created by Protestant individualism and American liberal materialism. But that “praise” is only a way station to Reisach’s own commendation of the Roman Catholic Church for its proper structures of religious authority and its proper balance between material and spiritual interests. As demonstration of his case he provides a highly charged reading of American history, especially its early Puritan phase and the later constitutional separation of church and state.

The article is divided into two main parts: a general consideration of Protestant and American history followed by specific attention to Mormonism. Reisach ends his discussion of Mormonism with the assertion that its history, as the culmination of Protestant errors, amounts to a compelling demonstration of the probity, faithfulness, and integrity of Roman Catholicism:

The principles of the Reformation in their fullest development have produced a society that is unreligious, egotistic, materialistic and in every way about to slip into anarchy. But even more frightening is what we see in Mormonism from the misapplication of Catholic principles. It is clear that neither Protestantism, nor the attempts that have been made in its wake to remedy the destructive consequences of its reformatory principles have been able to resolve the great social questions that agitate the

world. From all of this, one must deduce that such a privilege is reserved solely for the Catholic Church.¹⁷

Whatever Reisach's contemporary readers, or observers in the early twenty-first century, make of such judgments, they should recognize that Reisach's 1860 presentation provided an unusually serious treatment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—but also, through the Latter-day Saints, of Protestant history, the general development of the United States, and the specific political fracture that was leading to the Civil War.

Cardinal Reisach's Sources

Reisach's knowledge of religion in the United States seems to have been drawn largely from the writing of Joseph Edmund Jörg (1819–1901), an accomplished author from the strongly Catholic region of Bavaria. In 1858 Jörg published the two-volume *The History of Protestantism in Its Most Recent Development*.¹⁸ This history was a denunciation of both Protestantism and the United States. Jörg was also the editor of the *Historisch-politische Blätter für das katholische Deutschland*, which is cited above for its dyspeptic view of the United States after the war. The journal had been founded in 1838 by advocates of a European political Catholicism, who regarded political and social liberalism, state-dominated churches, and progressive Protestantism as their greatest foes. Jörg was himself an archivist who later took a seat in both the Bavarian and Bismark's national parliaments. During the Civil War he published six long articles on the American situation, which, to him, represented a full-scale demonstration of the perils of modern liberalism. His specific views on Mormonism were consonant with these general views on the United States.¹⁹ Besides Jörg's work, Reisach also drew information from reports to the Vatican from American bishops such as Martin Spalding of Louisville and John Hughes of New York.²⁰ Reisach's knowledge was partial, but—again, by

17. Reisach, "Il Mormonismo," 412.

18. Joseph Edmund Jörg, *Geschichte des Protestantismus in seiner neuesten Entwicklung*, 2 vols. (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1858).

19. For Jörg's writing on America during the Civil War, see Noll, *Civil War as a Theological Crisis*, 140–45; and for background on Jörg himself, see Dieter Albrecht and Bernhard Weber, eds., *Die Mitarbeiter der Historisch-politischen Blätter für das katholische Deutschland* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünwald, 1990); and Dieter Albrecht, "Introduction," *Joseph Edmund Jörg: Briefwechsel, 1846–1901* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünwald, 1988), xxiv–xxxviii.

20. For an excerpt from such a report, see Martin Spalding, "Dissertation on the American Civil War," in *American Catholics and Slavery, 1789–1866: An Anthology of Primary Documents*, ed. Kenneth J. Zanca (Lanham, Md.: University

comparison with other European contemporaries who had not traveled in North America—unusually extensive.

Finally, it is pertinent to ask how a European observer like Cardinal Reisach might have obtained access to information on the Mormons.²¹ Germany was far from the Mormon settlements in the American Intermountain West. But the intellectual center of Mormonism was in England and, therefore, much closer to Germany. The majority of Mormon missionary tracts, periodicals, and books were published not in Salt Lake City but in Liverpool. These publications were picked up by English and Scottish writers, whose articles German scholars read and heavily incorporated into their analyses. In Jörg's history, for example, British periodicals such as the *English Review*, the *Westminster Review*, and the *Edinburgh Review* were used as much or more than German sources.

The Mormon presence in Germany was all but nonexistent at the time that Cardinal Reisach took up his pen to address the topic. Nevertheless, German readers were not ignorant of the new faith. A handful of German articles and books had mentioned Mormonism. And German newspapers delivered news of Mormon happenings. Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde, for example, recalled reading in a German newspaper of the imprisonment of Joseph Smith in 1842.²² As would be expected, not everything printed in the German literature was as fair-minded as missionaries like Orson Hyde



Eine Stimme der Warnung und Belehrung für alle Völker (Hamburg: Nestler und Melle, 1853). Courtesy LDS Church Archives.

Press of America, 1994), 209–13. A full account of American reports sent back to the Vatican, especially from Spalding, is provided in Lalli and O'Connor, “Roman Views on the American Civil War.”

21. I thank Josh Probert for the following three paragraphs, which answer this question, and also for valuable help in annotating the document.

22. Orson Hyde, *A Voice from Jerusalem or a Sketch of the Travels and Ministry of Elder Orson Hyde* (Liverpool: James and Woodburn for Parley P. Pratt, 1842), 23.

would have hoped.²³ Either way, the conversion rates among Germans never came close to those in Scandinavia and the British Isles.

Nevertheless, some Mormon texts did appear in German—publications that influenced the view of the Mormons by Jörg, Reisach, and others. Orson Hyde published *Ein Ruf aus der Wüste* [A Voice Crying in the Wilderness]²⁴ in Frankfurt in 1842 on his way back to the United States from Jerusalem. A decade later, Hyde's fellow apostle John Taylor spent time proselytizing in Germany and published four editions of the periodical *Zions Panier* [Zion's Banner]²⁵ during the winter of 1851–52 as well as a German translation of the Book of Mormon in 1852.²⁶ Most important for “Il Mormonismo” was the publication of a German translation of Parley P. Pratt's *A Voice of Warning* in Hamburg in 1853 by Daniel Card, a German-speaking Mormon sent from Nauvoo, Illinois, to direct missionary work in Germany.²⁷

23. For a bibliography of German publications regarding Mormonism, see D. L. Ashliman, “Mormonism and the Germans: An Annotated Bibliography, 1848–1966,” *BYU Studies* 8, no. 1 (1967): 73–94.

24. Orson Hyde, *Ein Ruf aus der Wüste, eine Stimme aus dem Schoose der Erde. Kurzer Ueberblick des Ursprungs und der Lehre der Kirche “Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints” in Amerika, gekannt von Manchen unter der Benennung: “Die Mormonen.”* Von Orson Hyde, Priester dieser Kirche (Frankfurt: Selbstverlage des Verfassers for Orson Hyde, 1842). See Peter Crawley, *A Descriptive Bibliography of the Mormon Church*, 2 vols. (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, 1997, 2005), 1:205–7.

25. *Zions Panier der Kirche Jesu Christi der Heiligen der letzten Tage* (Hamburg: November 1, 1851–February 1[?], 1852). See Crawley, *Descriptive Bibliography*, 2:265–68.

26. *Das Buch Mormon* (Hamburg: Nestler and Melle for John Taylor, 1852). See Crawley, *Descriptive Bibliography*, 2:322–24.

27. Parley P. Pratt, *Eine Stimme der Warnung und Belehrung für alle Völker: oder eine Einleitung zu dem Glauben und den Lehren der Kirche Jesu Christi der Heiligen der letzten Tage* (Hamburg: Nestler and Melle for Parley P. Pratt and Daniel Carn, 1853).

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Karl August von Reisach (1800–1869). Courtesy of Bistumshaus Schloß Hirschberg, Diocese of Eichstätt.

Mormonism in Connection with Modern Protestantism*

[Karl August von Reisach, translation by Elizabeth Cramer]

The perfect and exact understanding of errors in matters of religion: their origins, their development, the continual changes that they undergo, the theoretical and practical consequences that flow from them, as well as the influence that they exert on public and political society, provide the Catholic theologian an opportune and profitable means to shed additional light on and to develop the doctrines of our holy faith, and to test them and to defend them against the heresies which bear testimony directly or indirectly against Catholic truths. Therefore, having accepted an invitation to open your scholarly dissertations of this year, in which (through the relevant questions that you treat), you set out to examine and to fight against the erroneous doctrines of a modern author, I consider it proper to choose a theme in which the development of the truth of the Catholic principles will shine forth against the exposition of a heretical system. For this purpose, I would ask you to follow me with your thoughts to a corner of North America, hidden in high mountains that separate California from the other United States, where the Latter-day Saints (as they call themselves) fled to establish and to strengthen their persecuted church, and to prepare themselves for the great mission that they claim to have received from the Holy Spirit: that of escaping to Utah Valley led by their prophet under the ensign to all nations to fight against and to destroy the ranks of Gog and Magog gathered under the teachings of the Pope of Rome. Then the Lord will destroy the rest of the Christians who are immersed in paganism with hailstones of fire, with pestilence and with famine, and the Latter-day Saints can triumphantly usher in a new chapter in world history when all the people of the earth will form a great family of holy brothers, and the earth itself will be changed into heaven by this new church. You understand already that I intend to speak to you of the extremely strange sect of the Mormons, who profess their pretended divine mission with phrases such as these. Perhaps you are wondering how it is that I intend to explain and support the truth of the Catholic Church by choosing to discuss the religious and socio-political system of these fanatics, those who with gross and shameful lies have invented a doctrine that together

*Rather than restrict to a few excerpts as we are accustomed to doing for the dissertations read in the Academy of the Catholic Religion, we have preferred to print extensively this dissertation from which His Eminence Cardinal Reisach inaugurated the meetings of that erudite assembly [footnote in original].

with the most grotesque and disgusting errors of heretical sects (including those of polytheism and pantheism), does not maintain anything of the Christian faith. They are turned completely against Christianity and are immersed in the most vile materialism and sensualism, which means that its members are more of a political sect of communists and socialists than a religious society of believers.

Nevertheless, if one carefully considers the origin and the development of the doctrine of this pseudo-church and the society of the Mormons, one must recognize that their entire social and religious system is a natural consequence of North American Protestantism, since Mormonism is a reaction against the fundamental errors of the Reformation. Therefore, by considering Mormonism under this point of view and apart from the foolish, exceedingly false and particular doctrines (with which Mormonism tries to validate and to make acceptable its fundamental principles), this very odd system carries a bright testimony of the truth of the principles of the Catholic Church, which are fought against and rejected by all of the Protestant sects. In all religious matters, these sects have placed the individual man in an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ (or with God) to the point of excluding every other real and objective mediation. This destroys the Catholic doctrine that the nature and authority of the church is a divine institution, established by God for the benefit of men. For this reason, the sects are also not able to admit or recognize an invisible church that has no real existence on this earth. Without any authority over individuals, they deprive both the church and religion of its regulating and refining influence on society. This influence conforms to the doctrine, law, and mission of Christ (not to mention the kingdom of God established on the earth), has been exercised for centuries by the church, serves to create a Christian society, and provides for the true temporal and eternal well-being of all nations.

Mormonism sought to find a solution to two fundamental defects that are inherent to all of the sects of the Reformation by establishing an authoritative and visible church as a mediator between God and the individual man, and by giving the church a more inclusive influence on its members and the direction of the members' political society. But in order to better understand the nature of this new pseudo-church, its relationship with political society, and to interpret how such an institution could have begun and made such rapid and great progress, it will be necessary to give a few brief explanations about the state of Protestantism in North America and about the influence that it has on society. I will therefore divide my remarks into two parts: the first will expound upon the above-mentioned facts. In the second part, I will try to explain the system of the Mormons

to the extent that it allows the previously mentioned truth of the Catholic Church to shine forth. I cannot hide that what I am about to tell you is basically a succinct analysis of what you will find about this topic in a work recently published in Germany (which deals with the development of Protestantism in recent years and the reactions to its own principles, which things destroy all faith and all true congregations).^{*1}

In North America, the Reformation occurred in a virgin land; when the first Protestant colonists arrived, there were no religious or secular establishments. Because everything had to be created from scratch, there were no impediments to the growth of the Reformation. There were no deep-rooted religious or social traditions, nor was there legislation from a preexisting political system that could oppose the Reformation from spreading all of its force and energies in order to form a truly religious and Christian society.

And in truth, the English and Dutch Puritans in North America tried to establish a new socio-political life on the basis of their religious doctrines. As the Baptist minister Doctor Baird² has aptly said, “By focusing more on the political system of the ancient Jews than the Kingdom established by Jesus Christ, they completely unified the state and the church, and fused these two equal institutions, similar to the sociopolitical state of the people of God. The consequence of this was the intolerance that condemned Roger Williams to fire, as well as three or four Quakers.”³

**Geschichte des Protestantismus in seiner neuesten Entwicklung* von Joseph Edmund Jörg, two volumes, Freiburg, 1855 [footnote in original].

1. Reisach is writing in reference to Joseph Edmund Jörg, *Geschichte des Protestantismus in seiner neuesten Entwicklung, Zweiter Band* [The History of Protestantism in its Most Recent Development] (Freiburg, Ger.: Herder, 1855). Reisach is quite correct when he writes that “Il Mormonismo” is “a succinct analysis” of Jörg’s *Geschichte*. Many of the major topics and quotes in “Il Mormonismo” are drawn from it.

2. Robert Baird was a Presbyterian, not a Baptist. He attended the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States in Princeton, New Jersey, and was ordained to the ministry on April 22, 1828. See Henry M. Baird, *The Life of the Rev. Robert Baird, D.D.* (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph, 1866), 30, 48.

3. Reisach is summarizing a four-page summary of the relationship between church and state in colonial New England in Baird’s 736-page survey *Religion in the United States of America* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1845). Baird wrote, “There was much, however, in the Hebrew commonwealth and laws that seemed adapted to the circumstances of men who had just exchanged what they considered worse than Egyptian bondage, for a Canaan inhabited by the ‘heathen,’ whom they were soon to be compelled ‘to drive out.’ The two cases were more

According to Doctor Schaff, this society (which began in New England and then later spread to the other states that were beginning to form), is best considered a theocratic state, or better yet, a bibliocratic state based on the rigid beliefs of Calvinism.⁴ Its very existence caused the persecution of anyone who opposed its doctrines, and created a tyranny over the entire community in the name of religion. This eventually resulted in full despotism over the most minute and ridiculous things. Despite the fact that the laws of this society were based solely on the Bible, it was unable to moderate or constrain the full liberty and independence of individuals as it is explained in that same Bible. Therefore, the fundamental principles of the Reformation gave rise naturally and unavoidably to the ruin of this entire theocratic system and caused the birth of new sects and religious societies. Then came the independence of the American colonies, and therewith the sanctioned separation of the church and the state and the absolute principle of religious liberty. According to this principle, the state has nothing to do with the church or for the church. The state does not recognize any one set of religious beliefs, it does not regulate religion according to one set of guidelines, and the schools do not teach any Christian religion. For the state, there are neither churches, nor confessions, nor dissenters: the

alike than at first strikes a superficial observer” (182). Baird concluded this section by writing,

Such was the state of things throughout the whole colonial age, and to this day, in no other country is the legitimate influence of the clergy in public affairs—an influence derived from their intelligence, united with religion, virtue, and public spirit, more manifest, or more salutary, than in New England. If these colonies might be compared, in their earlier periods, to the Hebrew commonwealth, it is certain, that wherever there was a Moses, there was also an Aaron; and the influence of Winthrop, and Haynes, and Bradford, and Eaton, was not greater or happier than that of their compeers and coadjutors, the Rev. Messrs. Cotton, and Hooker, and Brewster, and Davenport. (188)

Baird never wrote that Roger Williams was condemned “to fire.” He wrote, “In the end, Roger Williams was banished from the colony, and having retired to Narragansett Bay, there he became a Baptist, and founded what is now the State called Rhode island” (199).

4. After discussing the arrival of the Puritans “on the lonely rock of Plymouth” in his history *America* Schaff wrote, “Soon reinforced by larger emigrations of their brethren in faith, especially in 1630, they founded in Massachusetts, according to the principles of the strictest Calvinism, a theocratic state, and became the fathers of a republic, of whose power and importance they did not dream;—a striking proof, that the greatest results may flow from small beginnings.” Phillip Schaff, *America*, 89.

state is essentially indifferent to all religious sects and denominations. Churches are useless to the state, and it has no reason to mix itself with them. However, the state does grant equal rights to all of these different religious factions. In these circumstances surrounding the independence of the American colonies, religious belief (in whatever manner it was professed) was banished from the political arena, and therefore from every private, public and legal influence on social life as well. The individual was declared completely free and independent to profess whatsoever religion he wanted, to arbitrarily form new sects and to change his religious beliefs every single day, if he felt so inclined.

The fundamental principle of the Reformation (that is, religious individualism) was therefore able to take root because there were no hindrances or external political pressures. As a result, Protestants in the United States scattered into various religious sects and denominations. These grew to the point that individuals were able to discover the defects, gaps, contradictions, and consequences of the erroneous doctrines of the Reformers. It would be too long and boring, and even useless for my purposes for me to try to enumerate and to describe each and every one of the many sects in America, even if I wanted to just mention the principal doctrines that they profess, or to explain their origins and developments. Instead, I will talk about these sects in general, and will describe their principal tendencies, which in America (as well as in other Protestant countries) were a result of the principles of the Reformation. As I have already mentioned above, these principles exclude any mediation of the church between man and God, which forces religion and our salvation to depend on an intimate personal relationship in which man is in direct subjectivity to the Redeemer and with God. Having set forth this principle (together with the sovereignty of the individual), the obvious outcome would be a sense of indifference toward any sort of defined and determined formula of belief, even in the sects which admit that there must be some kind of visible or invisible church, but we have seen that the sects have consistently shown a tendency to liberate themselves from such ideas. Even though these sects recognize the Bible to be the rule of the faith and a few of them adhere strictly to the letter of the holy scriptures, the revealed truths and dogmas are less and less apparent in their common beliefs. Instead, everyone expounds the holy text according to his own will and under the influence of rationalized philosophy. There are, in fact, many Methodist sects throughout America, which have set themselves completely apart from any defined doctrine or church in such a way that everyone can personally be assured of the benevolence of God. This is obtained through strange and impetuous practices that make strong impressions on the soul in such a way that those who

believe in them also vainly believe and feel that in an instant they are filled with the grace of the Lord. The adherents who experience these extraordinary and surprising external manifestations feel internally enlightened, converted, justified, and assured without a doubt of their salvation. It is no wonder then, that we have on one hand the danger of losing every revealed Christian truth, and on the other the extinction of every true feeling and the very concept of a religious life in connection with an establishment. As a wise Protestant writer observed about the Methodist system, *religion does not begin with faith, but rather with frenzy, with hypocrisy and with intellectual satisfaction*. Therefore, it is no wonder that this danger inspired many who had felt the need for a positive and supernatural religion, but did not see it as a danger that originated from the consequences of the development of the principles and the doctrines of Protestantism, opposing its development and trying to erect barriers to it, without, however, entirely rejecting these same principles.

Those who profess only the principle of justification through faith and the invisible church believed that these barriers could be overcome by clinging to the ancient symbols of the Reformers, by uniting the various schisms through new interpretations of these symbols, and then by making them obligatory to everyone and thereby giving their fragile and frail religious communities a set of stable and firm procedures that are more in line with the modern spirit. Through this external bond, they believed that any group could be united in a secure, tangible ecclesiastical unity in order to form the true, invisible church.

On the contrary, others soon realized that obligatory creeds about belief that are prescribed by those without divine authority are in opposition to individual liberty. Obligatory creeds caused truths to be lost (which until that point had been recognized as revelations) and the unity of doctrine was disrupted. They felt the need for authority more than ever, and had to recognize that an invisible church composed merely from a few elect was completely a spiritual entity and therefore not capable of meeting the religious needs of the believers, nor the needs of the exterior order of their community. In order to make this church tangible, the only alternative left was the explanation given by the Baptist and pietistic sects (rather than the doctrine of the Reformers of the church), which is that church exists through the community of the believers and the justified. This is done by proclaiming that those who make up this said community were they themselves saints and justified people. In other words, this entirely abandons the concept of the church which was put forth by the Reformers and admits that the church should not be formed by those that individually and spontaneously unite themselves with Christ, but should be a

concrete divine institution, which exists in order to bring men unto this union. While they realized that these pietistic or strange sects (whether they be ancient or modern) were able to stop the progressive destruction of revealed truths and to establish an external congregational structure, they also had to pay careful attention that none of the existing Protestant communities could legitimately prove the divine origins of its institution. Therefore, they were left without any legitimacy whatsoever to claim the real and existing character of the church, which was already said to exist in Protestantism. Based on these considerations, many were led to believe that the church that they desired did not exist and that it would have to be reestablished by God. Because of this, many new sects were created, among which, for example, are the Irvingites,⁵ who resorted to a new pouring out of the Holy Spirit on their founders and apostles in order to legitimize their divine origins. Others explain the prophecies of the Old Testament and the Book of Revelation by reading them completely literally and in a Hebrew manner. The Millennialists, for example, are waiting for the formation of the true church and the second coming of Christ, and are preparing by gathering into their midst those who are destined to be the true people of God and preparing them for that end.

Amid these innumerable schisms, a group of spiritualists has recently arisen, who declare that they are in close contact with angelic spirits and the souls of the dead through their sorceries, speaking tablets, and prophesying mediums. They receive new doctrines and saving doctrines through these means and thereby resolve the defects and inherent aberrations of

5. "Irvingites" is used in reference to the members of the Catholic Apostolic Church, a charismatic Millennialist sect founded in London during 1832. Edward Irving (1792–1834) was a minister in the Church of Scotland who was trained in Edinburgh University and thereafter led congregations in London. His congregations became centers of charismatic worship where speaking in tongues, prophesying, and other spiritual phenomena were popularly exercised. Irving was removed from his post at the Caledonian Chapel over his endorsement of the Pentecostal gifts. Not long thereafter, a group of believers from various Christian backgrounds, who were sympathetic to the gifts of the Spirit and with whom Irving was associated, founded the Catholic Apostolic Church. Irving was ordained as the prophetic "Angel" of the church—a leadership position that nonetheless left him subject to the authority of the church's apostles. Irving died soon thereafter, and the movement's members were later referred to as "Irvingites." See Columba Graham Flegg, *Gathered under Apostles: A Study of the Catholic Apostolic Church* (New York: Oxford, 1992), 1, 46–62; see also Sheridan Gilley, "Edward Irving: Prophet of the Millennium," in *Revival and Religion since 1700: Essays for John Walsh*, ed. Jane Farnett and Colin Matthew (London: Hambledon, 1993), 95–110.

the dualism of the Protestant sects (which support the notion of an intimate relationship between man and God in matters of religion).

But what influence has this kind of religious doctrine had on society? How has this affected the social and political life of Northern Protestant America?

Those who are wise and attentive observers of all things American (including the heretics, many of whom are natives of the place) agree that the Protestant groups of the United States possess and manifest a certain character all of its own. They demonstrate not only the evils prevalent in our times, such as moral corruption (that is, rampant materialism), but also the principles that distinguish those groups from the old Christian ones. They have changed and distorted the natural and Christian conscience in such a way that they seem to have completely reverted back to the decadence and perversion of ancient societies (from which only the coming of the Redeemer could save the world).

Because no religious or ecclesiastical doctrine was enforced under the law without influencing societal or private life, religious individualism was produced and nourished by the spirit of the sects. Moreover, as the reformers removed any intermediary between the individual and God (the Savior in religion), the same principles destroyed the true church, as there was not the intermediary which assured the influence of religion on society. By separating church and state, the spiritual and eternal pursuits are separated in principle from those in society that are temporal and earthy. If man is declared independent and given the right to choose how and in what manner he wishes to create and maintain an individual relationship with his God, then is it any wonder that in his social and private life, he will also separate in the same way his individual interests in order to determine according to his pleasure if and when these will influence his social and private relationships? The sectarian attitude with this dualism has allowed for an immense rise in materialism in the United States of America. Similarly, religious individualism has produced the widespread egoism that characterizes American society and openly testifies that the people there lack all social traditions and have not been reared in a religious community that was willed and established by God. In fact, as a German Protestant observer wrote, "They have turned their backs on the ancient doctrine of sacrificing oneself for others and for the community and the worst egoism reigns, the natural consequence of which is that each individual tries in every way to get rich as soon as possible, even at the expense of others." "Help yourself," they say as a matter of principle to the poor who ask for relief. "Time is money" has become a proverb. The goal of man, therefore, is to make money: not making money is a waste of time and everything else.

I do not suppose that such sentiments are professed by all American Protestants, but it is certain that they demonstrate and express the spirit that generally reigns in that society which came into being under the domination of heretical sects. From this, it is easy to explain how it happens that those who govern the society can be publicly accused of corruption without creating a scandal, and how (according to the statement of a German writer) even the smallest children speak of business affairs using commercial terms unique to the trade, and how, by using those terms, they become greedy for money, and how the entire population is anxiously immersed in business and commerce, and how everything is measured and valued according to its usefulness and earning potential.

The religious principle of the sects exalts the individual in every way; there is no respect for authority. In fact, the tendency to free oneself from all forms of authority is instilled and encouraged from the religion itself. In America, this tendency penetrates to all religious, social, and political relations. This influences the raising of children within a family and in schools, as well as domestic relations, and public and private morality. I leave it to you to imagine the outcome, since it is already too terrible and delicate of a topic if I had to enter into a detailed exposition of this subject with facts and evidence.

In order to not dwell too long on these issues (which I mention only to lay the groundwork for my principal argument), I will just mention the observations of an American author, Dr. Nevin⁶ (a professor of theology at the reformed seminary of Mercersburg in Pennsylvania, a place that suffers greatly because they do not have the true church) who describes in such great detail the sectarian spirit and all of its consequences that his description alone is enough to acquaint us with the religious and social condition of the Protestant society in which he lived.

“The church,” he says, “in the deep sense of the apostolic symbol, is an object of faith. It cannot be just a concept or an abstraction. The disgrace of our times is that this faith has been abandoned in such a way that a few

6. John Williamson Nevin (1803–86) was a Presbyterian minister and academic in southern Pennsylvania who converted to the German Reformed Church. The “reformed seminary” that Reisach mentions is the seminary associated with the German Reformed Church at Mercersburg, Pennsylvania. Nevin taught theology both there and at the Church’s Marshall College, where he would later be president. Along with Phillip Schaff (1819–93), Nevin was central in forming and forwarding the Mercersburg theology—a reaction against American revivalism and individualism toward a more unified, catholic view of the church and salvation rooted largely in the Apostle’s Creed. See Richard E. Wentz, *John Williamson Nevin: American Theologian* (New York: Oxford, 1997).

believe that it is anti-Christian to confess the ancient church by repeating the saying, 'I believe in the one holy Catholic Church.' They deny this article and explain it in a gnostic sense as a sign of the anti-Christ. Our entire religion suffers because of this defect and the church is deprived of its own true force. One finds everywhere that the all of the sects recognize Christ, but that he does not have a true identity. As a natural result, one cannot attribute a substantive reality to the church either. Without this, there is a lack of faith in the church as a real institution that supernaturally and permanently exists in this world. The sects recognize that there is a church, but the church that they recognize cannot exist in the world in the true sense of a living organism living and growing from its ancient origins. For them, the Christian society is an aggregate of living atoms from which every person feels drawn by themselves and for themselves toward Christ. They suppose that Christ does not have an actual church in the world, rather an invisible or spiritual Christianity. Men can then access any form of this Christianity that pleases them through the Bible. The spirit of the sects does not believe in a universal church, but believes that this is simply a papist expression devoid of reality because it cannot be applied to his fake church that exists in the clouds (or at the very most in the Bible). From this it follows that the holy ministry is not held in very high regard, nor the sacraments, or worship in general. The anti-Christian spirit is displayed in the disrespect for tradition and any kind of authority. It is impossible to believe in a tangible church if at the same time one does not also recognize that the divine life of God incarnate continues in the church and that the church is not a monotone and sterile tradition, but a vital organism of everlasting life for all ages. Faith in a living Christ makes it impossible for any Christian to disregard the church of times past or the one of the present time because He acts through the church and is continually present in it. It is fundamental to the sects to disrespect any ecclesiastical authority from the early church. They don't want to hear the church say that in the Bible you hear the voice of men. They believe that it is God himself who speaks in the Bible and who speaks directly and personally and to each person individually. Because of this, they believe in the Bible and not in the church, and they reduce the Christian religion to a subjective communication about the supernatural life. Everything is reduced to an unparalleled dualism: on one hand there is man, and on the other, God, and the two are in abstract opposition. The communication between God and man is magical and fantastical rather than concrete and historical. The church is nothing more than an idea, the sacraments are empty symbols, the Bible is a meteorite that fell out of the sky, and the process of the redemption of mankind is reduced to nothing more than

a magic trick whereby God brings about the conversion of man by some kind of invisible force. The piety that follows that kind of conversion is limited to a certain time and place and can never bring harmony into a person's life. Religion that today seems to have the power to move heaven and earth won't have the power or the will to sanctify even the warehouse or the bureau tomorrow. For the sects, science, art, and social interaction are more or less profane. Their restlessness, impatience, impetuosity, eccentricity, and tendencies toward the extreme and fanaticism are also manifested under the form of calmest bigotry.⁷ This is how a Protestant theologian speaks about the American sects. It is no wonder that the spirit that is demonstrated in these sects has provoked numerous reactions, one of which is Mormonism, which I will now begin to explain to you.

It has not been my intention to explain the particular dogmas and doctrines professed by the Mormons, in which one will see a meaningless hodgepodge of the strangest opinions, and a certain eclecticism (which could be termed utilitarian because it has been created to get closer to and to accommodate the circumstances created by the doctrines which are in force in the Protestant world). Neither can it be said that they have a repository of faith or a complete doctrine for every point, since their principle of continual inspiration to their prophet excludes any stability in their teachings and allows for variation in the doctrine. Therefore, there is not even faith in particular points of belief. Instead, their source of pride is that in their system, faith ceases in order to give place to a perfect science that comes to them by the means of the above mentioned continuous inspiration. The most important thing for them is to have a church (that is, an institution) that is designed to remove the dualism between man and God, or between religion and public life. At this point, I will narrow my argument in which I will attempt to explain how Mormonism originated from the Protestant sects. I know that you will find in it a confirmation of the fundamental principles of the Catholic Church and convincing proof that only she is able to satisfy all of the religious and social needs of man and of society.

7. Jörg's history included several excerpts from Nevin's writings. It is difficult to find a direct quote from a Nevin source, but Jörg got Nevin's thought from the German periodical *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*. As he does with other authors, Reisach is paraphrasing Nevin's thought more than directly quoting from it. The subject matter can be found in an 1846 sermon entitled "The Church" and an 1848 sermon that was later published as "Anti-Christ, or the Spirit of Sect and Schism." Similar themes are elucidated in *Catholic Unity* (1844). For a collection of these and other of Nevin's writings, see James Hastings Nichols, ed., *The Mercersburg Theology* (New York: Oxford, 1966).

In opposition to all of the naturalistic systems, the Mormons admit the need for divine revelation in order for man to know with certainty the way to eternal salvation. They admit that such revelations are found in the Bible, which they believe is inspired. They agree with the Catholic Church on these two points. But they also add their Book of Mormon to the Bible. In fact, they prefer it, considering it to be a pure and perfect revelation. On the other hand, according to them, the sacred scripture has been altered and corrupted, so there was a need for a new compilation, which they have prepared but not yet printed. However, they do not consider revelation to be finished and complete or to be confined to these books of theirs, but believe that revelation continues through their prophet. Therefore, not even the inspired doctrines of the founder and first prophet of the sect (which are collected and expounded in their *Doctrines [sic] and Covenants*) can close the canon of their revealed doctrine. They are continually adding new revelation through the mouth of successive prophets *according to the needs of the people and the church*. According to the Mormons, this continuation of revelation is the reason why their knowledge of spiritual and heavenly things supersedes that of all the other Christians. The prophet is not even bound by tradition, and therefore, with time, he might produce doctrine inspired by his predecessors or by himself. His authority is living and his inspiration is a constant gift; at every moment he has the ability to proclaim the current will of God with complete independence from the past. The prophet is given the right to receive these obligatory revelations for everyone: this monopoly on revelation is the fundamental principle of their doctrine, even their chief cornerstone, on which rests the entire social, religious and political basis of Mormonism.

If we were to ask how in the world such a false theory was able to grow out of the American Protestant sects, Parley Pratt (the foremost theologian of Mormonism)⁸ would defend this principle of continuous revelation against the other Protestant sects by responding, “Why do the existing churches follow such different paths and have such different doctrines? Why do they need entire libraries of sermons, of treatises, of books full of controversy, of proofs, of opinions, which is just the reasoning of man? There are two reasons for this blindness: the first is the belief of man that

8. Parley P. Pratt (1807–57) was a Reformed Baptist preacher who converted to Mormonism in 1830 and became a member of the leading Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Among the most active of missionaries, Pratt was a pioneer in using newspapers, tracts, and books for Mormon evangelization. See Parley P. Pratt, *The Autobiography of Parley Parker Pratt*, ed. Parley P. Pratt Jr. (New York: Russell Brothers, 1874); and Peter Crawley, “Parley P. Pratt: The Father of Mormon Pamphleteering,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 15 (Autumn 1982): 13–26.

personal, divine revelation from the Holy Spirit is not necessary except in the very early days of the church. Therefore, they have tried to understand the doctrine of the holy scriptures with their own knowledge, which one can never understand except through the spirit of truth. The second reason is that having lost the spirit of divine inspiration, they began to offer and establish their own opinions and explanations of the word of God instead of believing the things that are written. By distancing themselves from the literal meaning of the scriptures, anyone's interpretation is as good as the next person's. In order to understand something from the holy scriptures, there must first be a clear and infallible method for interpretation, without which one is lost in a spirit of uncertainty and doubt; ever learning, but never coming to a knowledge of the truth. By neglecting this rule, men found themselves in a state of great ignorance and perturbation despite their research in the libraries. In fact, there will always be uncertainty when man is left to change the word of God or to explain it in a spiritual way, with uncertainty and arbitrarily. The Bible, therefore, would be of all books the one whose value is the least certain. It would have been better for man if God had not revealed anything than a book that left them uncertain and doubtful and which obligated him to continually dispute about its contents."⁹ This is how, with perfect reasoning, this Mormon professor refutes Protestantism.

9. The quote is from Pratt's *A Voice of Warning*, which Reisach copied from pages 506–7 of Jörg's history. Concerning the book, Peter Crawley has written,

Voice of Warning was not quite the first Mormon missionary tract or the first outline of the tenets of the Latter-day Saints, but it was the first to emphasize the differences between Mormonism and orthodox Christianity. It established a formula for describing the church's basic doctrines, and it included biblical proof-texts, arguments, and examples which would be used by Mormon pamphleteers for a hundred years. (Peter Crawley, *A Descriptive Bibliography of the Mormon Church, Volume One, 1830–1847* [Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1997], 71)

Reisach is lifting the quote from Jörg, who had obtained a German translation of *A Voice of Warning* that was published in Hamburg by the German-speaking Mormon Daniel Carn (1802–72), who was then serving as president of the German Mission. Therefore, it is possible that Reisach's quote may be corrupted by the multiple translations it went through. See Parley P. Pratt, *Eine Stimme der Warnung und Belehrung für alle Völker* (Hamburg: Nestler und Melle, 1853); David J. Whittaker, "Early Mormon Pamphleteering" (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1982; BYU Studies, 2003), 18; and Crawley, "Father of Mormon Pamphleteering," 13–26. The text that Jörg is paraphrasing is as follows in the original English edition:

Mormonism was forced to resort to continuous revelation through their infallible, inspired prophet because of the state in which Protestantism in America had been changed from the natural development of its principles. The prophet's authority had to exclude the Protestant religious individualism that had divided the society into innumerable sects (which are limited to a few revealed truths, have substituted a positive and revealed religion with pure naturalism and philosophy, and will never be able to create or conserve a true religious society).

During the Reformation, there was no attempt to restrict the authority to a certain number of people who were trained teachers to the rest of the members of the religious community. In fact, the Irvingites of England entirely rejected the churches of the Reformation because they were not able to find true authority in any of the existing sects, and founded their own new church based on their Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. No one

“Whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our profit and learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope.” Now, suppose a friend from a distance should write us a letter, making certain promises to us on certain conditions, which if obtained, would be greatly to our profit and advantage, of course it might be said the letter was written for our profit and learning that through patience and comfort of the letter we might have hope to obtain the things promised. Now, if we clearly understood the letter, and knew what to expect, then it would afford us comfort and hope, whereas, if there was any doubt or uncertainty on our minds in the understanding of the same, then could we derive no certain comfort or hope from the things written, not knowing what to hope for; consequently the letter would not profit us at all. And so it is with the Scriptures. No prophecy or promise will profit the reader, or produce patience, comfort or hope in his mind, until clearly understood, that he may know precisely what to hope for. Now the predictions of the Prophets can be clearly understood, as much so as the almanac, when it foretells an eclipse, or else in the Bible of all books is of most doubtful usefulness. Far better would it have been for mankind if the great Author of our existence had revealed nothing to His fallen creatures, than to have revealed a book which would leave them in doubt and uncertainty, to contend with one another, from age to age, respecting the meaning of its contents. That such uncertainty and contention have existed for ages, none will deny. The wise and learned have differed and do still widely differ, from each other, in the understanding of prophecy. Whence then this difference? Either Revelation itself is deficient, or else the fault is in mankind. But to say Revelation is deficient would be to charge God foolishly; God forbid, the fault must be in man. There are two great causes for this blindness, which I will now show. (Parley P. Pratt, *A Voice of Warning* [New York: W. Sandford, 1837], 11–15)

can deny that in this attempt, as with that of the Mormons, that there is testimony borne of the truth of Catholic principles. And how much more valuable is this testimony when borne by these sects (which consider the Catholic Church to be the church of the anti-Christ) when they embrace the very principles of the Catholic Church, confessing that these same principles are naturally the only ones on which one can establish a church which is in accordance to the purposes of God and to the needs of men. In fact, recognizing a living, authoritative, infallible leader entrusted to guide men, recognizing him as necessary in order to receive divine revelation so that all men can be united in a spiritual society with similar thoughts and desires—this is the same as recognizing Catholic beliefs. The Mormons rely on continuous and *new* communicated revelation according to the present needs, which comes *directly* to their prophet. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, has a human leader who is able to maintain, explain, apply and disseminate the revelation of God (through the continual assistance of the Holy Spirit, which was promised to the church until the end of time) without having to receive continuous, new revelation. The revelations from God were given to the world as a precious gift, complete and perfect, and are made eternal and available to men through the ecclesiastic ministry of the church *loquens patribus in prophetis novissime diebus istis loquutus est nobis in Filio*.¹⁰ Mormonism recognizes that it is necessary to have a leader who has evident authority from God and who teaches the will of God to men without error. In fact, by restricting and by *monopolizing* (if I may call it that) the role of the infallible leader to the prophet only, they recognize the need to have one person who holds the privilege of infallibility in order to maintain unity and to prevent schisms.

But how is it that the Mormons prove and legitimize the divine origin of their scriptures, the divine authority of their prophet, and the continuous revelation that comes from him?

Certainly answering such a question is not a simple task, but it was necessary for the Mormons to do if they wanted to declare themselves as the one and only true church of God. It was difficult for this pseudo-church to legitimize itself because it had to assert that it was an entirely new institution, since the Mormons consider that all other churches (both ancient and modern) are corrupt and full of paganism, and would be better described as churches of the anti-Christ rather than of Christ. Other pious and fanatic sects in America and Europe profess the same belief, because, as I already noted, they could not bring themselves to accept the invisible church of

10. “Who . . . spake . . . unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son”—an excerpt from Hebrews 1:1–2.

the Reformers, nor could they be persuaded that the church could become visible with the addition of saints and the justification of all individuals, which requires an external existing religious society. Therefore, these sects resorted to a new effusion of the Holy Spirit, which they believed had come to their founders and to successive ministers until all of the faithful had received these gifts of the spirit. They believe that this is the same spirit that was given to the Apostles in the primitive Christian church and then was subsequently lost because of sin and a defection from the true faith. Even the first prophet, Joe Smith, and his colleagues were forced to resort to this method of legitimization, but in America this did not seem strange or unusual. For example, in the Methodist meetings it is believed that the Holy Spirit descended and manifested its arrival with visible effects, which are frequently compared to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In that manner, when a large assembly of Mormons was convened for the solemn creation of their church, they behaved as the Methodist congregations do (in which everyone is filled with frenzies) and the supposed descent of the Holy Spirit was displayed in the most unusual and clamorous manner. The Mormons believed that through this, the presence and restoration of the ancient gifts of the Holy Spirit had come through their new church. The prophet knew how to take advantage of this situation by professing that he had seen a vision in which Satan had mixed his inspirations with those of the Holy Ghost. Because of this, Mr. Joseph Smith, Junior, alone claimed to have the privilege to communicate with angels. Everyone else, under threat of divine retribution, is obligated to obey him as they would the voice of the Most High every time that he shall communicate his instructions with the words "Thus saith the Lord."

I do not wish to bore you too long with a description of the frenzies and deceptions of this sect and its leaders. But I cannot help but point out how the Mormons go to great lengths using every kind of fraud and great cleverness in order to conform themselves to the opinions and fables dispersed in America through its sacred history by fabricating a history of ancient America. They use this book in order to show how their sect is consistent with the numerous eras of divine revelation, and in this way, they explain their origins. It seems to me that even this undertaking was led by a hidden (and possibly involuntary) sentiment that is based on a Catholic principle.

There are no written historical documents as a record of America, but seeing as how the Americans would like to be able to glory in an ancient history of their own, American archeologists are in the business of fabricating hypotheses about the numerous monuments and antiquities preserved in Central America. In fact, they use these to prove that

the indigenous American people at one time had an extremely advanced culture, from which they decayed and were eventually reduced to the savage state in which they find themselves today. It is the general and public opinion among Americans that these indigenous people are of Eastern descent and originate specifically from Palestine and are of the Jewish origin. Others wish to prove that the monuments originated from the ancient Egyptians. Others date the origins of the first inhabitants to the Flood, if not to the Creation of the world. As early as 1812, a man named Spaulding, a merchant and preacher in various sects, wrote a historical novel titled *Manuscript Found*, in which he recounts in a biblical style how he came to be acquainted with the traditions of the ancient American people.¹¹ This book remained unpublished, but fell into the hands of a certain man named Rigdon,¹² son of a printer and then later a colleague of the first prophet of the Mormons, Joe Smith. The latter then professed to have found the Book of Mormon in a hill, written in Egyptian characters on golden plates. Mormon was the father of Moroni, the last prophet of these ancient indigenous people, who, before the final catastrophe that his people suffered, gathered together the writings of their prophets. As you can imagine, this book is the aforementioned historical novel by Spaulding with various additions and scriptural texts inserted by Smith and Rigdon, who invented the most foolish stories in order to hide this obvious fraud.¹³

11. Reisach is referring to “Manuscript Found,” an 1812 unpublished work by Solomon Spaulding (1761–1816). The narrative is a fictional story that includes fourth-century Romans traveling to precontact America. Being informed by the disaffected Philastus Hurlbut, Mormon antagonist and newspaper editor Eber D. Howe referenced “Manuscript Found” in his *Mormonism Unveiled* (1834) with the intention of disproving Joseph Smith’s account of the Book of Mormon’s origins by arguing that the Book of Mormon was a literary pastiche of Spaulding’s narrative. The manuscript was rediscovered in 1884 and is now housed in the Oberlin College Library. For a complete transcription of the text and the history surrounding its history in anti-Mormon literature, see Solomon Spaulding, *Manuscript Found: The Complete Original “Spaulding Manuscript,”* ed. Kent P. Jackson (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1996).

12. Sidney Rigdon (1793–1876) was a prominent Reformed Baptist (Campbellite) minister who converted to Mormonism in 1830 and became a major figure of early Mormonism. His father, William Rigdon (1761–1810), was not a printer but a farmer in northeastern Maryland and later in southwestern Pennsylvania. See Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon: A Portrait of Religious Excess* (Salt Lake City: Signature, 1994), 3–6.

13. Drawn from the following excerpt:

Unter dem Titel „Gefundenes Manuscript“ hatte ein gewisser S. Spaulding, der sich bald als Sekten-Prediger, bald als Handelsmann

This is the very Bible of the Mormons, which tells of the destiny of the Jewish inhabitants of America. It also affords the West the privilege of having seen the promised Messiah, none other than Christ, who, after completing his work in Jerusalem in Palestine, came to America in order to fulfill his mission to the scattered Jews (who had progressed much further than those in the eastern part of the ancient world). Because of the visit of the resurrected Redeemer, a flourishing and grandiose Christian kingdom was formed there. But gradual apostasy destroyed the entire foundation created by Christ. All that remains of the ancient inhabitants is the Indians, who are completely uncivilized and live submersed in the darkest paganism. With this history in hand (if such a fable merits such a title), the Mormons feel a connection with the elect people of God and with Jesus Christ. In order to further legitimize their mission (already evidenced by the copious display of spiritual gifts manifest at the establishment of their church) and in order to justify formal succession, the Mormon theologians point to the doctrine of *living witnesses*. As the *Doctrines [sic] and Covenants* (the official book of Mormon doctrine) attests, the spirits of *Moses and Elias* were present at Smith's second baptism as witnesses, and are representatives of Judaism, as well as the Apostles Peter, James, and John, who represent the governing body of the first Christian church. The latter were not just spirits, but alive in their bodies because according to their doctrine, they never died. These men were the founding fathers of the new church. There are also three additional living witnesses from the church established by Christ in America who travel together with John to all the nations of the world and visit the saints among the Mormons. The more faithful and perfect the obedience of the people, the sooner these four witnesses will appear publicly to announce that victory over the pagans is near. In fact, they maintain that there is a connection and a succession

herumtrieb, in der an indianischen Antiquitäten, Höhlen und Gräften reichen Stadt Salem die historischen Sagen Amerika's zu einem dicken Buche in alttestamentlicher Sprache und biblischer Form verarbeitet (um 1812), ohne jedoch dasselbe zum Drucke bringen zu können. Für den jetzigen Eigner des Werkes, Rigdon, konnte nichts gelegener kommen, als Smith's Fund, d. i. der schwärmerisch abergläubliche Nimbus für die literarische Publikation, welche er projektirt hatte. . . . Dort saß der Prophet mit den Platten und dem wunderbaren Urim and Thummim, durch das er die neuägyptische Inschrift lesen und übersetzen konnte; das heißt, er diktierte Spaulding's Roman mit eingewebten eigenen Zusätzen, Bibelstellen, Auszügen und Paraphrasen, und so entstand das „Buch Mormon“. (Jörg, *Geschichte des Protestantismus*, 528)

from the ancient Christian churches of the East to the church in the West with the Mormons.¹⁴

Perhaps you will laugh and scoff when you hear these impudent fables. They seem to have been invented mainly to stimulate the pride and interest that Americans have in antiquity, as well as to provide this new sect with historical precedence. These stories have not failed to make an impression on a few ignorant souls, who, in the sectarian dualism are deprived of any nourishment to the mind or heart. But the Mormon founders and theologians sense quite well that a true church, as they understand it, needs to have a historical basis. To be Christian, it would also need to have a connection to Christ and to the people elected by God who preserved the revelations of the primitive church and its prophetic testimonies, in which the Messiah promised them that the kingdom of God would be established in the world. It seems to me, therefore, that the greatest error in this Mormon roguery is their attempt to cloak real truths (which carry significant power), because by admitting that one point is true, one is naturally forced to admit that another point related to the first is also true. In the Catholic Church, there is a priesthood and a royal empire that is alive, authoritative, and visible through its leaders in the Bishopric and the infallible Head. These things were received by the Apostles from God and continue

14. Here, Reisach is largely lifting from Jörg, who writes,

Sie stellten zum Zwecke lebendiger historischen Succession die Lehre von den „alten Zeugen“ auf. Schon bei der zweiten Taufe Smiths, des Propheten, am 15. Mai 1829, erschienen, laut der officiellen Mormonen-Dogmatik „Doctrines and Covenants“, als Taufzeugen die Geister von Moses und Elias, in der Eigenschaft von Repräsentanten des Judenthums, dann die Apostel Petrus, Jakobus und Johannes, welche „die Regierung der ersten christlichen Kirche“ vertraten, und zwar die letztern nicht als Geister, sondern leibhaft, denn sie sind nach der Mormonenlehre niemals gestorben. Sie standen bei der neuen oder zweiten Kirche zu Gevatter; dabei hatte es aber noch nicht sein Bewenden. Auch von der durch Christus in Amerika gegründeten Kirche blieben drei Zeugen des Todes überhoben; mit dem Evangelisten Johannes vereinigt durchwandern die Vier in leibhafter Menschengestalt, unter den Kleidertrachten und mit den Sprachen der verschiedenen Völker, alle Länder der Erde; bei einzelnen Heiligen der Mormonen haben sie schon persönlich Besuch gemacht, und je treuer der Gehorsam ist, mit dem die neue Kirche ihrem Ziele entgegengeführt wird, desto bälde werden die vier Zeugen vor allem Volk auf der Kanzel auftreten und ihm den großen Triumph über die „Heiden“ ansagen. Inzwischen ist durch sie die Verbindung und Succession mit der weiland ostchristlichen und der weiland westchristlichen Kirche hergestellt und unterhalten. (Jörg, *Geschichte des Protestantismus*, 518–19)

in an uninterrupted succession, which is irrefutably testified by reliable evidence of every kind throughout the history of the entire Christian era. This historical testimony of the true succession is an essential characteristic of the Catholic Church, because from it there is an intimate connection with the Apostles, which has existed in all ages, and is manifested as Apostolic and United, even throughout all time. In this manner, its actual and current existence represents and proves its continual existence for all of the previous centuries until the coming of Jesus Christ, the mediator of the New Testament, who fulfilled the prophecies given to the elect Jewish people.

The Mormon Church considers the prophet the supreme authority regarding doctrine and that his authority is from God. Because of this, everyone must believe and obey him without examining the revelations given by the mouth of this prophet. Therefore, it is only natural that they also attribute to him the high priesthood and supreme authority over the religious society that is formed on principles of authority and obedience. In this way, Mormonism is essentially different from the societies created on the principles of the Reformation, as it rejects the idea of the universal priesthood. Instead, the priesthood is not just an ambiguous surface organization, but is an essential and constructive part of the organization, and one that is dictated entirely according to the divine revelations of the supreme ruler. Mormonism has a great hierarchy divided into numerous orders and gradations, all of which are centered on the prophet (everyone who is chosen to participate in the priesthood hierarchy receives his authority through the prophet—either directly or indirectly—and exercises this power by virtue of his holy ministry). In all of this, Mormonism closely resembles the Catholic Church and therefore bears clear testimony that these principles, according to which God has established his true church, are fully conformed to the nature of a true and genuine religious organization.

I will now turn to my final point, as I realize that I have already worn out your patience and gracious attention. How has this aforementioned religious and ecclesiastical system affected the societal and political lives of Mormons? I must respond to this question in order to demonstrate how this sect has tried to compensate for the terrible consequences of the Reformation in regards to American society and to show how this reaffirms the truth of Catholicism.

In Europe as well as in America, there are common complaints among Protestants that their church exercises little or no influence on their lives: while the church may be concerned with the spirit world, the temporal and earthly things are left by the wayside, as if they did not even exist.

Mr. Christopher Hoffmann,¹⁵ a Protestant and founder of a new Hebraized sect in Württemberg, said, “It cannot be the true church if it does not provide for the happiness of the congregation. It is a contradiction for Christianity to assure eternal happiness but then not be able to satisfy the temporal needs of men.” One of the main objectives of Mormonism is to regulate its society to in order to benefit everyone. At the same time, it also attributes societal evils to all of the Christian churches, or even to the general spirit of Christianity. Mormons consider civil society to belong to the essence of the church so that it is neither separate nor distinct from the religious society, and the religious authority of the prophet is the same as his supreme authority over their public affairs. He regulates and directs the private, social, and political life of the Mormons with the same independence and universality with which his authority embraces their religious affairs. Furthermore, all of the laws and regulations that direct the actions of the men are aimed at the communal end of the public life

15. Christopher Hoffman (1815–85) was the organizer of a radical pietistic conventicle called, first, the “Congregation of God’s People in Jerusalem,” and then the “Temple Fellowship.” A millenarian sect, the Templars were driven out of the Lutheran Church in 1859 and later emigrated to Palestine, where they established settlements near Jerusalem in preparation for the millennial *Parousia*. While the Temple Societies were first founded in the United States, Russia, Germany, Switzerland, and France, the first actual temple colonies were built later in 1869 in Jaffa, then later in other Palestinian locations. Concerning the origins of his ambitious project, Hoffman wrote the following:

The turmoil strengthened me in my belief that the work of Christ and the Apostles while on the earth had been built on faith in the Prophecies of the Old Testament Prophets of Israel. These prophecies concerned mainly the founding of the Kingdom of God on earth. I became convinced that a revived religion and a new social order would have to be built, one goal, one aim for the Christian.

Then from several directions, mostly non-church groups, the question came: Where should this center be located? Since that had seemed unimportant to me, and irrelevant until then, I made a special study, to discover if a center were named in the prophecies. I found that some Prophets declared Jerusalem to be the center. Others mentioned Israel, that is, Palestine, to be the external manifestation of the Kingdom of God on this earth. . . . Henceforth, I would work for the gathering of the Children of God in Jerusalem. The sentinel should carry my message, my call to all people who willed to hear. (Christopher Hoffman, *Jerusalem Journey: The Autobiography of Christopher Hoffman 1815–1885*, trans. and abr. Gertrud Paulusreno, 94–95)

See Alex Carmel, “Christoph Hoffman,” *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 4th ed. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 3:1819–20.

and are ultimately based on the divine revelations received by the prophet. All actions in the society are therefore considered religious, and the Mormon community a perfect theocracy. It is evident that in such a society, there are no individual liberties in either the public or private sphere. In truth, the prophet even assigns wives to their husbands. This is no longer a religion that merely influences social relations and the state. No, the state and the church are all one, and the fulfillment of social obligations constitutes the practice of the religion.

For the Mormons, the sociopolitical sector of society and the entire social and private life in a civil community (which is directed at the common temporal and earthly happiness) is not just something that can be adapted, sanctified and encouraged by the religious spirit. No, their entire earthly community has the same objective of the church and the state: their system promises to establish heaven on earth. Their church (as opposed to the sectarian churches who are only concerned about the future life in the eternities) is a church that is only concerned about the things of this world. They know of no happiness apart from the present. This is the pure religion of materialism.¹⁶ The Mormon system exercises absolute control over, conquers, and even excludes the egotistical individualism that drives the Protestant sects of American society. But the principle of materialism, which is equally important in America, is maintained by the Mormons. The only difference is that among the other sects, the individual benefits from it, while among the Mormons, the entire socialist community benefits from it.¹⁷ A fundamental principle of the political society of the United States is to entirely separate the church from the state, or the natural order from the supernatural one. Contrary to this, Mormonism mixes and unifies the church with the state, imbues the natural with the supernatural order, as well as the supernatural with the natural order, transforming both into pure and simple materialism.¹⁸

16. Reisach is directly quoting Jörg on this point: “Die Mormonenkirche ist im schnurgeraden Gegensatz zu den Kirchen, die sich nur mit dem Jenseits abgeben, die Kirche, welche sich nur mit dem Dießseits abgibt; sie kennt gar keine jenseitige, von der dießseitigen unabhängige Glückseligkeit, mit andern Worten: sie ist pure die Religion des Materialismus.” Jörg, *Geschichte des Protestantismus*, 521.

17. “Letzterer ist hier niedergearbeitet, das Prinzip des Materialismus aber ist geblieben, nur mit dem Unterschied, daß dasselbe jetzt Allen in Gemeinschaft zu gute kommen soll.” Jörg, *Geschichte des Protestantismus*, 523.

18. “Sie hat nicht die natürliche Ordnung in die übernatürliche hineingezwungen, sondern umgekehrt die übernatürliche Ordnung in die natürliche. Nicht so fast die natürliche Ordnung ist hier um ihre Freiheit gekommen und zur Unnatur verkehrt wie bei andern Schwärmerkirchen, sondern umgekehrt ist es die übernatürliche Ordnung, welche in den Staub gezogen und zur Unnatur des

One might wonder how it is possible to find a confirmation of the truth of Catholicism in this horrendous and wicked religious, social, and political system. Without a doubt, there is both a direct and an indirect confirmation.

It is not Catholic doctrine that the church must be separated from the state. Instead, the two must converge in accordance with human society so that the social and public sectors of society are based upon the law of God, which the church promulgates, applies, and endorses through its canonized regulations. Because society is based on this foundation, it acquires the energy, force and consistency that only religion is able to provide to it. Without this, how can society assure its citizens the peace of mind that they seek on earth *ut quietam at tranquillam vitam habeant*.¹⁹

These principles are recognized by the Mormons and are applied in order to oppose the erroneous principles of other Protestant sects and to avoid their sad consequences. However, there is no doubt that they are poorly applied and that the perverse and erroneous application of these principles has produced a monstrous socialist theocracy characterized by the most shameful materialism.

The principles of the Reformation in their fullest development have produced a society that is unreligious, egotistic, materialistic and in every way about to slip into anarchy. But even more frightening is what we see in Mormonism from the misapplication of Catholic principles. It is clear that neither Protestantism, nor the attempts that have been made in its wake to remedy the destructive consequences of its reformatory principles have been able to resolve the great social questions that agitate the world. From all of this, one must deduce that such a privilege is reserved solely for the Catholic Church.

By distinguishing (but not completely separating nor entirely mixing) the church and the state, by directing (but not taking over nor destroying) the legitimate temporal power in its proper sphere, and by defending and preserving the liberty and independence of the divine power of the leader, priesthood, and empire in order to lead the faithful in the way toward eternal salvation, the Catholic Church has destroyed slavery and tyranny, has protected the true liberty of the people and of the

Materialismus verkehrt ist. . . . Daher ist auch ein Unterschied von kirchlich und staatlich nicht mehr möglich, sondern Kirche und Staat sind völlig Eins." Jörg, *Geschichte des Protestantismus*, 522–23.

19. "That [they] may lead a quiet and a peaceable life"—a phrase from 1 Timothy 2:2, wherein the author enjoins his reader to pray for those in earthly authority.

individual, and has sanctified and civilized human society. It also does not hesitate to continue to carry out this divine mission in the midst of the cruelest persecutions and the most powerful attacks.

We as Catholics are also spectators of these persecutions and attacks. Mormonism actively fights against our principles (all the more so in Europe) and thereby advances the war on the Catholic Church. Religious individualism attacks the divine authority of the church. Religious indifference and the idea of freedom of conscience in religion are prevalent. People want to separate the church from the state, which deprives the state of the beneficial influence of the church. They try to bind the church and take it into slavery, justifying the entire action with the chains of the omnipotent power of the independent state. In order to destroy the divine edifice, they concentrate all of their blows on bringing down the cornerstone. And because God wanted him who brought the keys of the kingdom of heaven also to be earthly King, thus in his kingdom, he and his church are made completely free and independent. The social and political order founded on the basis of the gospel would be preserved for all nations and a society which is truly Christian. One needs to raise the royal crown to him in order to be able to secularize his state and all of the human societies.

These are all vain attempts! Because it is the work of man, Mormonism will fail: if not because of American influence, then by internal schisms. It will be dissolved by its own iniquity and the monstrosity of its doctrines. The Catholic Church and His Holiness the Pope will conquer and remain unchanged, sustained as the work of God through his infallible truth and omnipotent arm. The Lord God has already given to the great and most merciful Successor to Peter divine wisdom to shine in the darkness of deceptions, hypocrisy, and in the frightening disturbances of the mind, solemn stability, and fearless courage that imposes itself on the strong ones of the earth and transforms defenseless supports into bulwarks of justice. Under the guidance of their pastors, millions of faithful around the world raise their voices to protest against the wicked robbery of their estate, and to gather unanimously together around the same Father for comfort and against abuse and calamities. This proves very convincingly that charity and divine authority come only from one faith whereby society is able to conserve within itself the principles and energy necessary to maintaining and reestablishing a social and political order that is truly Christian. *Portae inferi non praevalerunt.*²⁰

20. "The gates of hell shall not prevail." Matthew 16:18.