

# **In the Shadow of the *Kulturkampf*:**

**Perceptions of the *Milderungsgesetzen* in Dutch Catholic media, from 1880 to 1884**

**Thomas Kerstens**

## **Abstract**

This is a transnational research on the way Dutch Catholic media perceived the *Kulturkampf* in Germany from 1880 to 1884. This dissertation examines two Dutch Catholic newspapers and one magazine to explain three things. Firstly, what the main motives of Dutch Catholic media were to report on German social struggles after 1880. Secondly, how the *Milderungsgesetzen* – that were intended to end this social struggle – influenced the content of the reports of Dutch Catholic media. Thirdly, to what extent the German social struggles were put in an international perspective by these media. The conclusion adds to the debate that questions the nineteenth century as the ‘age of the nation state’.

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## Introduction

Religion has been instrumental to the study of nation states and the shaping of Western-European democracies in the nineteenth century. In it the German *Kulturkampf* stands central. During this culture war from 1871 to 1878 the German government passed the May Laws – anti-Catholic laws that raised heavy resistance from Catholic citizens. This struggle spread across multiple Western-European states, suggesting that a crisis of political legitimacy of the Roman Catholic Church was embroiled throughout the entire continent. Helmut Walser Smith stressed that, ‘cultural struggles between modern states and the Catholic Church occurred throughout Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century.’<sup>1</sup> Timothy Verhoeven expanded the geographical reach of the Church-state struggle and compared the cases of nineteenth century France and the United States in *Transatlantic Anti-Catholicism*. Owen Chadwick called this era the ‘last years of Catholic power in Europe’.<sup>2</sup> The political struggle of Catholicism grew more apparent at the end of the nineteenth century as Catholic political parties were established in different European countries.

Research on the culture wars of the late nineteenth century has tended to focus on case studies confined to national borders, including the Netherlands. However, Henk te Velde, challenged this dominant tradition in an article on political transfer, in which he emphasized how Herman Schaepman, the foremost nineteenth century leader of the Dutch Catholic State Party (DCSP), was largely inspired by German Catholic politician Ludwig Windthorst and his Centre Party.<sup>3</sup> The party programme of the DCSP – formulated by Schaepman – was based on a German example and therefore affirmed an international dimension in political development. Pieter de Coninck undertook similar research by focusing on the influence of a foreign political event on

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<sup>1</sup> Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Ideology, Politics 1870-1914* (Princeton, 1995), pp. 19-23.

<sup>2</sup> Owen Chadwick, *A History of the Popes 1830-1914* (Oxford 1998), p. 95.

<sup>3</sup> Henk te Velde, ‘Political Transfer: an Introduction’, *European Review of History*, vol. 12, no. 2, (2005), pp. 205-221.

Dutch society. In *Een Les uit Pruisen*, de Coninck analysed the ways in which the German *Kulturkampf* was perceived by Dutch media from 1871 to 1880, thereby adding a bottom-up dimension to the concept of political transfer.<sup>4</sup>

The research of te Velde and De Coninck brought a new originality to the field by emphasizing the transnational aspect of the *Kulturkampf*. The particular national struggle between Catholics and the German nation state influenced other countries politically and mentally.<sup>5</sup> The case of Herman Schaepman showed how the *Kulturkampf* had a dimension of what Paolo Pombeni called ‘political transfer’: a process in which political experiences from one country are considered valuable in another. This political experience is then imported and inspires development and progress in the other domestic political system. The same accounted for the German Catholic political experiences that greatly influenced the Dutch political system.<sup>6</sup> De Coninck showed how a German course of events not only had political effect in the Netherlands, it also affected Dutch Catholic mentality. The German *Kulturkampf* created a sentiment of fear amongst Dutch Catholics, best expressed by the Catholic media. As one paper wrote: ‘one day a similar situation will arise in our country’.<sup>7</sup> Transnational methods try to explain how, for example, states, societies and economies were, ‘constructed in the movement between places, sites, and regions’, and according to Pièrre-Yves Saunier, transnational perspectives contribute to the following three aspects of historical research.<sup>8</sup> First, it is focussed on contacts between communities and how these contacts ‘waxed’ and ‘waned’. Second, this type of research acknowledges foreign influence on the domestic features of societies and the projection of domestic features into the foreign. Thirdly, a transnational point of view includes people, groups

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<sup>4</sup> Pieter de Coninck, *Een les uit Pruisen: Nederland en de Kulturkampf 1870-1880* (Hilversum 2005), p. 332.

<sup>5</sup> te Velde, ‘Political Transfer’, pp. 205-221.

<sup>6</sup> Paolo Pombeni, ‘Political models and Political transfer in the shaping of Europe’, *European Review of History*, Issue 12, Volume 2 (2005), pp. 223-225.

<sup>7</sup> de Coninck, *Een les uit Pruisen*, p. 332.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* 1444.

and organisations that lived through the processes of contact, using them as units of historical research.<sup>9</sup>

Despite the excellent work being done to place Dutch Catholicism and its interactions with the *Kulturkampf* in a transnational perspective, there are still important gaps in our history of this phenomenon. De Coninck's research did focus on the influence of German political effects on Dutch Catholics but did not include the entire period of 'contact'; his research ends with the year 1880.<sup>10</sup> However, the *Kulturkampf* was not over yet at that time, its official end was 1887, when the German Government passed the so-called Peace Laws.<sup>11</sup> Although de Coninck's research looks further into Saunier's emphasis on the 'waxing' and 'waning' of contacts between communities, it seems to end rather abruptly. The *Kulturkampf* reached its pinnacle with anti-Catholic laws passed from 1873, called the May Laws, but it was far from over by 1880. In 1880, 1882 and 1883 the German government passed a series of so-called *Milderungsgesetzen* (Laws of Mitigation) to gradually abolish the May Laws. These laws paved the road for the Peace Laws from 1887.<sup>12</sup> Historiography on the *Kulturkampf* and perceptions of it in other countries has largely left out the role of the *Milderungsgesetzen*.

This dissertation is focussed on the perception of Dutch Catholic media during the end of the *Kulturkampf* from 1880 to 1884. Although other segments of society stopped reporting on the *Kulturkampf* after 1875, the Catholics did not. This provides us with a valuable source base for investigating the Dutch Catholic perception of the *Milderungsgesetzen*. Dutch Catholic media will be central to this dissertation in the form of three sources. The first being *Time (de Tijd)*, a newspaper established in 1845 in order to provide news to Catholics and make them aware of

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<sup>9</sup> Pi re-Yves Saunier, *Transnational History* (New York 2013), p. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Coninck, *Een les uit Pruisen*, p. 332.

<sup>11</sup> Heinrich August Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen: Deutsche Geschichte vom Ende des alten Reiches bis zum Untergang der weimarer Republik* (M nchen 2002), pp. 247-249.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

their emancipatory rights in Dutch society. By 1880, the paper had established itself as a newspaper for the upper echelons of Catholic society and had around 2,300 subscriptions. It was circulated nationally around three times a week.<sup>13</sup> The second source base is *de Tilburgse Courant*, a newspaper established in 1865 to provide its readers in the southern province of Noord-Brabant with moral, Catholic, news. Around 1880 it was one of the dominant newspapers in the province with around 500 subscriptions in the east of Noord-Brabant.<sup>14</sup> Thirdly, the *Catholic Illustration (de Katholieke Illustratie)*, the leading magazine for Dutch Catholics since 1867, will be consulted. This magazine was a dominant part of Dutch Catholic domestic life, appearing weekly with a steady circulation of 30,000 editions in 1880.<sup>15</sup> A comparison between *Time* and the *Illustration* on one hand and *de Tilburgse courant* on the other can show the differences between nationally-read newspapers and regional newspapers. The *Catholic Illustration* provides an extra dimension as it was published weekly.

The newspapers and magazine mentioned above will be used to answer the following question: to what extent did the *Kulturkampf* remain an important influence on the Dutch Catholic mentality from 1880 to 1884? The answer to this question adds further explanation to the current historiographical debate, which ends abruptly in 1880, and will be answered by three sub-questions. Firstly, what were the main motives of Dutch Catholic media in reporting on the *Kulturkampf* from 1880 to 1884? This fits into Saunier's view on a transnational approach to history as the newspapers researched experienced the entire period of transition in Germany. Second, how did Dutch Catholic media specifically receive the *Milderungsgesetzen* from 1880 to 1884? Or in other words: how did the correspondence on German societal struggles wax and wane?

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<sup>13</sup> Nic Schrama, *Dagblad De Tijd, 1845-1974* (Nijmegen 1996), pp. 110-140.

<sup>14</sup> 'Geschiedenis van het Brabants Dagblad' [[http://bdinternet.sohosted.com/av/geschiedenis/gesch\\_tb.asp](http://bdinternet.sohosted.com/av/geschiedenis/gesch_tb.asp)] (accessed on 12 May. 2014).

<sup>15</sup> Leonard Jentjens, *Van strijdorgaan tot Familieblad* (Amsterdam 1995), pp. 22-31.

Thirdly, to what extent was the *Kulturkampf* put in an international framework by Dutch Catholic media from 1880 to 1884? This question touches upon the concept of reflection. Was German news from the *Kulturkampf* also compared with other foreign events and what kind of lessons did Dutch Catholic media draw from it? Research on the *Kulturkampf* can show how the struggle between state and Church in the nineteenth century was not confined to national borders or a battle between the Vatican and different national governments. This research attempts to show how this battle was more complicated as the Church had roots that intertwined on multiple social levels, across national borders. This dissertation strengthens the claim that foreign socio-religious events were not only received in a national context but were also seen in an international perspective. This has the potential to put into question the historical debate that views the nineteenth century as the ‘age of the nation state’.

## Chapter 1: The *Kulturkampf*

Historians like Rebecca Ayako Benette and Michael Gross have defined 1878 as an official end of the *Kulturkampf*. However, contemporaries did not perceive it to be so.<sup>1</sup> On 9 January 1880, the Dutch Catholic newspaper *Time* stated that the German nation still had a long way to go before Catholics would be able to live freely in their country. The paper praised the Minister of Worship, Robert von Puttkammer, for attempting to remove ‘unnecessary torments and difficulties’ from society, but it suggested that his good intentions were undermined by the administration of the Ministry. *Time* reasoned that this was caused by Von Puttkammer’s predecessor, Adalbert Falk, who had appointed a ‘legion of *Kulturkämpfer*’ to the Ministry. Their continued influence stifled any active measures from easing the situation for German Catholics. Moreover, the measures that Puttkammer made, were poorly executed.<sup>2</sup>

Over the course of the following years both the *Tilburgsche Courant* and *Time* reported on debates in the German house of representatives with a high frequency. Apparently German politics concerning Church-state relations were still considered important in the Netherlands after 1880. The papers told their readership that the *Kulturkampf* was still raging on and devoted large parts of their papers to its coverage. But why did Dutch Catholic media consider this topic to be important? How did they express this importance to their readership? Were the images that Dutch Catholic media created around the *Kulturkampf* homogeneous?

### Chapter 1.1. Windthorst speaks

The term *Kulturkampf* was ubiquitous in Dutch Catholic newspapers from 1880 to 1884.

Every event in German politics was eagerly picked up on by *Time* and the *Tilburgsche*

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<sup>1</sup> Ronald J. Ross, *The Failure of Bismarck’s Kulturkampf: Catholicism and State Power in Imperial Germany, 1871-1878* (Washington 1998), pp. 121-124.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Foreign News.’, *Time*, 9 Jan. 1881.

*Courant*. These occasions can be separated in four different groups. Firstly, newspapers largely focussed on the political debate and on the juridical consequences of the *Kulturkampf*. Secondly, the ongoing diplomatic negotiations between the Vatican and Berlin were a returning theme.<sup>3</sup> Thirdly, the social consequences of the May Laws were frequently examined and journalists looked at the negative effects the laws had on Catholics. Fourthly, newspapers sought to situate the *Kulturkampf* in a medieval past.<sup>4</sup>

The multiple shapes and forms in which the May Laws and anti-Catholic policy were reported on, revealed a strong sense of the continued importance of the *Kulturkampf*. The May Laws consisted of a series of government measures that were meant to cause a decline of power and presence of the Catholic Church in Germany.<sup>5</sup> Monastic orders, bishops and priests were exiled, giving the Holy Sacraments was criminalized and the government decided all priests had to pass a *Kulturexamen* before they could become active in Germany. However, the German Catholic Centre Party (*Zentrumspartei*), led by Ludwig Windthorst, led resistance to the May Laws. As this fraction proved successful in resistance of further government measures, the Centre Party had established itself as a political force by 1880.<sup>6</sup> The prime objective of the party now shifted from a rebellious political fraction to an active political player that actively wanted to change German society, most importantly by abolishing the May Laws.<sup>7</sup> It was this direct opposition against the May Laws that stood central to every reference to Germany.

It was commonplace for *Time* to print direct translations of speeches and reports from the Prussian *Landtag* or German *Reichstag* without comment. For example, with the opening of the debate on the budget for the Ministry of Worship on 7 February 1880 in the Prussian

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<sup>3</sup> chapter 2.4. will elaborate on this, pp. 29-32.

<sup>4</sup> 'Henry IV at Canossa', *Katholieke Illustratie*, no. 17 (1881), p. 129

<sup>5</sup> Michael B., Gross, *The War against Catholicism* (Ann Arbor 2004), p. 252.; Ross, *The Failure of Bismarck's Kulturkampf*, p. 279.

<sup>6</sup> Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen*, pp. 225-226.

<sup>7</sup> Rebecca Benette Ayako, *Fighting for the Soul of Germany* (Cambridge Mass. 2012), pp. 74-75.

*Landtag*, *Time* translated and printed a speech by Windthorst in the *Landtag* from 5 February.<sup>8</sup> The Centre Party's leader argued that conservatives should join the Catholic effort as religion formed the backbone of their ideology. Windthorst also complained about the lack of initiative of the Ministry of Worship to improve the well-being of Catholic Germans. Although *Time* would print many of Windthorst's speeches from the Prussian *Landtag* over the course of the years that followed, reports were limited to literal translations of his speeches and comments were rarely added.<sup>9</sup> These speeches were published prominently on the first page and in most occasions spread over multiple, successive editions of *Time*.<sup>10</sup> If a short introduction or comment was made, it usually referred to the great rhetorical power of Windthorst: when the Centre leader had to face rejection of one of his proposed laws to end the May Laws in February 1881, *Time* kept referring to Windthorst as 'the great orator' and the 'little excellency'.<sup>11</sup>

The *Tilburgsche Courant* also reported on Germany with high frequency. Like in *Time*, the paper generally avoided making comments on political debates. After concluding that mutual understanding was required for social peace in Germany on 12 February 1880, the *Tilburgsche* frequently reported on Windthorst's contributions to the debates in *Reichs-* and *Landtag* but did not add any comment. The newspaper remarked that 'When Windthorst speaks, we can leave out our own considerations'.<sup>12</sup> According to the *Tilburgsche Courant* comments could only add distortion of the messages of the Centre leader. These messages were portrayed as an undeniable truth. However, where *Time* stuck to adding relatively short comments when discussing other politicians, the *Tilburgsche Courant* added numerous paragraphs

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<sup>8</sup> 'Windthorst on the Kulturkampf', *Time*, 9 Feb. 1882.

<sup>9</sup> 'Windthorst and the Military Law', *Time*, 5 Mar. 1882.; 'Speech by Windthorst', *Time*, 1 June. 1880.; 'Windthorst's Proposal', *Time*, 14 Jan. 1881.; 'Speech by Windthorst', *Time*, 10 May. 1881.; 'The Centre wants interpellation!', *Time*, 5 Dec. 1882.; 'The Windthorst Proposal', *Time*, 1 May. 1883.

<sup>10</sup> 'Speech by Windthorst Part I', *Time*, 10 May. 1881.; 'Speech by Windthorst Part 2 (end)', *Time*, 11 May. 1881.

<sup>11</sup> 'Foreign News', *Time*, 1 Feb. 1882.

<sup>12</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 12 Feb. 1880.

with its own comments. Every time Bismarck or an anti-Catholic politician spoke, their speeches were paraphrased and followed by critical remarks. An example was an article on the German political climate from 4 July 1880 in which the *Tilburgsche* claimed that, 'The Centre is the only party that did not twist its programme-points and did not bow for the government.' In particular Bismarck's attempts to prevent the revision of the May Laws caused agitation. The paper isolated his obstinacy, remarking that: 'Political defeats of Bismarck were numerous, however, he never ceases to propose new laws that stand no chance', showed how stubborn the *Reichskanzler* was.<sup>13</sup> In November 1881, after the Centre-Party won a major victory during the elections for the *Reichstag* the newspaper concluded that, 'Bismarck and his allies would have never expected this, otherwise they would never have started the *Kulturkampf*'.<sup>14</sup> The *Reichskanzler* underestimated his Catholic opponents and now experienced a tremendous blow to his arrogance.

Over the course of 1880 to 1884 the German political debate was presented as a constant process in which Bismarck was losing 'his *Kulturkampf*' and yet did not realize he should appease the Catholics.<sup>15</sup> In the meantime Windthorst and his Centre Party were profiled as a righteous group propagating not only the rights of Catholics but also their country. They combated the *Kulturkampf*, an event which 'left Germany emptied out after numerous sacrifices'.<sup>16</sup> The direct reprints of Windthorst's speeches on first sight seem to point at a transnational exchange of news with little or no reflection. However, *Time* and the *Tilburgsche Courant* both created a façade of objectivity. When the Centre Leader was discussed, no comments were added. But whenever another politician, like Bismarck, was discussed, strong comments crept in the reports. The nature of these critiques focused on the unwitting nature

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<sup>13</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 22 May. 1881.

<sup>14</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 13 Nov. 1881.

<sup>15</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 5 Mar. 1882; 8 June. 1882.

<sup>16</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 13 Apr. 1882.

of the *Kulturkämpfer*. German anti-Catholic newspapers also belonged to this group and were also commented on. Just like Windthorst did not get any comments, the Catholic newspaper *Germania* was seen as a source of truth. Just like Bismarck, the *Nord-Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* was heavily criticized and even portrayed as a source of lies.<sup>17</sup> The *Catholic Illustration* did not touch upon the political dimension of foreign news, however it joined the debate when it came to social and cultural developments.

## Chapter 1.2. Social Consequences

The *Kulturkampf* embodied more than a political debate. From 1871 to 1878, it had resulted in the expulsion of priests and widespread confrontations between Catholic citizens, their local authorities and other social groups. After 1880, this social tension remained apparent and was underlined by *Time* and the *Tilburgsche Courant* on a weekly basis. A majority of German bishops had been expelled from the country, resulting not only in empty bishop-seats but also empty parishes. Each time a village priest died, this was reported by both newspapers.<sup>18</sup> The *Tilburgsche* considered these empty dioceses as the greatest sacrifice that was made during the *Kulturkampf*.<sup>19</sup> One particular event showed how deeply rooted the social consequences resulting from anti-Catholic legislation of 1871 to 1878 were and how they remained of great influence after 1880. This event was the opening of the Cathedral of Cologne in October 1880. This event caused agitation under German Catholics because the Bishop of Cologne, Paul Melchers, was still expelled and was not allowed to return to Germany and officially consecrate the Cathedral.<sup>20</sup> This was the first occasion in which the *Catholic Illustration* referenced to the troubled Catholic position in Germany, albeit in an indirect way. Before giving a detailed history

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<sup>17</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 17 Feb. 1881.; 'Foreign news', *Time*, 20 Jan. 1880.

<sup>18</sup> 'Foreign news', *Time*, 17 June. 1880.; 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 13 June. 1880.

<sup>19</sup> 'Germany', in *Tilburgsche Courant*, 13 Mar. 1882

<sup>20</sup> 'The Cathedral of Cologne', *Catholic Illustration*, no. 5 (1880) p. 34.

of the construction of the Cathedral, the *Illustration* posed two questions: ‘Why was this joyous moment overshadowed by distasteful events?’ and ‘Why was it impossible to open this house of prayer with a proper religious ceremony?’ The main cause for these distasteful events was the absence of Bishop Melchers. However, the *Catholic Illustration* moved on quickly in this article by stating that, ‘this is not the place to elaborate on Germany’s relations between the state and Church’. After this statement the article continued with a historical summary of the construction of the Cathedral. The *Illustration* stated that it originally intended to publish a story about the festivities and wanted to publish a woodprint of the newly finished church.<sup>21</sup> The political and social situation in Germany had spoiled the party for not only German Catholics but also for the editorial office of the *Catholic Illustration*.

For the readership of *Time* and the *Tilburgsche Courant* the festivities surrounding the completion of the Cathedral of Cologne were widely anticipated. On 7 July *Time* already reported on the possible content of the programme. The presence of the Emperor and the possibility of a Catholic Mass to inaugurate the Church were considered most important.<sup>22</sup> In August 1880, *Time* made a connection with the *Kulturkampf* just like the *Illustration* would do later. The paper argued that the anti-Catholic laws made proper festivities impossible. With a majority of German bishops banished, German Catholics had not much to celebrate and the paper implied that the actual festivities of October should be postponed.<sup>23</sup> This did not happen. Instead, a range of secular festivities took place on 15 October in the presence of the Emperor.

In September 1880 the news in anticipation of the opening of the Cathedral was largely based on rumours. The basis of the Dutch Catholic newspapers’ viewpoints was that the opening of a house of worship without a Bishop was unthinkable. After all, Cologne was the seat of Bishop Melchers and now secular forces decided over the opening of his Cathedral. The *Tilburgsche*

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 7 July. 1880.

<sup>23</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 3 Aug. 1880.

still seemed to struggle with this realisation one month before the festivities: ‘The Cologne chapter must have agreed with the festivities since they will obviously have been ordered to do so by Bishop Melchers’, the newspaper remarked.<sup>24</sup> Over the course of the weeks that followed, the festivities became a subject that caused further agitation and led to the emphasis of a political dimension. The *Catholic Illustration* deliberately refrained from reports of this dimension. In contrast the *Tilburgsche Courant* did only report on the social troubles in Germany and summarized what was considered wrong about the celebrations.<sup>25</sup>

Not only was the absence of Bishop Melchers a leading issue, the inauguration of the Cathedral was considered as a possibility for the Catholic Germans to further emancipate themselves. *Time* claimed that national celebrations like the *Sedanfeier* – the celebration of the biggest German victory during the Franco-Prussian war in 1870 – had the intention to unify all Germans, but could not manage to truly bind them as long as the May Laws existed. The entire holiday could not have any significance as Germans were not equal. Instead of this secularized holiday, Catholic festivities in Cologne could become a true celebration of German fraternity if the government made concessions.<sup>26</sup> Reports on the festivities in Cologne by German non-Catholic newspapers did not express the same sentiment. The Jewish *Tageblatt* from Berlin claimed that the opening of the Cathedral could prove to be a German-Patriotic festivity. Not only did *Time* describe this suggestion as ‘disgusting’ and ‘distasteful’ because these comments were made by non-Catholics but also because it ignored the equality of Catholic citizens.<sup>27</sup> The *Tilburgsche Courant* picked up the same remarks by the *Tageblatt* and added anti-Semitic critique by naming it a plan for a ‘German Temple’.

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<sup>24</sup> ‘Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 5 Sept. 1880.

<sup>25</sup> ‘Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 7 Nov. 1880.

<sup>26</sup> ‘Sedanfeier’, *Time*, 4 Sept. 1880.

<sup>27</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 9 Sept. 1880.

A number of restrictions to the festivities in Cologne were added to the news about the Cathedral. At the beginning of September, Catholics from Cologne heard they were allowed to address the Emperor upon his arrival. This was seen as a chance to finally address the *Kulturkampf* and its negative consequences directly.<sup>28</sup> However, it was changed a week later as the emperor did not desire to have any Catholics as a part of his welcome committee. The *Tilburgsche* explained that Catholics were only allowed to write the speech with which the Emperor would be greeted before entering the city. Any remark concerning the *Kulturkampf* would be left out as the speech would be reviewed by the – largely liberal – Cologne city council. Because of his secular approach of the festival in Cologne the emperor was now considered anti-Catholic and the article concluded that: ‘Despots and persecutors of the faithful are always afraid to hear the truth’.<sup>29</sup> In an expression of frustration, *Time* and the *Tilburgsche Courant* both quoted one of the citizens of Cologne who attended the meeting of local Catholics that wanted to write the address to the Emperor: ‘the Cathedral’s structure may have been completed, but the fundament of our Church lies in shambles’.<sup>30</sup>

*Time* continued to point out two more grievances concerning the opening of the Cathedral and tried to explain what this meant for German Catholics and Catholics in general. First, the municipality only decided to let the schools closest to the Church attend the celebration. This meant that not every Catholic child from the city could attend the ceremony. A second problem was the presence of Old-Catholic bishop Reinekens, a Protestant priest, and a number of freemasons. As *Time* wrote, ‘Even a Protestant member of the municipal authorities called this an outrage!’.<sup>31</sup> The Cathedral festival in Cologne potentially formed a great possibility for Dutch newspapers to boast with Catholic glory. However, the resentment in their articles shows that

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<sup>28</sup> ‘Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 19 Sept. 1880.

<sup>29</sup> ‘Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 9 Oct. 1880.

<sup>30</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 13 Sept. 1880.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*.

they considered this possibility to be spoiled. Another article in *Time* from 18 October confirmed that the social position of German Catholics was perceived to be so grave that it destroyed any sense of pride. The absence of the Bishop of Cologne formed a constant reminder of the *Kulturkampf* to *Time*, as the newspaper wrote:

‘And the congregation of Cologne, who in the first place owns this grand Cathedral, mourns and cries with anguish. Violence has separated it from its deeply loved and appraised pastor, and thereby widowed her. She can praise God for the completion of His House, but happiness, joy and festivities have been denied to the side of the tested.’<sup>32</sup>

### Chapter 1.3. A Historical Dimension

Next to a political and social dimension, Dutch Catholic media added a historical dimension to the *Kulturkampf*. The term Canossa recurred frequently in the reports on Germany and tied the nineteenth-century-struggle to the Middle-Ages. At the beginning of the *Kulturkampf* in 1871 Bismarck claimed that he would not give in to the Catholics if resistance to his laws would arise; he ‘would not go to Canossa’. To re-emphasize this claim, Bismarck erected a number of so-called Canossa-pillars with his claim inscribed in it.<sup>33</sup> The term ‘Canossa’, which referred to the Investiture Controversy of the eleventh century, would remain tied to the *Kulturkampf*. For Dutch Catholic newspapers the term referred to two things. First, the Investiture Controversy was part of the rich history of the Catholic Church. The *Catholic Illustration* often published woodprints depicting these historical events. The Investiture Controversy was divided in three parts. Firstly, the controversy started because of the ‘foolish’ idea of kings that the Vatican could give its Bishops worldly power. Secondly, this led to a confrontation although the Pope had tried to be the moral superior party by attempting to console the kings that opposed him. Thirdly, these ‘false kings’ lost the support of their subjects and their

<sup>32</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 18 Sept. 1880.

<sup>33</sup> Benette, *Fighting for the soul of Germany*, pp. 74-75.

seats of government became 'places to be feared'.<sup>34</sup> In the spring of 1881, an illustration of the arrival of Emperor Henry IV at Canossa was showed on the front-page. The corresponding article opened with a comparison between Pius IX, who experienced the *Kulturkampf*, and Gregorius VII. Both Popes were seen as strong men who did not fear to challenge the worldly powers of their days.<sup>35</sup> The *Illustration* continued to further explain what the Investiture Controversy exactly was and what it meant for the position of the Church. No explicit reference to the German *Kulturkampf* was made, but the comparison between Pius IX and Gregorius VII combined with implicit references sufficed. In this context Bismarck was the 'delusional' leader who did not understand the Catholic Church and therefore opposed it. Attempts made by Pius IX – that in reality were marginal – and later Leo XIII to prevent or end a conflict were bluntly rejected. This led to loss of support of all Catholic citizens. The *Catholic Illustration* portrayed the history of anti-Catholic sentiment to be a cyclical process; the *Kulturkampf* developed just like the Investiture Controversy. The rest of the article provided a rather interesting conclusion. Just like during the Investiture Controversy, those who struggled against the Catholic Church would lose and had to plead for mercy to the Church no matter how powerful they were. But the Investiture Controversy was considered a valuable lesson for Catholics to beware of the cunning of their opponents. Henry IV only made a fake plea for mercy to Gregorius VII and attacked the Vatican after his re-communication. The woodprint provided with the article shows how Emperor Henry IV kneels before Pope IV in Canossa while he begged to be re-communicated. The text, with which the accompanying article ended, concluded: 'The big man [Gregorius VII] became the victim of his tireless and heroic efforts for the Church, which commemorated him as one of its highest saints.'<sup>36</sup> The conclusion was

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* 130.

<sup>35</sup> 'Henry IV at Canossa', *Catholic Illustration*, no. 17. (1881), p. 129.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

that the Church should not be too hasty with forgiving worldly leaders, who could be dishonest in contrast to the Pope.

*Time* and the *Tilburgsche Courant* expressed a sentiment of longing for a contemporary Canossa. The second type of references to Canossa was used to further explain how Bismarck had been overconfident in turning the German state against the Catholic Church. Now that the resistance of the Centre Party had been established in the political arena and the government had lost the support of an important part of its electorate, the continuation of the *Kulturkampf* seemed foolish in the eyes of the *Tilburgsche Courant*.<sup>37</sup> Yet Bismarck was portrayed as too stubborn, proud and therefore stupid to admit defeat. While the *Milderungsgesetzen* were ratified, the *Reichskanzler* had to face recurring defeats and he had ‘survived his own legacy’, the *Tilburgsche* concluded.<sup>38</sup> As Bismarck had stated he refused to go to Canossa, he would now refuse to make a rational decision and end the discriminatory laws.<sup>39</sup> *Time* even wrote an entire article on a speech by Bismarck on Canossa in June 1882. In this speech Bismarck explained how the German Empire had thrived under Henry IV as the emperor had no fear of having multiple enemies. Canossa could be explained as an agreement in order to focus more attention on other, more powerful, enemies. *Time* quoted this speech in its entirety because it did not include any explicit denial of Bismarck that he had gone to Canossa. However, the *Reichskanzler* merely claimed he only referred to the historical event.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, the term Canossa became a term of hope for the future. Although Bismarck kept claiming he would never go to Canossa, the Dutch Catholic newspapers kept on claiming how the end of the *Kulturkampf* and therefore a Canossa were inevitable.<sup>41</sup> When the 1883 *Ultimo-Gesetz*, the third *Milderungsgesetz*, was passed, *Time* used this historical event as a victorious title. Canossa

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<sup>37</sup> ‘Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 17 June. 1880.

<sup>38</sup> ‘Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 24 Feb. 1881.

<sup>39</sup> ‘Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 23 Mar. 1882.; 4 May. 1882.

<sup>40</sup> ‘Bismarck on Canossa’, *Time*, 15 June. 1882.

<sup>41</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 8 Apr. 1880.

not only proved to function as an event from the past from which Catholics could learn from or yearn for. It also became a vision of the nearby future in which the *Kulturkampf* would not only be ended, but its creators would also have to pay for their deeds.

## Chapter 2: The *Milderungsgesetzen*

Dutch Catholic media had high expectations for the end of the *Kulturkampf*. Based on their political, social and historical analysis, *Time*, the *Tilburgsche Courant* and the *Catholic Illustration* expressed hope for a rapid end of the German struggle and wished for punishment of the *Kulturkämpfer*. As the *Illustration* put it in a historical analogy: one day Bismarck might have to kneel like Henry IV.<sup>1</sup> But what happened when German Catholics had the possibility to improve their situation in the present? From 1880 to 1884 the so-called *Milderungsgesetzen* shaped the possibility for the Centre Party to try and abolish the May Laws. These laws were the product of a parliamentary procedure and of cooperation between the government and the Centre Party. To what extent did the *Milderungsgesetzen* influence the way in which Dutch Catholic media reported on the *Kulturkampf* from 1880 to 1884? Did the cooperation between the government and the Centre Party lead to a change in the view Dutch Catholic media had on Bismarck and his ministers? Were the laws perceived as a positive development?

### Chapter 2.1 The July Law

As early as 27 January 1880, *Time* noticed that the German Minister of Worship, Robert von Puttkammer, might try to start negotiations for revision of the May Laws.<sup>2</sup> The *Tilburgsche* only picked up this news in February and stated that Von Puttkammer might provide the much desired change in anti-Catholic legislation. However, the local newspaper added that although Puttkammer seemed a moderate man who was against the *Kulturkampf*, it might take him considerable time to entirely abolish the May Laws.<sup>3</sup> Both newspapers claimed that the negotiations between the Church and German state could only be successful with a total abolishment of these

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<sup>1</sup> 'Bismarck on Canossa', *Time*, 15 June. 1882.

<sup>2</sup> 'Foreign news', *Time*, 27 Jan. 1880.

<sup>3</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 28 Jan. 1880.

laws. They also stressed that serious obstacles slowed down the achievement of this success or even blocked it entirely. For the majority of 1880 a sense of uncertainty concerning new legislation prevailed, and although most reports on possible laws were seen as ‘rumours’, both newspapers deemed the topic so important that these rumours were frequently published. It was only in May 1880 that *Time* noted that a ‘seemingly big change’ might be topic of debate in the Prussian *Landtag*. This was of vital importance as Prussia was seen as the front-running anti-Catholic state of Germany.<sup>4</sup>

On 22 May, *Time* published eleven articles of a newly proposed law to revise the May Laws, revealing its belief that the social dimension of the *Kulturkampf* was the biggest problem that should be resolved.<sup>5</sup> German social crisis had caused the expulsion of German Bishops. Therefore, *Time* claimed that the fourth article of the draft of the new ‘discretionary’ law, that would allow direct return of these bishops, was the most important.<sup>6</sup> This was a major concession to Catholics. However, the law also consisted of a number of concessions on the part of the Catholic Church, which *Time* and the *Tilburgsche Courant* found preposterous. They considered *Anzeigepflicht*, the duty of the Church to report the appointment of new priests, as a bridge too far. This duty of declaration meant that whenever the Catholic Church appointed a priest or bishop, the government would screen the chosen individual and could then decide to either accept or reject the Church’s choice. *Time* stated that the Centre Party would never agree with this law and expected that Windthorst would try to add numerous amendments in order to deny any concessions to the German government.<sup>7</sup> However, these attempts failed. The entire design of the ‘discretionary’ law was rejected in the Prussian house of representatives on 12 July. *Time* tried to put this rejection into perspective and stated that ‘this law was a flop anyway’ because

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<sup>4</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 22 May. 1880.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 1 June. 1880.

the original concept did not comply with the newspaper's expectation of full abolishment of the May Laws. Moreover, the concessions the Catholic Church had to make were an insult.<sup>8</sup> The rejection of the newly designed law was even seen as a positive development. *Time* claimed that, 'the National-Liberals and conservatives must have understood how contradictory the May Laws are and therefore have to be abolished entirely.'<sup>9</sup>

Eventually, the final ratification of the 'discretionary' law was a disappointment in the eyes of Dutch and German Catholics according to *Time* and the *Tilburgsche Courant*. Article four was entirely removed and the *Anzeigepflicht* was included. This was a significant blow, especially since *Time* had boasted only two weeks earlier that, 'as long as the law includes the *Anzeigepflicht*, it is unacceptable to the Centre.'<sup>10</sup> Next to the May Laws, German Catholics now also had a 'July Law' the newspaper sneered. The law crushed all hope for immediate change. The *Tilburgsche* had claimed that, '*was lange währt, wird endlich gut*', 'What takes its time, turns out to be good.'<sup>11</sup> The new law falsified this claim. Just like the national newspaper *Time*, the local newspaper strongly opposed the absence of article number four and the presence of duty of declaration. The *Tilburgsche Courant* showed similar disappointment and stated that the July Law, 'preserved the core of the May Laws and only had very limited positive effects'.<sup>12</sup> Still, both newspapers held onto the hope of total abolishment of the May Laws. They mockingly called the new law 'July Law' or 'the new Culture Law' and portrayed it a step back. The *Tilburgsche* predicted that the absence of the old bishops would directly influence future developments. With their absence the opening of the Cathedral in Cologne could not take place for

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<sup>8</sup> 'Foreign news', *Time*, 12 June. 1880.

<sup>9</sup> 'Foreign news', *Time*, 14 June. 1880.

<sup>10</sup> 'Foreign news', *Time*, 1 July. 1880.

<sup>11</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 8 July. 1880.

<sup>12</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 25 July. 1880.

example, otherwise the Emperor and attending legislators would make a ‘rather goofy’ impression.<sup>13</sup> Dutch Catholic media also changed their view on Minister von Puttkammer. His seemingly pacifistic stance was now considered a façade, and the German state and its politicians were portrayed as slow learners. As *Time* put it, ‘if the government really wants to gain social peace, it should understand that peace is impossible without cooperation and agreement of Catholics.’<sup>14</sup>

## Chapter 2.2. The Mainau Law

Although the July Law did not allow the return of the old Bishops, new bishops gradually entered Germany. The first of them was Bishop Michael Felix Korum of Trier.<sup>15</sup> His inauguration raised a number of questions for foreign spectators. *Time* wondered whether the Prussian *Landtag* would discuss the budget for the Ministry of Worship again and hoped it would mean the end of the rest of the ‘damned May Laws’. Negotiations were postponed to January 1882, however, and the agenda remained unclear.<sup>16</sup> Each time a new bishop was inaugurated, *Time* asked its readership the following question: ‘would this finally mean the *Kulturkampf* could become history?’<sup>17</sup> In the meantime the *Tilburgsche Courant* emphasized that the German government should be distrusted and openly questioned whether it ‘really sympathized with Catholics’.<sup>18</sup> Windthorst’s failed attempts to further revise the May Laws over the course of 1881 caused this.<sup>19</sup> However, hope for the end of the *Kulturkampf* also emerged in November 1881. To the joy of Dutch Catholic newspapers, the Centre Party was capable of expanding its power in the *Reichs-* and *Landtag* during national elections in 1881. Moreover, these elections meant a major

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<sup>13</sup> ‘Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 26 July. 1880.

<sup>14</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 26 Aug. 1880.

<sup>15</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 26 Sept. 1881.

<sup>16</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 27 Sept. 1881.

<sup>17</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 28 Sept. 1881.

<sup>18</sup> ‘Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 13 Oct. 1881.

<sup>19</sup> ‘Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 30 Jan. 1881.; ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 19 Dec. 1881.

loss for the government. If Bismarck wanted to remain in power, *Time* claimed, he had to cooperate with the Centre Party.<sup>20</sup>

The disappointment of *Time* and the *Tilburgsche Courant* in the slow social developments in Germany boosted interest in political power of Catholics. The July Law of 1880 never lost its image as a disappointment and Dutch Catholic media perceived it as ineffective. According to *Time* the *Anzeigepflicht* helped to welcome new bishops to Germany but it also slowed down the process significantly: many parishes stayed empty.<sup>21</sup> Dutch Catholic media claimed that Germany still had a long way to go if it wanted social peace. Hence the Dutch spectators described a new juridical proposal by Windthorst as the most logical political step for the *Landtag* and the rest of Germany. The May Laws imposed an obligatory *Kulturexamen* on every priest that wanted to work in Prussia and the rest of the German empire. On 3 May 1882, the Centre Party proposed a new law that would abolish this exam and – by means of concessions – would maintain the requirement that Catholic priests should have attended higher education or *Gymnasium*.<sup>22</sup> Dutch Catholic newspapers claimed that this topic was of lesser importance than the return of old bishops or decriminalisation of the Holy Sacraments. *Time* and the *Tilburgsche* saw the abolishment of the *Kulturexamen* as a small step in the right direction. *Time* thought that the proposal would not get a lot of resistance due to the minor topic it concerned. Moreover, the newspaper claimed that, ‘no one dares to vote in favour of the *Kulturkampf* anymore’, since German politicians should have come to the realisation that the May Laws caused social upheaval.<sup>23</sup> The proposal made by Windthorst was accepted on 20 January 1882.<sup>24</sup> Revision in the Prussian House of Lords, however, seemed problematic as the law could be rejected in this stage as well.

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<sup>20</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 5 Nov. 1881.

<sup>21</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 2 Jan. 1882.

<sup>22</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 3 May. 1882.

<sup>23</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 13 Jan. 1882.

<sup>24</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 20 Jan. 1882.

The signs of a much desired positive outcome remained vague and Dutch Catholic media tried to find positive signs in every political event. For example, a new minister of Worship, Heinrich von Gossler, had to defend himself on numerous occasions in the *Landtag* since he had worked for the Ministry of Worship under the anti-Catholic minister Falk. Gossler denied that he did supported the May Laws. *Time* used this to claim that German politicians finally seemed to understand that the *Kulturkampf* should be ended, as Gossler's expression was betrayal of 'the essence of the Falk-era'.<sup>25</sup> It even seemed like the entire *Landtag* claimed the *Kulturkampf* was over already and that no further laws were needed. *Time* derided this idea.<sup>26</sup> The *Tilburgsche Courant* was relatively positive and claimed that 'the end of the *Kulturkampf* had finally begun', however there were still enough problems to be dealt with.<sup>27</sup> Slow negotiations surrounding the Windthorst proposal were looked at with a high degree of annoyance.<sup>28</sup>

When the second *Milderungsgesetz* passed, Dutch Catholic media used it to celebrate progress of the Centre Party on the one hand. On the other hand *Time* and the *Tilburgsche Courant* stressed that the battle was far from over. Although the law only partially made it through the Prussian House of Lords and was accepted on 25 January, the *Tilburgsche Courant* rejoiced as the law reclaimed a basic religious freedom. According to this newspaper it could truly mean an end to the *Kulturkampf* as one of its 'most hated' laws had been abolished. The *Tilburgsche* mocked Falk, the former Minister of Worship, who was present during the ratification of the second *Milderungsgesetz*: 'During Windthorst's victory Falk sat in the room, blankly staring ahead, silent as a fish, while his precious May Laws, and thus his own power, were brought to an end.'<sup>29</sup> According to the local newspaper one of the main *Kulturkämpfer* finally got what he deserved: loss of political power and humiliation. Although *Time* shared the opinion that Falks

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<sup>25</sup> 'Foreign news', *Time*, 9 Feb. 1882.

<sup>26</sup> 'Foreign news', *Time*, 10 Feb. 1882.

<sup>27</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 13 Oct. 1882.

<sup>28</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 15 Jan. 1882.

<sup>29</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 5 Feb. 1882.

political career was over and ‘had lost all credibility’, it was less positive and reminded its readership of possible new obstacles.<sup>30</sup> The most notable of them was Bismarck’s power over his ministers. The new discretionary law could not be accepted as durable and minister Gossler could not promise any further changes of the May Laws.<sup>31</sup> In the eyes of Dutch Catholic newspapers, the new law only provided the false idea that the *Kulturkampf* was over in order to appease German Catholics. *Time* warned that the cultural struggle in Germany was still raging on, but in a ‘milder fashion than it had before’.

Although politicians tried to end the *Kulturkampf* by negotiating, these negotiations were slow and led to unsatisfactory results. According to the Dutch spectators, German Catholics should not have been fooled by the new laws. If they believed the Liberal claim that the new law was a true end of the *Kulturkampf*, the May Laws would remain in place and oppression would not disappear.<sup>32</sup> In reality, *Time* claimed, ‘we have reached just as much [by the new law] as we had at the beginning of the struggle.’<sup>33</sup> The *Tilburgsche* added that the new ‘Mainau Law’ could merely be considered as a ‘transitional law’ since it did not change German society enough.<sup>34</sup> As long as the German government did not care about the rights of the Catholic Church out of sincere rather than political considerations the struggle was far from over. Dutch Catholic newspapers claimed to think in the same way as the Centre Party and claimed that newly designed laws to abolish the May Laws entirely, that were proposed at the beginning of March 1882, were praised.

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<sup>30</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 2 Feb. 1882.

<sup>31</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 14 Feb. 1882.

<sup>32</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 25 Feb. 1882.

<sup>33</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 25 Feb. 1882.

<sup>34</sup> ‘Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 2 Apr. 1882.

### Chapter 2.3. The Ultimo Law

After the ‘Mainau Law’ Dutch Catholic media changed their reports in two ways. Firstly, the social dimension of reports on Germany got a rather positive tone. The new law had a number of positive effects. In April 1882 more bishops were allowed to return to Germany. For example the new Bishop of Breslau returned, and seminaries were opened once again in Prussia.<sup>35</sup> To *Time* the effect of priests being educated in Germany meant a gradual end of the *Kulturkampf*.<sup>36</sup> In the eyes of the newspaper the shortage of priests could only be met after the decriminalisation of priesthood.<sup>37</sup> Secondly, *Time* made a noticeable shift in the way it reported on the new political debate. Before April 1882 the *Kulturkampf* was portrayed as a heavy battle that was still raging on. Anti-Catholic politicians like Bismarck were using their old tricks. The Centre Party therefore had to be cautious and had to defend its ideals fiercely. However, when the Centre Party made its proposal for a new law for the decriminalisation of priesthood, *Time* praised the ‘civilized’ style of debate in the *Landtag* which heavily contrasted with the ‘heavy *Kulturkampf*’, which ‘thank God was over’.<sup>38</sup>

However this positive dimension that was added to the Mainau Law had largely been pushed to the background. Windthorst’s proposal for the abolishment of the punishment of exile for bishops was rejected by the Prussian *Landtag* on July 7 1882 and caused upheaval in Dutch Catholic media. Both the *Tilburgsche Courant* and *Time* were outraged by the amount of time that had passed since Windthorst had shared his proposal in early January and its rejection half a year later. In the weeks that followed the Dutch media reported on Germany as if the ‘heavy *Kulturkampf*’ had not ended. The *Tilburgsche* raised various questions: ‘did the German government truly desire peace?’, and ‘why has this rejection [of Windthorst’s proposal on 7 July]

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<sup>35</sup> ‘H.S.H. Mgr. Robert Herzog, Prince-Bishop of Breslau’, *Catholic Illustration*, no. 38. (1882), pp. 300-301.

<sup>36</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 11 Aug. 1882.

<sup>37</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 25 Apr. 1882.

<sup>38</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 6 May. 1882.

been delayed so long?’<sup>39</sup> According to *Time*, Bismarck once again stood behind the rejection and the paper claimed that, ‘he [Bismarck] pushed the proposal to the background just to pick up the topic again whenever he desired’.<sup>40</sup> In the eyes of the newspaper the German state was too stupid to learn that the *Kulturkampf* harmed the country, while a clever Bismarck used this lack of insight to the advantage of his own anti-Catholic political plans.

The three *Milderungsgesetzen* influenced the way in which *Time* and the *Tilburgsche* reported on German politics and society. The July Law, the Mainau Law and the Ultimo Law – which would only be sanctioned by the emperor on 11 August 1883 – were perceived as minor steps in the right direction.<sup>41</sup> Moreover the relative speed with which the law in 1883 was passed boosted confidence; the growth of Centre Party power in the *Reichstag* had created a positive position in negotiations with the German Government. Whenever a party in the *Reichstag* wanted support of the Centre, it had to cooperate in either the *Land-* or *Reichstag*. *Time* expressed hope for the future as the power of the Centre Party would mean imminent victory of the Catholic cause, it was only a matter of time no matter what obstacles lay ahead.<sup>42</sup> Catholics had entered the political arena and established themselves from 1871 to 1882. It became clear that the rules of the *Kulturkampf* had changed. The Centre Party had not only become a dominant part of the German political system. If Bismarck and his government refused to abolish the May Laws, Catholics would eventually abolish the laws themselves through their parliamentary strength. Just like *Time* the *Tilburgsche* provided a message of Catholic strength to their readership: ‘the Catholics will obviously maintain their strength and will become even more powerful’.<sup>43</sup> These were no empty expressions, the style of reporting significantly

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<sup>39</sup> Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 9 July. 1882.

<sup>40</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 7 July. 1882.

<sup>41</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 16 July. 1883.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*; ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 23 Oct. 1882.

<sup>43</sup> ‘Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 29 Oct. 1882.

changed thereafter. Domestic policy was disregarded more frequently in *Time* and the *Tilburgsche Courant*. When their sorrows for German domestic politics waned, both newspapers shifted their attention to the international dimension; the negotiations between the German ambassador at the Holy See, Kurd von Schlözer and the representative of the Holy See, Cardinal Luigi Jacobini.

#### **Chapter 2.4. The Vatican**

The *Milderungsgesetzen* were passed and showed that the Centre Party could achieve multiple minor victories. However, the total abolishment of the May Laws was something it was unable to achieve. Therefore, the negotiations between the strongest Catholic organisation, the Vatican, and Berlin entered the foreground of Dutch Catholic reports on Germany. In contrast to the constantly changing style of reporting on German domestic news, news on the diplomatic negotiations between Berlin and the Holy See remained constant. The cause for this was the incredible and constant delay of the negotiations between the Vatican and Berlin. The main topics of these negotiations were the possible return of Bishops and the Government-imposed *Anzeigepflicht*. Three aspects from the reports on these negotiations from 1880 to 1884 in *Time* and the *Tilburgsche Courant* constantly occurred and came to the foreground in 1883.

Firstly, the contents of the negotiations remained vague. Each time a German newspaper reported on possible negotiations with Jacobini, *Time* included a short notice of it in its foreign news section. However, on numerous occasions the messages ended with the remark that the content of negotiations remained unknown and should not be interpreted as truth. Secondly, the negotiations were used by *Time* and the *Tilburgsche* to underline the open-mindedness and peacefulness of the Holy See. When, for example, Bishops Melchers was appointed as Arch-

bishop by Pope Leo XIII in January 1880, the article ended as follows: ‘again it becomes apparent that the Holy Father only desires peace, yet everything remains unclear when it comes to negotiations and concessions.’ Thirdly, whenever Dutch Catholic newspapers reported on the negotiations of the German representative, Kurd von Schlözer, they were surprisingly positive about him. Dutch spectators portrayed this particular government official as a fine individual who understood the gravity of his work in sharp contrast with his domestic colleagues. The reports on von Schlözer tended to take on the form of active commentary. Each expression of him and Cardinal Jacobini during the negotiation-process was topic of analysis. Whenever the ambassador had to return to Berlin for further instructions by Bismarck, *Time* attempted to explain what the new topics of debate might be, for example at the end of August 1882.<sup>44</sup> Based on the debate in the *Reichstag* on mixed marriages at that time, *Time* concluded that Schlözer must have been instructed to insist on this type of marriage in Rome.<sup>45</sup>

However, the ambassador still remained a government official. Von Schlözer had to defend the interest of his government and thus Bismarck. On 9 September 1881 for example, the *Tilburgsche Courant* explained how Bismarck used the negotiations with the Vatican as part of his political game. By postponing negotiations until after the elections, Bismarck hoped to gain a stronger position in a political debate with the Centre. The main way to do so was to tactically call von Schlözer back to Berlin for meetings.<sup>46</sup> After the *Milderungsgesetz* from 1882 the suspicious stance of Dutch Catholic media against the German government became even more apparent. The main message *Time* expressed was how Bismarck used the international negotiations as a last resort to save his image. His main motivation to slow down the pace of negotiations with the Church was ‘anger’. Bismarck perceived the Curia to be ‘stubborn and unable

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<sup>44</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 28 Aug. 1882.

<sup>45</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 5 Sept. 1882.

<sup>46</sup> ‘Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 9 Sept. 1881.

to concede', with his political ambitions.<sup>47</sup> *Time* further explained that the German *Reichskanzler* could be angry but did not realize that it would only worsen the situation for his country:

'When will the *Kulturkämpfer* finally learn and admit that the Church, that has been freed from the chains of the state, has regained full power and therefore can end this situation on its own. A battle against the Church is a battle against the material and moral health of the country.'<sup>48</sup>

The Vatican not only had a moral high-ground but also the right to dictate the pace of negotiations. The *Tilburgsche* stressed this in the beginning of 1883. In February the German Emperor reacted to past correspondences with the Pope about the end of the *Kulturkampf* by stating that the *Anzeigepflicht* should not be such a big issue for the Holy See to agree with. According to the Dutch Catholic newspaper, this once again showed that the Emperor and therefore modern Germany had only one message to the world: 'Kneel before me and I will give you everything'. Prussia just kept on demanding concessions although it had absolutely no right to do so.<sup>49</sup>

This distrust and negative image of the German government was broadened by the addition of the role the German media played in the reports on the negotiations with the Holy See. Just like they did with their political reports, *Time* and the *Tilburgsche Courant* largely based their information on German newspapers. However, most German newspapers only seemed to publish the official correspondences of the government and not the letters from the Vatican. The *Tilburgsche* lamented this situation and explained that only liberal magazines claimed to publish the letters from the Pope.<sup>50</sup>

By portraying Bismarck as a chess-player who dominated vague negotiations behind the scenes, Dutch Catholic media had the liberty to fully interpret the negotiations the way it wanted. The

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<sup>47</sup> 'Foreign news', *Time*, 11 Aug. 1882.

<sup>48</sup> 'Foreign news', *Time*, 12 Aug. 1882.

<sup>49</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 4 Feb. 1883.

<sup>50</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 25 Feb. 1883.

content of the negotiations remained unclear to *Time*, the *Tilburgsche* and their German sources. Therefore they added their own explanations to the slow pace of the talks between the Vatican and Berlin.<sup>51</sup> The image that was eventually created of the negotiations was one of constant talks with minimal result. In this process the Pope had the moral high-ground in contrast to Bismarck who only got more frustrated by the behaviour of the Pope.<sup>52</sup> The German *Reichskanzler* in turn used dirty tricks to delay the negotiations with the Holy See as much as possible and abused his superior position over his representative in Rome. According to Dutch Catholic media, Bismarck had failed to cover up his political loss against Catholics and now desperately tried to save his image by dominating the diplomatic dimension. In the meantime von Schlözer had a mediating role. Although *Time* and the *Tilburgsche* often described him as a pawn of Bismarck, at the end of 1883 his good intentions were stressed once more. In December 1883, Schlözer was awarded with the highest knighthood in the Order of Pius IX.<sup>53</sup> A title which to a historian of the *Kulturkampf* might come across as ironic, but was perceived as an exceptional, well-deserved, reward for the German diplomat; at least he had tried to appease the Vatican.

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<sup>51</sup> 'Foreign news', *Time*, 6 Jan. 1883.

<sup>52</sup> 'Foreign news', *Time*, 9 Jan. 1883.

<sup>53</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 30 Dec. 1883.

### Chapter 3: An International *Kulturkampf*

Where individuals like von Schlözer were praised for their attempts to make peace with the Vatican, politicians who did the opposite were subject to the heavy critique of Dutch Catholic media. This had become the rule rather than the exception for the Belgian and French prime-ministers Walthère de Frère-Orban and Léon Gambetta as anti-Catholic measures by governments became less confined to Germany. Around 1880 the liberal Dutch and Belgian governments passed laws to promote secular state-schools over private religious schools.<sup>1</sup> In the Low Countries this led to conflict that was largely confined to the political arena. Meanwhile, France experienced a struggle more similar to Germany: There the government under Gambetta expelled monastic orders after the so-called ‘march-decrees’ were passed and added a social dimension to the struggle.<sup>2</sup> The *Kulturkampf* seemed to cast a shadow over German borders in the eyes of contemporaries. This raises an interesting question for historians of the *Kulturkampf*. Did the Catholic media go so far as to put this social struggle in an international perspective? If so, does it reveal a certain degree of reflection of the *Kulturkampf* by Dutch Catholic media? How were other national stories of anti-Catholicism tied to the German case and did the Dutch Catholic media use these cases to relate themselves to? In short, to what extent did Dutch Catholic media put the *Kulturkampf* in an international perspective from 1880 to 1884?

#### Chapter 3.1. The *Kulturkampf* Beyond Germany

The term *Kulturkampf* was not only used to denote struggle of the Catholic Church in Germany. *Time* and the *Tilburgsche Courant* also used the term *Kulturkampf* relatively liberally

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<sup>1</sup> K.E. van der Mandele, *Het Liberalisme in Nederland* (Arnhem 1933), pp. 188-211.; Jeffrey Thyssens, ‘La Question Scolaire sous le Gouvernement Frère-Orban 1878-1884’, in Lubelski-Bernard ed., *La Belgique au temps de Frère-Orban* (Brussels 1996), p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> ‘The Execution of the March-decrees in Paris’, *Catholic Illustration*, no. 11. (1881), pp. 82-83.

when it came to French news, especially after the *Milderungsgesetzen* led to a ‘milder phase’ of the German social struggle. For instance, when talking about the influential role of monastic orders in Westphalia and their recognition by the German emperor, the *Tilburgsche* immediately added the phrase ‘and yet in France they are prosecuted and exiled.’<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the fact that the term was used in different national contexts showed how the national concept of *Kulturkampf* had become an international theme that could be transplanted into other – yet similar – national contexts.<sup>4</sup> The actual term *Kulturkampf* was regularly used in a French context as well. As soon as 1880 *Time* already stated that ‘While in France the *Kulturkampf*, after a slow series of skirmishes, is definitely about to begin, Germans are looking in vain for an end’.<sup>5</sup> This style of comparison between Germany and France became a recurring theme and regularly included the term *Kulturkampf*. The use of this term further implied that *Time* and the *Tilburgsche Courant* perceived both struggles to be similar. Germany served as an example and showed what the consequences of anti-Catholic policy might be in other countries. For example, the expulsion of monastic orders in Germany had removed a ‘bulwark against socialism’ and according to the newspaper this could now happen in France as well.<sup>6</sup>

The French struggle between the government and the Catholic Church that was just about to start received more attention in the *Illustration* than the German *Kulturkampf*. For example, the execution of the March-decrees was described in great detail.<sup>7</sup> In the article on the March-decrees the article was filled with lamentations about the expulsion of monastic orders. However, *Catholic Illustration* did not use the term *Kulturkampf* in reports on the German troubles. A possible explanation for this is the fact that the *Illustration* was only published weekly and elaborated merely on topics that it considered of the highest importance. As the largest

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<sup>3</sup> ‘Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 25 Dec. 1881.

<sup>4</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 15 Sept. 1881.

<sup>5</sup> ‘Foreign news’, *Time*, 1 Apr. 1880.

<sup>6</sup> ‘The Modernized Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 4 Feb. 1883.

<sup>7</sup> ‘The Execution of the March Decrees’, *Catholic Illustration*, no. 11. (1880), pp.82-83.

part of the magazine was devoted to short stories and excerpts of novels and travel-stories, the paper had to be more selective about its publications on news. This did not mean that the *Illustration* tried to cover up the anti-Catholic sentiments in France or Germany. From 1881 onwards a number of articles and woodprints about the French situation were showed.<sup>8</sup> But there was a less noticeable connection to the German *Kulturkampf* in its reports and an absence of a link between anti-Catholicism in Germany and France. Anti-Catholicism was rampant in France at the end of the nineteenth Century according to the *Catholic Illustration*, however the magazine did not profile anti-Catholicism as an international concept. The march-decrees were portrayed as a strictly national phenomenon.

### **Chapter 3.2. *Tout comme chez nous!***

The role of the *Kulturkampf* in the world-view portrayed by *Time* and the *Tilburgsche Courant* went even further than merely stating that anti-Catholic measures in states like Germany and France were similar. The local *Tilburgsche* went the furthest in this by stating that the entire European Continent was suffering under anti-Catholicism as it threatened the moral order. In an article of 10 September 1882 called ‘Is there a Europe left?’, the newspaper argued that the Catholic Church still formed a moral foundation of Europe. ‘Whenever human passions, self-interest, ambition or national jealousy’ had disrupted European peace, it writes the Church had, ‘taken on the mission of being the highest, most honourable arbiter with a sole purpose to restore peace by casting a verdict based on honesty and equity’.<sup>9</sup> The leadership of the pope was tied to the social glory of Europe as the Church was able to establish internal peace in Europe by unifying all Catholic nations. Movements that tried to oppose the power of the papacy, like Protestantism and later Liberalism, therefore not only proved a

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<sup>8</sup> ‘The expulsion of the Sisters of the Legion of Honour in Paris’, *Catholic Illustration*, no. 39. (1881), p. 305.

<sup>9</sup> ‘Is there a Europe left?’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 10 Sept. 1882.

threat for the Church but for all of Europe. The anti-Catholic movements of Germany and France were not only comparable in form, the *Tilburgsche Courant* claimed, could both affect the moral climate of their countries.

This social menace was caused by a political movement. According to Dutch Catholic media, Liberalism was the source of anti-Catholicism. In 1881 the Belgian liberal government under Walthère de Frère-Orban wanted to have more influence on the income of priests. The reason was that most priests heavily resisted the secular law on primary education of 1879. This was a reason for the *Tilburgsche* to claim a ‘German situation’ had occurred in Belgium and used ‘*Brotkorbgesetz* in Belgium’ as the title of the article. This particular German law denied the income of priests during the *Kulturkampf*.<sup>10</sup> The *Tilburgsche* emphasized how the German *Kulturkampf* spread through Europe and threatened the Catholic Church, the only institution that could guarantee internal European peace as it formed a bulwark against Liberalism.<sup>11</sup>

Discriminatory laws like the May Laws in Germany or the March-decrees had one thing in common: they were created by Liberals. These foreign examples were used by the *Tilburgsche Courant* and *Time* to warn their readership for Dutch Liberals. A great example were the elections in Baden in which the Liberals faced a massive loss in August 1880. The newspaper stated that, ‘the Liberals promised the electorate a golden future, but once in power their impotence stood in the way of its realization, *Tout comme chez nous!*’<sup>12</sup> Just like the Liberals had been a fierce opponent for German Catholics, the Dutch had experienced the same. Liberalism and thus anti-Catholicism were perceived as an international phenomenon. The *Tilburgsche* kept on pointing out that Liberalism lay at the heart of this sentiment by using another German example. When the Prussian *Landtag* rejected another proposal by Windthorst again

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<sup>10</sup> ‘*Brotkorbgesetz* in Belgium’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 13 Mar. 1881.

<sup>11</sup> ‘Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 8 June. 1882.

<sup>12</sup> ‘Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 22 Aug. 1880.

in 1881, the paper explained that Liberalism was the main cause of Catholic suffering. ‘Liberalism has an ideology of equality for all, except for Catholics!’, it implied that the German case was only the tip of the iceberg: ‘Liberalism has been just as rampant in Germany as it has been elsewhere’.<sup>13</sup> Anti-Catholicism in Germany had become an example according for Dutch Catholics. If no political force could oppose Liberalism, the moral order of society would be in peril like it was east of the border.

Pieter de Coninck’s work concluded that Dutch Catholics perceived the *Kulturkampf* as something that could occur in their country as well.<sup>14</sup> From 1880 to 1884, Dutch Catholic media stressed that it had become a situation that anti-Catholicism was alive and well in their country. The *Tilburgsche* claimed that Dutch Catholics already had suffered a similar opposition. This message had been repeated frequently, for example in 1881 when the liberal *Kölnische Zeitung* wrote an article which implied that Catholic priests in the Elzas undermined the power of the Church by their presence on German soil. According to the *Tilburgsche* this was a severe contradiction which was something Liberals were notorious for, ‘exactly as they use to do in our country’.<sup>15</sup>

*Time* did not emphasize this international dimension of the *Kulturkampf* as much as the *Tilburgsche Courant*. This was striking because when it came to the amount of reports on the *Kulturkampf*, explanation of the *Milderungsgesetzen* and changes in reports, both newspapers seemed to make relatively similar developments. Also, both newspapers made use of the same German and other non-Dutch newspapers as sources for these reports. However the local *Tilburgsche Courant* added more opinionated paragraphs with a Dutch viewpoint than *Time*. The national newspaper had a less aggressive stance when it came to the *Kulturkampf*, international anti-Catholic developments and the idea of an international anti-Catholic movement

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<sup>13</sup> ‘Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 20 Feb. 1881.

<sup>14</sup> de Coninck, *Een les uit Pruisen*, p. 332.

<sup>15</sup> ‘Germany’, *Tilburgsche Courant*, 17 Feb. 1881.

created by Liberals. The stance of the *Tilburgsche* was less constant than *Time*'s as it also underlined that the German Ministry of Worship was capable of serving as a good example for the Netherlands and Belgium. When minister Von Puttkammer emphasized how important private education and the role of religion in schools could be, the Dutch Catholic newspaper praised the minister. It even went as far as saying that 'Our country and Belgium had a lot to learn from this wise decision'.<sup>16</sup> It must be said that the *Tilburgsche Courant* did not have a merely negative stance on the international role of the German Cultural struggle. The newspaper had a more positive way of looking at the German *Kulturkampf* and its international consequences. In Germany the Catholic citizens had proven themselves as being resilient and capable of resisting even the strongest form of oppression from the nation-state, 'victorious they stood on the battlefield, like a warrior that had been covered in wounds, full of courage and determination, truly a sight to behold for angles and men' the *Tilburgsche Courant* expressed.<sup>17</sup> Dutch Catholic media drew to positive conclusions from the German *Kulturkampf* from 1880 to 1884.

In the first place, the Germans were an example. If Dutch or Belgian Catholics would resist anti-Catholic legislation just like the Germans had done, their rights would be preserved and the Catholic community would be 'hardened like iron', *Time* concluded.<sup>18</sup> German Catholics were used as proof by more conservative Catholic newspapers for a certain positive outcome of Cultural struggles all over Europe. Secondly, the practical side of the story was that Germany was attempting to end the domestic struggle. After the rise to power of the Centre Party policies against anti-Catholic laws became more apparent. Especially to *Time* this could serve as an example for other countries facing similar problems. The big discrepancy in the international dimension of the *Kulturkampf* between this national newspaper and the *Tilburgsche*

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<sup>16</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 16 June. 1881.

<sup>17</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 24 May. 1883.

<sup>18</sup> 'Foreign news', *Time*, 10 Sept. 1883.

*Courant*, was that the latter was inclined to portray anti-Catholicism as an international movement that could affect Catholicism in general. Both newspapers did however share their view on the positive and even educational value of past experiences from German Catholics.

### Chapter 3.3. The Spirit of the Century

The *Catholic Illustration* had been remarkably absent in the evaluation of anti-Catholicism when it came to an international perspective. As stated in section 3.1. the *Illustration* largely focussed on France and only looked at the news in a national perspective. However, the magazine did perceive anti-Catholicism as something that was not confined to national borders. In the article on Henry IV at Canossa for example the opening statement of the article revealed that the *Illustration* defined anti-Catholicism to be part of the ‘Spirit of the Century’: ‘Present-day Catholics have had to endure the blame and mockery with which the world had faced the great Pius IX just because he defended the rights of the Church’. Just like his predecessor Gregorius VII, Pius IX had to combat the ‘illusions of his time’.<sup>19</sup> From this perspective anti-Catholicism was not tied to a single national context. As the Church was not able to defend itself from the force of multifarious national governments, the *Illustration* claimed, explained that Catholics should unite. The magazine stressed the importance of Catholic youth-clubs because the ‘modern age’ could tempt young Catholics to leave the Church.<sup>20</sup>

The *Tilburgsche Courant* also connected anti-Catholicism with the ‘Spirit to the Century’. In contrast to the *Illustration* it shaped an extremer vision in which the Catholic Church stood against the rest of the world. The nineteenth century was described as a chaotic time of moral deterioration in an article titled ‘Political and Social storms’. The *Tilburgsche* explained that since the Parisian Commune of 1870, the world had been subject to chaotic and evil ideologies. As the paper put it, ‘The cosmopolitan revolution is currently organized better than ever,

<sup>19</sup> ‘Henry IV at Canossa’, *Katholieke Illustratie*, no. 17. (1881), p. 129.

<sup>20</sup> ‘On Catholic Associations’, *Katholieke Illustratie*, no. 5. (1882), pp. 38-39.

governments show impressive proof of acceptance of this situation' and therefore it posed an incredible threat for the Catholic Church.<sup>21</sup> Religion was the sole power that could withstand the challenges the constantly changing world might provide. The *Kulturkampf* showed how the absence of Catholicism would result in deterioration of the nation as a 'bulwark against socialism' had been removed.<sup>22</sup> Moreover the *Tilburgsche* pointed the finger at Liberalism and claimed this modern ideology systematically opposed Catholicism. Their way to do this was enhancing power of the modern state. In other words, 'In the present day Catholic interests are being denied and menaced by the modern state under the pretext of keeping the Church out of politics'.<sup>23</sup> The paper argued this deterioration in morality not only spread throughout Europe from Russia to France, but also divided nations like the *Kulturkampf* had done. For example:

'The political situation in Europe is under pressure, the trust of the peoples has been shocked and hence cannot put unconditional trust in their governments. The attempts of kings and statesmen to make peace [either domestically or with one another] lost every form of credibility. The European peoples have learned that promised peace too often led merely to the silence before the storm.'<sup>24</sup>

The modern nation-state had proven to be a strong yet untrustworthy construction that might not only drag single nations into crisis but maybe even Europe entirely. The modern state had become an abomination that would even attack the Church. As the *Tilburgsche Courant* would later claim, the only motto of modern nation-states was, 'kneel before me, and I shall give you everything'.<sup>25</sup> The only way for the church to protect itself in these perilous times was the unification of all Catholics. The *Tilburgsche* stressed that otherwise Liberals would be able to reach their prime objective: 'to carry the Church to its grave'.

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<sup>21</sup> 'Political and Social storms', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 23 Oct. 1881.

<sup>22</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 13 Apr. 1882.

<sup>23</sup> 'Strenght through Unity', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 2 Dec. 1880.

<sup>24</sup> 'The political situation', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 8 June. 1882.

<sup>25</sup> 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 4 Feb. 1882.

The nineteenth century and the years ahead were hence described as an age of combat; the Catholic Church had to fight for its right for existence in every national context as Liberals dominated European governments. In contrast to the *Catholic Illustration*, the *Tilburgsche Courant* combined this belief in an anti-Catholic spirit of the century with an international approach to the *Kulturkampf*. The *Catholic Illustration* emphasized that anti-Catholicism was part of the spirit of the century and existed predominantly in France. The image gave the impression that anti-Catholicism did exist, but that it was a distant phenomenon that could not occur in the Netherlands. In contrast the *Tilburgsche Courant* had a militant approach and actively tried to mobilize its readership to resist further liberal influence in daily life, the political arena and on the Church. *Time* stood in the middle of this debate and provided an image of transition. The *Kulturkampf* was over in Germany and now started in France. This image could be seen as a less emotional analysis of the contemporary situation. Anti-Catholicism was an existing and international phenomenon but it would fade in time.

## Conclusion

The newspapers analysed in this dissertation considered the *Kulturkampf* to be of tremendous importance. From 1880 to 1884, *Time* and the *Tilburgsche Courant* continued to closely observe political and social events in Germany. As one of the biggest Catholic newspapers in the Netherlands, *Time* profiled itself as an objective source of news. The *Kulturkampf* and *Milderungsgesetzen* were reported on in great detail. Moreover, the paper actively cited its sources and refrained from explicit commentary. By defining anti-Catholic newspapers as unofficial it implicitly added a pro-Catholic opinion to the German news. The *Tilburgsche Courant* in contrast actively added commentary when it came to German news, portraying its own view on the *Kulturkampf* as the truth. They were able to make a deliberate selection of sources to publish and could add subtle comments. Both newspapers claimed to be a source of objectivity, while in fact they shaped the debate to their own liking. The *Catholic Illustration* did not directly look at the *Kulturkampf*, however by looking at past events like Canossa it indirectly added commentary to the German political and social climate.

The *Milderungsgesetzen* combined with the international dimension of the *Kulturkampf* posed a valuable lesson to Dutch Catholics according to *Time*, the *Catholic Illustration* and the *Tilburgsche Courant*. The German Catholic Centre Party had succeeded in politically combatting the May Laws. *Time* and the *Tilburgsche* both claimed that the course of events considering a *Kulturkampf* - which could take place in any country - had a certain pattern. So whereas they one day feared that the Netherlands might experience a social struggle like Germany, they also expected spiritual strengthening. The only way to effectively resist anti-Catholic laws was the German way: unite all Catholics just like the Centre Party had done. The *Tilburgsche Courant* and *Catholic Illustration* put this idea in a circular historical perspective. They both implied that anti-Catholicism was part of the spirit of the century. The local newspaper used Liberalism as an anti-Catholic scapegoat that formed a menace in every Christian nation. The *Catholic*

*Illustration* remained vague in its definition of this spirit of the century and merely claimed that the nineteenth century was a time of anti-Catholicism in general. It is therefore possible to describe the *Kulturkampf* and *Milderungsgesetzen* as transnational concepts. By claiming that the *Kulturkampf* and the Laws of Mitigation from 1880 to 1883 were an example for the Dutch context, *Time* and the *Tilburgsche Courant* showed that they perceived the German political context to be influential across national borders. The *Catholic Illustration* showed how the influence of the German societal struggle, that once waxed in Dutch context, now waned and was replaced by a French case.

The German *Kulturkampf* became an example of the sentiment of anti-Catholicism in Europe. The *Milderungsgesetzen* were key for the *Tilburgsche Courant* and to a lesser extent *Time*. In contrast to the *Catholic Illustration* these newspapers did not compare the anti-Catholicism of the nineteenth century with that of the Investiture Controversy of the eleventh century. Although they both expressed hope for a Canossa in which Bismarck and other anti-Catholic politicians would remorsefully bow to the Church, they both did not explicitly express a sense of certainty that this might happen on its own. To predict the future of European cultural struggles in France, Belgium and the Netherlands *Time* and the *Tilburgsche Courant* looked at contemporary events in Germany: the *Milderungsgesetzen*. The old expression of fear that one day a similar situation might arise in the Netherlands was re-interpreted. On the one hand it gained a positive connotation, because next to anti-Catholic laws, a strong political Catholic resistance was also possible in the Netherlands. On the other hand this message of hope was not only interpreted for the Dutch case anymore; the effective German Catholic resistance was reflected on Belgium, France and the rest of Europe.

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## Appendix

### Original Quotations

#### Chapter 1: The Kulturkampf..... 8

2. 'Legioen aan Kulturkämpfer', 'Ontbreekt alle inhoud', 'Foreign News.', *Time*, 9 Jan. 1881.
33. 'Wanneer Windthorst spreekt kunnen wij onze beschouwingen achterwege laten', 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 12 Feb. 1880.
13. 'De keren dat Bismarck een échec lijdt zijn bijna niet meer te tellen, mij hij gaat onvervoerd door met het schrijven van kansloze wetten', 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 22 May. 1881.
14. 'Dit hadden Bismarck en de zijnen niet verwacht toen zij de Kulturkampf startten', 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 13 Nov. 1881.
16. 'Heeft Duitsland daarbij gewonnen? Niets, alleen niets, maar de Kulturkampf heeft ontzeglijke offers geeïst', 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 13 Apr. 1882.
20. 'Waarom is deze vreugdige gebeurtenis overschaduwde door walgelijke toestanden?', 'The Cathedral of Cologne', *Catholic Illustration*, no. 5. (1880), p. 34.
24. 'Kapittel te Keulen zal de beslissing tot het houden van een Kerkelijk feest uiteraard af laten hangen van toestemming van Aartsbisschop Melchers', 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 5 Sept. 1880.
29. 'Despoten en geloofsvervolgers zijn altijd bevreesd de waarheid te horen', 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 9 Oct. 1880.
30. 'Het feest vindt plaats temidden van de Kulturkampf', "De dom is gereed maar de bouw der Katholieke Kerk ligt in puin!", 'Foreign news', *Time*, 13 Sept. 1880.
31. 'En de Kerk in Keulen, die in de eerste plaats deze grote Kathedraal bezig, rouwt en draagt leed. Geweld heeft haar gescheiden van haar geprezen herder, en haar daardoor tot wees gemaakt. Zij kan God danken voor de voltooiing van Zijn Huis; maar vreugde, maar geluk, maar feestelijkheden staan niet aan de kant van de beproefden', 'Foreign news', *Time*, 18 Sept. 1880.
36. 'Deze grote man werd het slachtoffer van zijn ondermoeibare en oversaagde inzet voor de Kerk, die hem sindsdien als een van zijn belangrijkste Heiligen heeft aanbeden', 'Henry IV at Canossa', *Catholic Illustration*, no 17. (1881), p. 129.

**Chapter 2: The Milderungsgesetzen.....20**

9. 'De Nationaal-Liberalen en Conservatieven zullen begrepen hebben hoe tegenstrijdig de Meiwetten zijn en dat daarom volledig moeten worden afgeschaft', 'Foreign news', *Time*, 14 June. 1880.
12. 'Behoudt de kern der Meiwetten en boekt beperkte resultaten', 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 25 July. 1880.
13. 'Een malle indruk', 'Foreign news', *Time*, 26 Aug. 1880.
14. 'Zou dit betekenen dat de Culturkampf eindelijk tot het verleden behoort?', 'Foreign news', *Time*, 28 Sept. 1881.
25. 'Verraad van het Falk-tijdperk', 'Foreign news', *Time*, 9 Feb. 1882.
27. 'Terwijl Windthorst aan het woord was zat Falk maar voor zich uit te staren, stom als een visch, terwijl er een eind werd gemaakt aan zijn geliefde Meiwetten', 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 5 Feb. 1882.
33. 'Maar wij staan hierdoor waar wij ook aan het begin van de strijd stonden', 'Foreign news', *Time* 25 Feb. 1882.
34. 'Overgangswet', 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 2 Apr. 1882.
38. 'De tijden der hevige Culturkampf zijn goddank voorbij', 'Foreign news', *Time* 6 May. 1882.
39. 'Wil de Duitse regering werkelijk vrede?' and 'Waarom is deze verwerping zo lang verstraagd?', 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 9 Jul. 1882.
48. 'Wanneer leren de Kulturkämpfer eindelijk dat de kerk, die vrij is van de ketenen der staat, haar volle kracht heeft teruggewonnen en de situatie zelf tot een eind kan brengen. Een strijd tegen de kerk is een strijd tegen de stoffelijke en zedelijke gezondheid van het land', 'Foreign news', *Time*, 12 Aug. 1882.
49. 'Kniel voor mij, en ik zal alles geven', 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 4 Feb. 1883.

**Chapter 3: An International Kulturkampf? .....33**

3. 'terwijl zij in Frankrijk vervolgd en weggejaagd worden', 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 25 Dec. 1881.
5. 'terwijl de Culturkampf in Frankrijk nog maar net na langzame schermutselingen op gang komt, probeert men in Duitsland tevergeefs naar een eind te zoeken', 'Foreign news', *Time*, 1 Apr. 1880.
9. 'heeft de taak op zich genomen van hoogste en meest eerwaardige scheidsrechter met als enig doel om de vrede te behouden door oordelen gebaseerd op de waarheid en billijkheid', 'Is there a Europe left?', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 10 Sept. 1882.

12. 'Liberalisme wil gelijkheid voor allen, behalve voor Katholieken!' and 'Het Liberalisme is net zo hevig geweest als in andere landen', 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 20 Feb. 1881.
15. 'Gelijk zij in dit land doen', 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 17 Feb. 1881.
16. 'Ons land en België kunnen hier nog veel van leren', 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 16 June. 1881.
17. 'Gelijk overwinnaars stonden zij op het slagveld, als eenstrijder bedekt met wonden, vol stoutmoedigheid en vastberadenheid, waarlijk een schouwspel voor engelen en mensen om te aanschouwen.', 'Germany', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 24 May. 1883.
19. 'Wij Katholieken van deze dagen, die den beledigingen aanschouwd hebben, waarmee de Wereld den grooten Pius IX, roemruchtiger gedachtenis, overladen heeft, omdat hij pal stond voor de rechten van de Kerk', 'Henry IV at Canossa', *Catholic Illustration*, no. 17. (1881), p. 129.
- 20 'Voor al voor jonge lieden is eene Katholieke Vereeniging, in onze zaken bijna een noodzakelijkheid', 'On Catholic Associations', *Catholic Illustration*, no. 5. (1882), pp. 38-39.
21. 'De cosmopolitische revolutie is op dit oogenblik beter georganiseerd dan ooit, de regeeringen geven doorslaande bewijzen dat zij haar duchten, zij is nooit zoo onbeschaamd opge reden en wij hebben dus alles van haar te vreezen', 'Political and Social storms', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 23 Oct. 1881.
23. 'Het vertrouwen der volkeren is te veel geschokt, dan dat zij nog onvoorwaardelijk geloof zouden slaan aan de vredesbetuigingen van vorsten en staatslieden. Immers de laatste jaren hebben hun geleerd, dat de schijnbare vrede maar al te vaak de stilte bleek te zijn, die den orkaan voorafgaat, en hoe zoet het ook zij te hopen, ernstige teekenen wijzen op een naderende Europeesche crisis', 'The Political Situation', *Tilburgsche Courant*, 8 June. 1882.