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Paolo Sarpi, Caesar Baronius, and the Political Possibilities of Ecclesiastical History

Charles Keenan

Two of the most famous Catholic histories written during the early modern period were the Annales ecclesiastici *of Caesar Baronius (d. 1607), a year-by-year chronicle of the Catholic Church from the birth of Christ to the twelfth century, and the* Istoria del concilio tridentino *of Paolo Sarpi (d. 1623), a scathing critique of the Council of Trent that argued the famous council had only made religious problems worse. Rather than comparing either of these works with similar histories written by protestants—thereby investigating inter-confessional Reformation debates—this article sets Baronius's* Annales *and Sarpi's* Istoria *side by side to explore disputes within Catholicism itself. By analyzing how the authors examine four topics in their histories (Peter and the papal primacy, the relationship between the local and universal church, the history of ecumenical councils, and the relationship between secular and ecclesiastical authorities), as well as considering both historians' actions during the Venetian interdict crisis of 1606, this essay argues that Sarpi and Baronius fundamentally disagreed about the origins and exercise of both secular and ecclesiastical authority. These two modes of Catholic history-writing reveal how Sarpi and Baronius drew from contemporary political models, such that "ecclesiastical history" could have significant political ramifications.*

If one were asked to list the most eminent historians from the early modern period in Europe, two names would undoubtedly arise. On the one hand, there is Caesar Baronius (Cesare Baronio, 1538–1607), a member of the Oratory of Philip Neri, who was later promoted to cardinal and who served as a papal confessor for several years. His major work, the exhaustingly-thorough twelve volumes of the *Annales ecclesiastici*, chronicles the history of Catholic Church year-by-year from the birth of Christ until the year 1198. Baronius received financial support from the popes of this period, and the *Annales* themselves were printed on the Vatican's new press. The *Annales* also remained the most authoritative Catholic history well into the nineteenth century. On the other hand, there is Paolo Sarpi (1552–1623), a Servite friar from Venice who served as the Venetian senate's theological advisor during

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Charles Keenan is a fellow at the Institute for Advanced Jesuit Studies, Boston College.

the interdict of 1606–1607. His most famous published writing was the *Istoria del concilio tridentino*, a *History of the Council of Trent* that boldly claimed the famous council had resolved nothing and, instead, made contemporary religious problems worse. Despite attempts at censure, the history was well-received in many parts of protestant Europe, and even today, one can still find a statue of Sarpi standing proudly in the Campo Santa Fosca in Venice.

Despite the two authors' preeminence in early modern Europe and their relationship with one another, the large bodies of scholarship on each historian have largely passed by each other in silence.[1] Indeed, if any comparison with Baronius is to be made, a long-standing debate asks whether the *Annales* were written in response the *Magdeburg Centuries* (more properly known as the *Ecclesiastica historia*), a century-by-century ecclesiastical history penned by Matthias Flacius Illyricus and other protestant authors across the Alps.[2] The similarities of the projects, the proximity of publication dates, and the general polemical climate of Reformation Europe all suggest the possibility of a connection between the two projects.[3] More recently, though, many historians have asserted that the

[1]The motivation to consider *either* Sarpi *or* Baronius in relation to their contemporaries has led to many fascinating articles, but with the exception of recent work by Stefano Andretta, no one has set the two men next to each other and systematically analyzed their histories. Stefano Andretta, "Cesare Baronio e Venezia," in *Cesare Baronio tra santità e scrittura storica*, ed. Giuseppe Antonio Guazzelli, Raimondo Michetti, and Francesco Scorza Barcellona (Roma: Viella, 2012), 249–279; Andretta, "Sarpi e Roma," in *Paolo Sarpi: Politique et religion en Europe*, ed. Marie Viallon (Paris: Éditions Classiques Garnier, 2010), 139–162; Andretta, "Paolo V e l'interdetto," in *Lo Stato Marciano durante l'interdetto 1606–1607*, ed. Gino Benzoni (Rovigo: Minelliana, 2008), 35–50. There is also a brief mention of the two in Giuseppe Ricuperati, "Cesare Baronio, la storia ecclesiastica, la storia 'civile' e gli scrittori giurisdizionali della prima metà del XVIII secolo," in *Baronio storico e la Controriforma: Atti del convegno internazionale di studi Sora 6–10 ottobre 1979*, ed. Romeo De Maio et al. (Sora: Centro di Studi Sorani "Vincenzo Patriarca," 1982), 760–767. William J. Bouwsma does discuss both authors but dismisses the writings of Baronius—along with those of Bellarmine and others—as "often tedious, repetitious, quite without intellectual distinction, and frequently merely hortatory or vituperative." Bouwsma, "The Venetian Interdict and the Problem of Order," in *A Usable Past: Essays in European Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California, 1990), 98.

Among the essays that have considered Sarpi or Baronius in relation to other early modern thinkers are the following: Eleonora Belligni, "Marcantonio De Dominis, Paolo Sarpi, Roberto Bellarmino e il problema dell'autorità dopo il concilio tridentino," in *Paolo Sarpi*, ed. Viallon, 257–307; Sylvio Hermann De Franceschi, "Romanité et universalité de la communauté ecclésiale: Le débat catholique sur les caractères de la véritable Église au temps de Paolo Sarpi," in ibid., 105–138; Jaska Kainulainen, *Paolo Sarpi: A Servant of God and State* (Leiden: Brill, 2014); Agostino Lauro, "Baronio, De Luca e il potere temporale della Chiesa," in *Baronio storico e la Controriforma*, 361–403; Francis Oakley, "Complexities of Context: Gerson, Bellarmine, Sarpi, Richer, and the Venetian Interdict of 1607–1607," *The Catholic Historical Review* 82, no. 3 (July 1996): 369–396.

[2]As an introduction, see Gregory B. Lyon, "Baudouin, Flacius, and the Plan for the Magdeburg Centuries," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 64, no. 2 (April 2003): 253–272.

[3]Norelli, "L'autorità della chiesa antica nelle Centurie di Magdeburgo e negli *Annales* del Baronio," in *Baronio storico*, 259; Giuseppe Finocchiaro, *Cesare Baronio e la tipografia*

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origins of Baronius's *Annales* are unrelated to the Reformation, claiming the *Annales* were commissioned by Philip Neri in the context of his Oratory.[4]

Much ink has been spilled trying to answer this question. However, ecclesiastical history was not simply a genre that hosted Reformation-era disputes between Catholics and protestants, neatly divided into two camps, with one side writing against the other. As this article will demonstrate, Catholic historians could, and did, disagree with one another on fundamental ecclesiological issues, and they could articulate their disagreements in writing through the genre of ecclesiastical history. Such writings were consciously and primarily directed at other Catholics, not protestants. Thus, instead of the *Magdeburg Centuries*, this article will compare Baronius's *Annales* with Sarpi's *Istoria*, two works written by authors who were contemporaries, who had met one another, and, most importantly, who both identified as Catholic. To take one of Simon Ditchfield's recommendations, if one asks what early modern Catholicism *did* rather than worry about which descriptive label to apply to it—whether "Counter-Reformation," "Tridentine," or something else—a comparison of these famous histories will allow us to explore two rival conceptions of ecclesiastical history, or *historia sacra*, written by Catholics in the early seventeenth century.[5] By setting Baronius and Sarpi side by side, this article therefore seeks to participate in the trend to explore the "complexities of post-Reformation Catholicism."[6]

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dell'Oratorio: impresa e ideologia (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 2005), 15; Sergio Bertelli, *Ribelli, libertini e ortodossi nella storiografia barocca* (Firenze: La nuova Italia, 1973), 66–67.

[4]Neri asked Baronius to give lectures on church history to the Oratory beginning in 1558, and, according to some of Baronius's biographers, it was in this pastoral context where the *Annales* were first conceived. A more direct, if less successful, answer to the protestants appeared in Onofrio Panvinio's history, which he explicitly directed against the *Centuries*. Still, the inadequacy of Panvinio's history led the pope to form a commission of cardinals in 1570 whom he charged to find a solution to the matter. Stefano Zen, *Baronio storico: Controriforma e crisi del metodo umanistico* (Napoli: Vivarium, 1994), 17, 19; Hubert Jedin, *Il Cardinale Cesare Baronio: l'inizio della storiografia ecclesiastica cattolica nel sedicesimo secolo*, trans. Giulio Colombi (Brescia: Morcelliana, 1982), 22–23, 39–40; Cyriac K. Pullapilly, *Caesar Baronius: Counter-Reformation Historian* (Notre Dame, Ind.: Notre Dame University, 1975), 14–15, 26; Georgiana Davidson, "Caesar Baronius and the Catholic Renewal: History and Piety in the Post-Tridentine Era" (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Berkeley, 1981), 38–39.

[5]Simon Ditchfield, "Of Dancing Cardinals and Mestizo Madonnas: Reconfiguring the History of Roman Catholicism in the Early Modern Period," *Journal of Early Modern History* 8, nos. 3–4 (2004): 407–408; Ditchfield, "In Sarpi's Shadow: Coping with Trent the Italian Way," in *Studi in memoria di Cesare Mozzarelli* (Milano: V&P, 2008), 587. For a recent collection of essays exploring the genre of *historia sacra* in early modern Europe, see *Sacred History: Uses of the Christian Past in the Renaissance World*, ed. Katherine van Liere, Simon Ditchfield, and Howard Louthan (New York: Oxford University, 2012).

[6]Stefania Tutino, *Empire of Souls: Robert Bellarmine and the Christian Commonwealth* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2010), 5.

In addition, it contends that what has traditionally been classified as "ecclesiastical history" had significant ramifications for contemporaries that went far beyond the religious sphere. What was at stake was not simply rival conceptions of the Christian past, as important an issue as that became during the Reformation. Rather, Baronius and Sarpi profoundly disagreed on the sources and proper use of authority, both secular and ecclesiastical. The first part of this article compares how the authors treated four topics: Peter and the papal primacy, the relationship between the universal church and local churches, the history of ecumenical councils, and the relationship between ecclesiastical and secular authorities. It then shifts to discussing the role of these historians during the Venetian interdict crisis and argues that their intellectual differences gained even more significance when placed into such a volatile political environment. The tensions of the interdict help to show not only the differences in the methodologies of Sarpi and Baronius as historians, but also how they saw authority operating in concrete situations. In developing ecclesiologies in the course of their histories, both authors were drawing from models of political government, so that in the end the *Annales* and *Istoria* represent much more than "ecclesiastical history" per se. A comparison of the *Annales* and the *Istoria* suggests that Catholic history-writing in early modern Europe may have been more diverse, more contested, and more political than has previously been believed.

I. Peter and the Primacy

From the opening pages of the *Annales*, Baronius declares that the church is "clearly the oldest of all things," which has existed from the creation of the world.[7] The church, however, cannot be understood except in relation to Peter and the apostolic succession. As he explains in the preface, the church is a "visible monarchy built by Christ the Lord, established upon Peter, and maintained through his true and legitimate successors, undoubtedly the Roman pontiffs."[8] One of Baronius's primary concerns is to establish a link between Christ and Peter, so that even as the *Annales* are filled with

[7]"Ecclesiam . . . esse omnium plane antiquissimum." Caesar Baronius, *Annales ecclesiastici auctore Caesare Baronio sorano ex Congregat: incipiens ab adventu Domini N. Iesu Christi, perducitur usque ad traiani imperatoris exordium: com lectitur annos centum: permissu auctoris editio novissima ab ipsomet ante abitum aucta & recognita*, vol. I (Coloniae Agrippinae: Sumptibus Ioannis Gymnici & Antonii Hierati, 1609), "*Apparatus ad Annales Ecclesiasticos: De adventu filii Dei*," col. 1. All of the volume and column numbers cited (col.) refer to this 1609 edition, but for ease of consultation, I will also list the year (*anno*) and section number (no.) whenever possible, which are more standard across different editions.

[8]Ibid., vol. I, "*Praefatio in Annales Ecclesiasticos ad lectorem*." See also col. 150 (*anno* 33, no. XX): "Deus omnipotens . . . ipse sit auctor Ecclesiae, protector, ac moderator; tamen principatum quendam in ea esse voluit, ac monarchiam, quam Petro contulit, ac in eius successores propagavit."

scriptural quotations, easily the most frequently quoted passages are the traditional proof texts for the Petrine doctrine, Matthew 16:18-19 and John 21:15-17.

Baronius pursues a three-step strategy throughout the *Annales*, already discernible in the quotation above: linking Christ with Peter, linking Peter to subsequent pontiffs, and arguing that Peter's preeminence among other disciples has been replicated in the relationship between later popes and bishops, such that the pope is undoubtedly superior to other ecclesiastics. Baronius repeatedly asserts Peter's preeminence among the apostles, such that he refers to Peter as "head of all," "prince of all," and "prince of the Apostles."[9] Similarly—or rather, consequently—Baronius declares that the pope is the "Vicar of Christ, successor of Peter, and greater and more eminent than all bishops whatsoever,"[10] and when addressing the pope directly in a prefatory letter, Baronius describes Sixtus V as the "vicar of Christ our Lord, and successor to Blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles; as a living Peter, and through him, Christ."[11] Baronius's concern to defend Peter's uniqueness also leads him to reshape, if not reject, some traditionally-held notions about other apostles. Baronius makes a special effort to demonstrate that Peter was called by Christ before Andrew, even though Andrew was older, a point likely directed at the Greek churches that esteemed Andrew as *Protokletos*, the "first-called."[12] Baronius is likewise skeptical of John, asking at one point that if John were truly the "beloved disciple," as traditionally believed, "why then was the primacy among apostles given to Peter, and not to John?"[13] Simply put, having already established the status and unique privileges of Peter, Baronius is free to project them onto later popes. The pope's unassailable position is reinforced by other documents that Baronius cites, such as Gregory VII's *Dictatus papae*, which declared that no one could judge the pope, or the decree by Nicholas II in 1059 that stated the pope could not be deposed by anyone.[14] As a result, for Baronius ecclesiastical history is the history of the papacy, and every page of the *Annales* is defined not only year-by-year, but pope-by-pope.[15]

Baronius also believes that the pope's unique position makes him a source of unity. Baronius frames questions of papal primacy not simply in terms of

[9]Ibid., cols. 110 (*anno* 31, no. XXIV), 152 quoting Augustine (*anno* 33, no. XXV), 160 (*anno* 33, no. XLVI).
[10]Ibid., vol. XI, col. 244 (*anno* 1052, no. XVIII).
[11]Ibid., vol. I, "*Sanctissimo ac Beatissimo Patri et D. N. Sixto Quinto Pontifici Maximo*."
[12]Ibid., vol. I, cols. 109–110 (*anno* 31, no. XXIII).
[13]"Cur itaque Petro, & non Ioanni inter Apostolos primatus delatus est?" Ibid., vol. I, col. 133 (*anno* 32, no. VI).
[14]Ibid., vol. XI, col. 244 (*anno* 1052, no. XVIII).
[15]See also Davidson, 117.

Roman juridical privileges, as we might expect; rather, he believes that the pope's role is fundamental to all Catholic life. Baronius explains that all the church fathers agreed communion with the pope defined who was a Catholic – for example, "Jerome confirms the person not in communion with [Peter's] successors to be alien from the Catholic Church."[16] Elsewhere, Baronius himself declares: "He is called Catholic who is joined in communion to Peter's see of the Roman Church, and he is a heretic who is divided from communion with that same chair."[17] This will be discussed more fully below, in the question of local and universal churches, but for now it is sufficient to note that for Baronius, Catholicity is defined not in terms of communion with other Catholics, or even with Rome, but specifically with the pope, who is always presented as the successor to Peter.

As we might expect, Sarpi's position diverges almost immediately from that of Baronius.[18] Analytically, Sarpi is less interested in the papacy as an institution than in presenting sketches of individual popes. When describing the sixteenth-century popes, for instance, Sarpi believes that Julius II was too pugnacious, and that while Leo X possessed a number of excellent personal qualities, he "would have been a perfect pope, if with these [personal traits] he had joined a little understanding of religious things and a little more inclination to piety, since he did not show any great interest in either."[19] Where the *Annales* offer an almost synchronic picture of the papacy and the church, Sarpi is keen to highlight the differences between individuals and their policies.

More generally, where Baronius always strives to emphasize the unity of the Catholic tradition, the *Istoria* depicts the fragmented exercise of power and plurality of opinions within the church, especially in the Roman curia. Sarpi's descriptions of the curia exemplify this. For instance, after having sent Cardinal Eck to negotiate with Luther, the rest of the curia blamed him "with great vituperation, attributing everything bad to his having treated Luther with severity and villainy,"[20] and later Sarpi highlights the disagreement between canonists and theologians over how best to address the Lutheran question.[21] Years afterward, when the possibility was raised of calling a general council, cardinals displayed the same uncertainty and mixed

[16]Baronius, *Annales*, vol. I, col. 235 (*anno* 34, no. CCV).
[17]Ibid., vol. I, col. 376 (*anno* 45, no. VI). Cf. col. 377 (*anno* 45, no. VII).
[18]Boris Ulianich also analyzes Sarpi's conception of the papacy, but largely based on Sarpi's private correspondence. Ulianich, "Considerazioni e documenti per una ecclesiologia di Paolo Sarpi," in *Festgabe Joseph Lortz*, ed. Erwin Iserloh and Peter Manns, vol. II: *Glaube und Geschichte* (Baden-Baden: Erschienen bei Bruno Grimm, 1958), 400–429.
[19]Paolo Sarpi, *Istoria del concilio tridentino*, ed. Giovanni Gambarin, vol. I (Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli, 1935), 7.
[20]Ibid., 14.
[21]Ibid., 16–17.

opinions. According to Sarpi, some were afraid because a council could not overcome the impediments between princes to secure a peace; others tried to weigh the benefits of a peace with that of a council; and others, a majority, tried to delay a council altogether.[22]

Unlike the "princes of all" described by Baronius, the *Istoria*'s pontiffs are constantly concerned about their own authority being diminished, and it is this dread that it drives almost all other aspects of their behavior. Leo X feared for his authority after Luther's revolt gained momentum; Clement VII realized that he needed to appease Germany in 1524, though without endangering his authority; and, according to Sarpi's telling, Paul III shied away from the potential reforms of Trent and was particularly afraid of the Spanish faction.[23] This pattern held true even when the pope was not present: in 1547, Paul III's legates became upset with Spanish bishops' proposed reforms of benefices, and when the legates wrote back to the pope, they framed it as a problem of authority.[24] At the same time, Sarpi points out that the popes were as concerned with giving up their authority as fending off any external threats to it. Although legates *a latere* could, in theory, make the pope "present" at Trent and elsewhere by exercising his authority, Sarpi describes how popes refused to cede full authority to these representatives. When Gasparo Contarini met with Emperor Charles V at Regensburg in 1541, Contarini explained that his powers as a legate were in fact quite limited. He had not been given the "full authority and absolute power" of the pope, since those resided "in the bones of the pope and could not be granted to another person."[25]

Sarpi's point in all this is subtle, but important. We have seen how Baronius viewed the papacy as the apex of Christian authority, and how Baronius achieved this result by insisting on the authority of Christ that was directly transferred to Peter and then to subsequent popes.[26] Sarpi's attack on the papacy never takes the most obvious route of directly disagreeing with Baronius's monarchical notions. Instead, Sarpi argues that Catholic history can be seen as the result of a multitude of private agendas unfolding, and that the popes were no different than anyone else in hoping to protect their own authority and privileges. But Sarpi's point is not just to undermine the

[22]Ibid., 144–145.
[23]Ibid., 14, 50, 142, 414.
[24]Ibid., 410.
[25]"Prima, perché è così annessa alle ossa del pontificato che non può essere concessa ad altra persona, poi ancora perché non si trovano parole né clausule con le quali si possi comunicare dal pontefice l'autorità di determinare le cose controverse della fede, essendo il privilegio di non poter fallare donato alla sola persona del pontefice in quelle parole: *Ego rogavi pro te, Petre*." Ibid., 151.
[26]Zen, 128; William J. Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defense of Republican Liberty: Renaissance Values in the Age of the Counter Reformation* (Berkeley: University of California, 1968), 309–310.

idea of a papal monarchy; Sarpi also highlights the benefits of organizational structures that allowed for discussion, negotiation, and dissent.

II. Local Churches and the Universal Church

These preferences become even clearer when we ask how these authors conceptualize the relationship of local churches to one another. For Baronius this would be a misleading question, since any focus on particular churches would mask their underlying unity, which is historically rooted in the apostolic tradition. Despite the fact that individual churches were initially founded by various apostles, they remain one (*Ecclesia una*).[27] This unity, as might be expected, is asserted through the primacy of Peter over the other apostles. Baronius's discussion of Christendom's traditional patriarchal sees demonstrates this exactly. One might think that Alexandria's church—traditionally the "second" patriarchal see, after Rome—would be esteemed since it was founded by Mark, but in reality Mark "had been sent to Alexandria by Peter," or according to another source that Baronius quotes, the Alexandrian church "was founded in the name of Blessed Peter by Mark, his disciple, the evangelist. He himself had been sent to Egypt by the apostle Peter."[28] Baronius similarly only mentions the third patriarchal see of Antioch because Peter had supposedly stayed there before coming to Rome.[29] As when defending the primacy, Baronius's intention is to eliminate any possible claim eastern patriarchs might make to unique privileges independent of the pope, since, as Baronius explicitly states at one point, the rights of eastern bishops derive from the authority of Peter and his successors.[30]

The examples of Alexandria and Antioch reveal how Baronius approaches all local churches in terms of their relationship to Rome, and, furthermore, how he tries to answer this question in historical terms. His conclusion is that the Catholic Church is a monarchy, one whose throne is filled by the Roman bishop.[31] The difference between Baronius's treatment of the primacy and this topic is minimal—in the former case, Baronius discusses the person of Peter and his successors, and in the latter, the rights of the Roman see. But the point is largely the same. Catholicity is once again defined in terms of communion with Rome. In Baronius's unequivocal

[27]Baronius, vol. I, col. 375 (*anno* 45, nos. II–III).

[28]"antequam idem S. Marcus Alexandriam mitteretur a Petro." Ibid., vol. IX, col. 851 (*anno* 820, no. XXI); "Secunda autem sedes apud Alexandriam beati Petri nomine a Marco eius discipulo atque Evangelista consecrata est: ipseque in Aegyptum directus a Petro Apostolo." Ibid., vol. IV, col. 495 (*anno* 382, no. XIX).

[29]Ibid., vol. IV, col. 495 (*anno* 382, no. XIX).

[30]Ibid., vol. VI, col. 758 (*anno* 517, no. XLIII).

[31]Ibid., vol. XI, cols. 885–886 (*anno* 1097, nos. XXIX–XXX).

phrasing, "Roman" and "Catholic" mean the same thing and always belong together.[32]

We might pause here to note how Baronius's commitment to this intellectual position affects—or rather, dictates—his methodology. As noted, Baronius draws from the Bible, Patristic authors, and the decrees of councils and popes to support his views in the *Annales*. It is curious, then, that when Baronius describes Antioch's church only in terms of how it relates to Peter, he is ignoring the Biblical description of Antioch. Acts 11:19-26 discusses the community at Antioch and how it was the first group to be called "Christians"—a point noted by Baronius—but Peter is never mentioned in this biblical passage. Moreover, Galatians 2:11-14 states that Paul had been in Antioch before Peter arrived. Given what we know about Baronius's erudition and piety, as well as the devotional practices of the Oratorians who regularly read scripture, it seems extremely unlikely that Baronius would have been ignorant of these passages.[33] That he still chose to depict Antioch as a church only in relation to Peter underlines Baronius's commitment to a centralized view of the church.

A similar distortion takes place in the first volume when Baronius quotes Irenaeus on the apostolic tradition and the succession to different sees. As is common in the *Annales*, here Baronius quotes Irenaeus and then offers a reiteration of the quotation along with his own commentary. In the quoted passage, Iraeneus states that discussing the apostolic succession of all churches would take a long time, and he instead calls the reader's attention to the church of Rome, "the greatest and most ancient, recognized by all," which was "founded and ordered by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul."[34] The original text is included in the *Annales* for the reader, but Baronius, in recapitulating the passage, only describes "the successors of Peter" (*Petri successores*) and the Roman see. Even if Irenaeus did point out the preeminence of the Roman church in this passage, his original concern had been with churches, plural (*Ecclesiis, omnium Ecclesiarum*); bishops, plural (*Episcopi, Episcoporum*); and multiple apostles (*Apostolorum,*

[32]Ibid., vol. I, col. 378 (*anno* 45, no. X). See also Giuseppe Antonio Guazzelli's analysis of how Baronius retrojects the adjective *Romanus* into the history of the early church, "Cesare Baronio and the Roman Catholic Version of the Early Church," in *Sacred History*, 60–66.

[33]On the Oratory and Baronius, see Jedin, 7, 69; and Pullapilly, *passim*. On the Bible as a historical as well as a theological source for Baronius: Giuseppe Finocchiaro, *Cesare Baronio e la tipografia dell'Oratorio: impresa e ideologia* (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 2005), 18.

[34]"Traditionem itaque Apostolorum in toto mundo manifestam in Ecclesia adest perspicere omnibus qui vera velint audire: & habemus adnumerare eos qui ab Apostolis instituti sint Episcopi in Ecclesiis . . . Sed quoniam valde longum est in hoc tali volumine omnium Ecclesiarum enumerare successiones: maximae & antiquissimae & omnibus cognitae, a gloriosissimis duobus Apostolis Petro & Paulo Romae fundatae & constitutae, Ecclesiae, eam quam habet ab Apostolis traditionem, & annunciatam hominibus fidem, per successiones Episcoporum pervenientem usque ad nos." Baronius, vol. I, col. 456 (*anno* 53, no. XVII).

Apostolis), including the *two* who had founded the Roman church, Peter and Paul. Here again, Baronius's commitment to the Petrine doctrine and Rome's supremacy over other churches forces him to re-interpret, if not misinterpret, his own sources, and once again the result is a view that favors authority centralized under the pope.

In his *Istoria del concilio tridentino*, Sarpi chooses instead to focus on local churches, which he tends to define in terms of the secular governments attached to those churches.[35] This is especially true at Trent, where Sarpi highlights the national factions represented in the council sessions. Again Sarpi's penchant for highlighting dissent becomes apparent, although in this case the dissent is structured by the council members' identification with their national churches.[36] Sarpi recognized the tension between the papal legates and curialists, on the one hand, and the Spanish faction on the other. Sarpi describes how the legates suspected the Holy Roman Emperor of giving the Spanish bishops instructions on how to vote at the council, so that the legates, in turn, wrote to the pope requesting more prelates of his own.[37] Far from Baronius's one, universal church, the picture given by Sarpi is one of competing national interests, to the extent that what is "religious" becomes inextricable from the political. This article will describe in more detail below how Sarpi saw the relationship between civil and ecclesiastical power, but one should note how Sarpi's emphasis on political allegiance means that, in his view, the question of local versus universal churches also encompasses conflicts between secular and religious leaders, including the animosity between Paul III and Henry VIII.[38]

Moreover, if Baronius writes his *Annales* from the papal court's point of view, Sarpi's history is from the perspective of Christians living outside of Rome, who constantly affirm their local privileges and traditions against the claims of the Holy See. In the debate at Trent over the validity of secret marriages, Sarpi explains how the French representatives asserted that there was an absolute difference between the "Roman church" and the "universal church."[39] The question was not merely juridical. For Sarpi, the Roman church's claims to supremacy were an abomination and lay at the center of all the contemporary church's problems; there was no historical basis for the Roman bishop's unique authority, he said, and since all bishops in the ancient church had been equal, debates over jurisdiction demonstrated just

[35]Bouwsma sees Sarpi's "renunciation of the general in favor of the particular" as a characteristic trait of the Renaissance. Bouwsma, "Venice, Spain, and the Papacy: Paolo Sarpi and the Renaissance Tradition," in idem, *A Usable Past*, 257.
[36]De Franceschi, 126; Ulianich, 367.
[37]Sarpi, I, 225.
[38]Ibid., 137–138.
[39]Sarpi, *Istoria*, vol. III, 138.

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how innovative the Roman claims were.[40] Put differently, Sarpi believes that the universalist claims of Rome impeded other efforts to effectively reform the church that might have been undertaken at the local or national level. For example, Sarpi describes how in the late 1530s German bishops believed that there were so many abuses that the only way they could be fixed was through a general council. However, the bishops also requested that if a general council was impossible the emperor and pope allow them to convoke a national council in Germany.[41] This was the great fear of the popes throughout the 1520s and 1530s, since they would ostensibly have less control over a national council held outside of Italy. But for Sarpi the situation was so dire that any solution—even by authorities outside of Rome—should have been embraced.

Given this affinity for local churches and support for national councils, one might briefly ask to what degree Sarpi was a proponent of Gallicanism, as some historians have suggested. The answer to this question surely depends on one's definition of the term. William J. Bouwsma once claimed that Gallicanism could be identified by its rejection of hierarchically-organized structures of governance and preference for discrete centers of power, tendencies he located in French lawyers.[42] Bouwsma also wanted to argue that Gallicanism had an impact beyond the borders of the kingdom of France. Based on these definitions Bouwsma concluded that Sarpi, who was influenced by these French thinkers, could be labeled a Gallicanist.[43] But Sarpi never appears as interested in the prerogatives of the *French* church as he is in defending all local and national churches against incursions from external powers. (And as Boris Ulianich noted, "if one considers well the thought and writings of our author . . . one will see how even the Gallican church does not correspond to Sarpi's ideal.")[44] Moreover, as many other scholars have concluded, Sarpi cannot be a Gallican thinker if Gallicanism is defined in terms of decentralized authority: although Sarpi is quick to circumscribe papal authority, he never does the same for the authority of the state, so that he could in fact be termed an absolutist.[45] This will become clearer below when

[40]Andretta, "Sarpi e Roma," 159–160; Ulianich, "Considerazioni," 391, 403.

[41]Sarpi, *Istoria*, vol. I, 155. On this, see also Ulianich, 377.

[42]William J. Bouwsma, "Gallicanism and the Nature of Christendom," in *Renaissance Studies in Honor of Hans Baron*, ed. Anthony Molho and John A. Tedeschi (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University, 1971), 809–830. For an alternative overview to Gallicanism, see J. H. M. Salmon, "Catholic Resistance Theory, Ultramontanism, and the Royalist Response, 1580–1620," in *The Cambridge History of Political thought, 1450–1700*, ed. J. H. Burns with Mark Goldie (New York: Cambridge University, 1991), 231–233.

[43]Bouwsma, "Gallicanism," 824n45; cf. 828–829, where he discusses the Gallican tradition in Venice.

[44]Ulianich, 400.

[45]The best discussion of this point is in Federico Chabod, *La Politica di Paolo Sarpi* (Venezia: Istituto per la collaborazione cultura, 1968), especially 73 and 103. Chabod points out the

we turn to the relationship between ecclesiastical and secular authority, but for now it is enough to conclude that while Sarpi would probably have supported Gallicanism (i.e., the French interest in its national church), it would be incorrect to call Sarpi himself a Gallican.

III. Councils

It should come as no surprise that Baronius held a skeptical view of ecumenical councils. On the one hand, Baronius emphasized the unity and unanimity present at true ecumenical councils. This is because true councils do little more than reaffirm the tradition of the church—which Baronius defines as the example of God and the customs of the Apostles—that has been agreed upon for centuries.[46] Innovation is an impossibility. On the other hand, Baronius underscores how councils are absolutely subordinate to papal authority. Councils are not legitimate unless they have been convoked by the pope, and even then, the occasions that warrant such convocations are limited. Baronius recounts how the apostolic representative to the Council of Chalcedon informed its members that they could not dare hold a synod without the authority of the Roman see.[47] To argue this position presented some difficulty, even for Baronius. After all, the Council of Nicea had been convoked by the emperor Constantine, independently of the bishop of Rome. But Baronius maintains that Pope Sylvester *could* have been involved in the convocation somehow, even if no records survive—or perhaps, he suggests, it was Sylvester who persuaded Constantine to convoke the council in the first place.[48]

In contrast, Sarpi's affinity for general councils underlies the whole of his *Istoria*, and councils provide the driving force for his conception of ecclesiastical history. It is telling that the *Istoria del concilio tridentino* actually begins in the year 1500, and that this prelude to the council is itself interrupted with an overview of church history that describes the persistent, incessant calls for councils over the centuries. Simply put, the history of the

similarities between Sarpi and Bodin, where if absolutism for the latter is best expressed through monarchy, Sarpi prefers its implementation through oligarchy. Similar interpretations of Sarpi appear in Kainulainen, *passim*; David Wootton, *Paolo Sarpi: between Renaissance and Enlightenment* (New York: Cambridge University, 1983), 5; and J. P. Sommerville, "Absolutism and Royalism," in *The Cambridge History of Political Thought*, 349.

[46]Baronius, vol. I, col. 618 (*anno* 58, no. CXIX).

[47]Ibid., vol. IV, col. 457 (*anno* 381, no. XX).

[48]Norelli, "L'autorità," 297–298. See also Irena Backus, *Historical Method and Confessional Identity in the Era of the Reformation (1378–1615)* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 335.

church is the history of councils.[49] Sarpi repeatedly quotes persons who affirm that councils are the oldest and most traditional way of settling disputes, and he quotes from those who believe that only a general council would solve the problems facing the Catholic Church in the sixteenth century.[50] During a legation to the emperor in 1539, Marcello Cervini explained that it was "the most ancient custom, since the [time of the] apostles, that controversies are ended only with a council, and [thus] all the kings, princes and pious men desire one now."[51] Moreover, these are not isolated incidents of conciliarism. Rather, Sarpi argues that the desire for reform is so widespread that everyone (*ognun*) desires the convocation of a council that will resolve the religious questions of the day.[52] The implication, of course, is that the church was guilty of ignoring the desires of its flock, and that further delay would highlight the church's continuing, gross inaction.

However, Sarpi's initial support for a general council was soon tempered by his realization that these assemblies were always perverted and defeated by private interests. Everyone who appears in the *Istoria* wants something different from the Council of Trent. Lutherans appeared interested in participating in a general council, but only if it were regulated by the authority of scripture and without any pontifical decrees or scholastic theology. Meanwhile, princes and other secular rulers cared little whether the council addressed questions of doctrine, and instead wanted the council to reduce the privileges of priests and friars so that the temporal authorities might prevail. And whereas "the people" desired that ecclesiastical authority be lessened through a council, and that tithes and other taxes be reduced, the Roman curia desired to use the council to restore obedience to its decrees.[53]

But a multiplicity of competing interests is only part of the problem with councils like Trent. The passage just described, which lists faction after action, closes with Sarpi saying that Pope Leo X *non sapeva che desiderare* —that is, unlike every other person who held specific goals, the pope "did not know what he wanted" from a council. Leo was merely afraid of the potential reforms that such a council could initiate.[54] If Sarpi depicts the history of the church as the history of councils, it is equally true to say that Sarpi sees these appeals being continually rebuked by popes who fear

[49]Sarpi repeats this excursus later in a more abbreviated form: 214–218. On Sarpi and conciliarism in general, see Kainulainen, 169–176.

[50]Sarpi, 14–15, 209.

[51]Ibid., 147.

[52]Ibid., 21. Cf. p. 28, "ognuno" and "questa fu desiderata da ogni sorte di persone come remedio salutare ed unico."

[53]Ibid., 28–30; Ulianich, "Il significato politico della *Istoria del Concilio Tridentino* di Paolo Sarpi," in *Il Concilio di Trento come crocevia della politica europea*, ed. Hubert Jedin and Paolo Prodi (Bologna: il Mulino, 1979), 194.

[54]Sarpi, 29.

that their authority will be reduced. Sarpi weaves this point throughout his history of the sixteenth-century popes: even as imperial troops were closing in on Rome in 1527, for instance, Sarpi describes how Clement VII "completely abhorred" the idea of a council, fearing that it would moderate his papal authority.[55]

Thus, the second problem with councils, in Sarpi's opinion, is that any council held in the sixteenth or seventeenth century would be held under complete papal control. This was certainly the case at Trent. Even before the council began, Paul III was concerned over the proposed location, and thought of transferring the council to Bologna, where he believed his authority would be absolute.[56] Once the council began, Sarpi's narrative emphasizes how popes involved themselves in every aspect of the council's sessions without traveling to Trent, whether through bulls, letters, or the presence of papal legates.[57] The legates were especially important in Sarpi's eyes as a kind of manifestation of the pope's will, a symbol of the degree to which Trent was dominated by papal interests. If previous popes had feared the opening of the council, Sarpi depicts the popes who reigned during the council as detesting its sessions. In one illuminating passage, Sarpi describes the progress of the Reformation in Europe and how Pope Pius IV reacted to it: "The pontiff felt greater disgust, receiving news daily, and always worse news, just as every day there was news in Trent (in addition to the mishaps that were occurring in Germany and France against his interests)."[58] In Sarpi's framing, Trent was as distasteful to the pope as the reformers in northern Europe—and, more to the point, the council presented yet another challenge that needed to be addressed and controlled. Shortly after that quotation Sarpi proceeds to describe the character of Pius IV, who claimed that everyone was working against him and his interests. The pope made this protest, Sarpi explained, "not for lack of restraint with his language, but with skill (*arte*), in order to restrain everyone, whether out of fear, shame, or civility."[59] Even faced with what he perceived as an unruly council, the pope (in Sarpi's version) was nevertheless able to skillfully, if not insidiously, restore control over the long-awaited council.

Sarpi constantly emphasizes the efforts made to circumvent this Roman-controlled environment—the imperial diet's proposals to call a national council of its own, or the Holy Roman Emperor writing directly to the

[55]Ibid., 67. For other instances on Clement's fear of a council, see also 55, 59.
[56]Ibid., 415–416.
[57]Ibid., 206–207, 225, 227.
[58]"Il pontefice, giongendo novi avvisi giornalmente, e sempre peggiori, sì come anco ogni giorno succedeva novità in Trento (oltre li accidenti che in Germania e in Francia occorrevano, contrari alle cose sue), sentiva maggior disgusti." Sarpi, *Istoria* II, 400.
[59]Ibid., 402–403.

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College of Cardinals, asking *them* to take charge of the council—but Sarpi acknowledges that these attempts all ended in failure.[60] The *Istoria*, then, does not celebrate the council's history. Instead, Sarpi is writing history in the ironic mode.[61] Nothing turns out as it should, and in the supreme irony, the long-awaited council to reform the church was so constrained by papal interests that it ended without reforming anything. The *Istoria*'s opening conveys this bitterness and summarizes Sarpi's disappointment exactly: "This council, desired and procured by pious men to reunite the Church that was beginning to divide against itself, instead so fixed the schism and made both sides persistent, that it made the discord irreconcilable." He continues, "Managed by princes for the reform of the ecclesiastical order, it caused the greatest deformation (*disformazione*) ever since the name 'Christian' was heard. The bishops used the council to reacquire their episcopal authority, which for the most part had passed onto the one Roman pontiff, who made them lose everything, completely. Thus," Sarpi concludes, "It would not be incorrect to call this council 'the Iliad of our time.'"[62]

IV. Civil and Ecclesiastical Authority

The final point of comparison between Baronius and Sarpi is the relationship between civil and ecclesiastical power, a topic that achieved extreme relevance during the Venetian interdict crisis of 1606–1607. For Baronius, there can be no true distinction between these two categories, either in theory or in practice, since he grounds all authority to govern in what is granted by God; the *Annales* repeatedly refer to biblical passages that explain how temporal government cannot exist unless permitted by God.[63] The same holds true for historical events. Baronius explains that when Leo III crowned Charlemagne as king of the Romans, "this happened, or could have happened, only with divine assistance."[64] God is therefore immanent and active in history.

In Baronius's schema, authority was transferred from its origins in Christ to Peter, then to Peter's successors, and finally onto worthy temporal rulers. The explosive contention is that temporal authority is not really separate from the

[60]Ibid., I, 58, 64–66.

[61]Peter Burke, applying the concepts of Hayden White's *Metahistory*, suggests that Sarpi's *Istoria* can either be seen as tragedy or satire. "Sarpi storico," in *Ripensando Paolo Sarpi: Atti del convegno internazionale di studi nel 450° anniversario della nascità di Paolo Sarpi*, ed. Corrado Pin (Venezia: Ateneo Veneto, 2006), 105–106.

[62]Sarpi, I, 4.

[63]Baronius, *Annales*, vol. IX, col. 612 (*anno* 800, no. IX).

[64]"nonnisi divino consilio factum esse, vel fieri potuisse." Ibid, vol. IX, col. 613 (*anno* 800, no. IX).

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church at all.[65] Baronius lists some of the implications of this assertion, beginning with his observation that "within this hierarchical order, it necessarily follows that if any of the sheep should err, it should be corrected by its pastor," concluding that it is the duty of the ecclesiastical authorities to discipline temporal rulers.[66] Baronius thus declares that the Catholic Church is the one, true monarchy, to the extent that he declares: "There is no other but this one; certainly, no other should be called a monarchy but the only one which has left alone, preserved, and cared for the name of 'Monarchy,' which has been imparted to it by Christ, and which alone has been venerated by the faithful."[67] In other words, not only is the church structured as a monarchy: it is the *only* institution that exists as such, since, on the basis of Baronius's other remarks, secular society has been completely subsumed within the structure of this one, true, universal (i.e., catholic) monarchy.

Paolo Sarpi could not have held a more drastically different position. Throughout the *Istoria* Sarpi insists on the separate spheres of civil and ecclesiastical authority.[68] Where Baronius is concerned to demonstrate the fundamental unity of Christendom, Sarpi gives careful attention to the struggles between secular and religious leaders as a fact of life. He notes that the conflict between Pope Paul III and Henry VIII was important since, at that point, there had been no changes to doctrine in England; the only debate was over the pope's claims to jurisdiction there.[69] Moreover, in Sarpi's view these two spheres are separate, but certainly not equal. Sarpi wants to demonstrate just how absurd popes' claims to universal jurisdiction are when faced with direct challenges. He gives the reader a vivid portrait of Clement VII in 1527, moments before the imperial army began to sack Rome, where Clement is "totally confused," eventually asking for his papal robes and saying that "he wanted to be dressed thus, in imitation of Boniface VIII," and that he would wait, seated in his papal throne, for any violations of his apostolic dignity.[70] Rome's impotence in the face of the invading armies, coupled with Clement's desperate attempt to maintain his "apostolic dignity," reveal just how hollow the pope's claims to authority were. Moreover, Sarpi never mentions God when discussing ecclesiastical power. Where Baronius

[65]Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defense of Republican Liberty*, 314.

[66]Baronius, *Annales*, vol. IX, col. 615 (*anno* 800, no. XV). Significantly, Baronius seems to elide the authority of the pope and that of God during his discussion on this topic, thus reinforcing the notion that secular authority is completely derivative of whatever is awarded by the pope and God—e.g., "Cum igitur Dei & Apostolicae Sedis gratia totum" and "par est utrisque Deo atque Apostolicae Sedi gratos esse." Ibid., vol. IX, col. 616 (*anno* 800, no. XX).

[67]Ibid., vol. XI, cols. 885–886 (*anno* 1097, nos. XXIX–XXX).

[68]Kainulainen, 179–188; Vittorio Frajese, *Sarpi scettico: Stato e Chiesa a Venezia tra Cinque e Seicento* (Bologna: il Mulino, 1994), especially 381–405.

[69]Sarpi, 111–112. Cf. the struggle between Clement VII and the Holy Roman Empire, 61–65.

[70]Ibid., 66.

invoked divine foundations in order to legitimate ecclesiastical authority, Sarpi leaves the metaphysical completely out of his history, with the result that papal claims are the claims of the pope, alone, and are therefore more vulnerable to criticism.[71]

Holding that the civil and ecclesiastical spheres are separate, the *Istoria* then demonstrates that all of the momentum for reform emanates from the temporal realm, while the pope and Roman curia are only committed to delaying councils, which represent the only hope of true reform. Again and again Sarpi describes how the imperial diet was the body which demanded papal legates to summon a council, how the imperial diet wanted to convoke a national council if a general one was impossible, and how the diet recognized the pope's attempts to delay any such council.[72] In addition, Sarpi's account emphasizes how ecclesiastical government always benefits whenever the secular arm is involved. The legitimacy and efficacy of the first ecumenical councils derived from the unifying presence of the Roman Empire and its emperors, Sarpi suggests, something which was lost during the Middle Ages and which left medieval councils disorganized.[73] Sarpi's *Istoria* addresses what happens outside of Trent as much as what happens at the council sessions. Sarpi's point, tacitly delivered through his style of writing history, is that the secular and ecclesiastical spheres are always in conversation with one another, whether they want to be or not; and furthermore, that the way in which secular governments choose to implement ecclesiastical policies matters as much as the content of those policies themselves.

What, then, were Sarpi's views on the forms that secular and ecclesiastical government should take? Sarpi preferred that secular and ecclesiastical governments alike be organized on the basis of republican or oligarchic principles. Sarpi takes a favorable view to the imperial diet, as just mentioned; he highlights the Sacred College of Cardinals as another representative body whose purpose had been usurped by the papacy; and of course, there is his sympathy for republican Venice as a refuge for those fleeing papal dominance at Trent.[74] Properly speaking, Sarpi's comparison is

[71]Ulianich and Wootton both argue that this refusal to consider the metaphysical is essential to Sarpi's method of writing history. Ulianich, "Il significato politico," 186, 188–189; Wootton, 1, 18. For Kainulainen, Sarpi's distancing of the worldly from the divine is a consequence of his low view of mankind after the Fall, when humanity had limited sense perception and as a result could not penetrate divine matters. Kainulainen, 64–84, 258–259.

[72]Sarpi, I, 58, 96–97, 153.

[73]Ibid., 6.

[74]The clearest example of his view that the Sacred College should be an advisory body appears in his *Istoria dell'Interdetto*, ed. M. D. Busnelli and G. Gambarin, vol. I (Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli, 1940), 17. On prelates going to Venice during Trent and the papal nuncio there ordering them to return to the council, Sarpi, *Istoria del Concilio Tridentino*, I, 410–411.

not just between ecclesiastical and secular governance: he sets the papal monarchy against local churches; the papal monarchy against its own quasi-senate, the College of Cardinals; and the papal monarchy against more representative forms of secular governance, including the Venetian Senate and the Imperial Diet. In each case, his inclination is to check the absolute power of the papacy through these other assemblies.

V. History, Ecclesiology, and the Venetian Interdict

Thus, how the authors conceive of the relationship between the civil and ecclesiastical spheres flows naturally out of the other themes we have examined. For Baronius the papal monarchy stands at the center of history. Any other source of authority—whether other bishops, councils, or secular government—must therefore be subsumed within papal prerogatives and seen to be derivative of it. Methodologically, Baronius chose to rely on the Bible, the writings of church fathers, and the decrees of popes and councils as his sources—even though, as mentioned, he can re-read those sources to fit his own ideas about papal primacy. The *Annales* always favor unity and, of course, immutability. The church has never erred, nor can it err.[75] To underline this point, Baronius often personally intervenes in the text, calling the reader's attention to this or that point: "Do you therefore see, reader, from these examples . . . ?"; "Do you understand, reader . . . ?"; and most directly, "Do you see, reader (I call upon you) . . . ?"[76] Baronius invites the reader to join in his project, to acknowledge the irrefutable evidence collected there, and to use the *Annales* as a way of celebrating the foregone conclusion of the glory of the church and its pristine tradition, handed down directly from the time of Christ to the present.

Sarpi's *Istoria del concilio tridentino* differs on nearly every point. Sarpi never relies on proof texts from the Bible or Patristic authors; instead, Sarpi knew Camillo Olivo, who had been secretary to Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga, and historians know that Sarpi obtained a large amount of his information for the *Istoria* based on conversations with Olivo.[77] His proclaimed focus

[75]"Romana ecclesia nunquam erravit nec errare potest," Baronius, vol. IX, cols. 842–843 (*anno* 819, no. XXVI). Here I concur with Simon Ditchfield's assessment that Baronius saw *historia sacra* as having an active function in minimizing distinctions between the Christian past and the present. Ditchfield, "Baronio storico nel suo tempo," in *Cesare Baronio tra santità e scrittura storica*, 9–10. See also Ditchfield, *Liturgy, Sanctity and History in Tridentine Italy: Pietro Maria Campi and the Preservation of the Particular* (New York: Cambridge University, 1995), 283–84.

[76]"Vides igitur ex his in primis, lector, . . ."; "Intellegis, lector . . ."; "Videsne tu lector (appello te) . . ." Baronius, vol. VI, cols. 134 (*anno* 450, no. XXVII), 758 (*anno* 517, no. XLIII) and 604–605 (*anno* 502, no. VI). For other examples (though there are many), see vol. IV, col. 379 (*anno* 373, no. XXI), cols. 546–547 (*anno* 385, no. IX); vol. XI, cols. 336 (*anno* 1059, no. XXXII), 885 (*anno* 1097, no. XXIX).

[77]Chabod, 26; Bertelli, 93.

was to tell the "whole" story—from the outset, Sarpi declares his intention of giving a "complete narration" (*intiera narrazione*), explaining that he had a "great curiosity to know the whole thing" (*gran curiosità di saperne l'intiero*).[78] The result is a much more complex history that seems, to modern readers, more "realistic." The historical actors are driven by self-interest, and the *Istoria* itself is the aggregate of these competing goals. Given the multitude of individuals involved and the variety of interests pitted against each other, things rarely turn out the way they are supposed to, and the end result—the reality of it all—is a messy, disjointed narrative.[79]

What about the personal relationship between these two men? They certainly had met each other: Sarpi had made several trips to Rome in the 1580s where he met a number of high-ranking prelates, including Pope Sixtus V, Giovanni Battista Castagna (the future Urban VII), Robert Bellarmine, Nicolás Alfonso de Bobadilla, and Baronius.[80] We also know that while Sarpi was in Rome in 1588, he received the first volume of the *Annales*.[81] Sarpi's time in Rome made a profound impact on the friar. It was the closest Sarpi came to the institutional center of Catholicism, and, as Gaetano Cozzi once remarked, Sarpi left Rome "quite puzzled and disheartened by the logic of the Roman curia."[82]

Whatever the nature of their interaction in Rome, Sarpi continued to mention Baronius in his writings after he returned to Venice, primarily as a symbol of all those who supported papal claims. In one of his *consulti* to the Venetian senate, Sarpi referred to Baronius when discussing the "coercive power" of Rome, and in another, Baronius is listed alongside Bellarmine and Antonio Possevino as noteworthy opponents of Venice.[83] Sarpi likewise opposed the expansion of the Oratory into France, believing that Baronius and others would export papalist opinions into that country.[84] But more importantly for our purposes, Sarpi began to critique Baronius's methods as a historian. Sarpi claimed—as many modern historians have also noted—that Baronius's history was

[78]Sarpi, *Istoria del concilio tridentino*, I, 3. Ulianich has also noted this goal: "Il significato politico," 181.

[79]For another analysis of Sarpi's rhetoric in the *Istoria*, see Sheila Marie Das, "Rhetoric and History: Paolo Sarpi's *Istoria del Concilio Tridentino*" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 2003). On Sarpi's methods as a theologian, Ulianich, "Le Epistole paoline nel pensiero e nelle opere di fra Paolo Sarpi," in *Ripensando Paolo Sarpi*, 76; and idem, "Paolo Sarpi 'riformatore,' 'irenico'? Note sulla sua ecclesiologia, sulla sua teologia, sulla sua religione," in *Atti del Convegno di Studio. Fra Paolo Sarpi dei Servi di Maria. Venezia, 28-29-30 ottobre 1983*, ed. Pacifico Branchesi and Corrado Pin (Venezia: Comune di Venezia, 1986), 57.

[80]Andretta, "Sarpi e Roma," 146–9; Wootton, 9; Zen, 176; Pacifico M. Branchesi, "Fra Paolo Sarpi prima della vita pubblica (1552–1605). Appunti di ricerca," in *Ripensando Paolo Sarpi*, 64.

[81]Zen, 289.

[82]Gaetano Cozzi, "La formazione culturale e religiosa (1552–1605), nota introduttiva," in *Paolo Sarpi, Opere*, ed. Gaetano and Luisa Cozzi (Milano-Napoli: Ricciardi, 1969), 19; quoted in Andretta, "Sarpi e Roma," 141.

[83]Andretta, "Sarpi e Roma," 152–154.

[84]Jedin, 37 n51.

dictated by predetermined conclusions. The *Annales* incorrectly projected papal primacy backward onto the beginnings of Christianity, even though, in Sarpi's view, there was no evidence for this. Baronius's methodological error thereby "corrupted everything," since it assumed that "what exists today has always existed."[85] One case that especially infuriated Sarpi was Baronius's treatment of a quote by Pope Leo IV in 850, who said that popes had "the power to bind and loose souls (*animas*)." In the *Annales*, however, Baronius omitted the word *animas*, so that the pope's authority could be applied to temporal as well as spiritual matters.[86] Sarpi claimed this was but one example of Baronius's mistreatment of historical evidence. The cardinal's commitment to supporting the papacy blinded him to basic facts. Sarpi wryly referred to Baronius as the "fifth evangelist," since he and his fellow Oratorians "did not acknowledge God as much as the pope."[87]

The Venetian interdict of 1606–1607 brought both of these authors' positions to the fore. Sarpi's role in the crisis is well known; Baronius's less so. When Pope Paul V placed an interdict on Venice after the republic had arrested two clerics and tried them in secular (rather than ecclesiastical) court, men on both sides began composing tracts on the relationship between secular and ecclesiastical power.[88] Sarpi took an active role in this pamphlet war, composing a number of treatises defending Venice's privileges, many of which were written in response to the writings of Robert Bellarmine. Baronius, for his part, wrote a *Paraenesis ad Rempublicam Venetam*, a short tract that urged the Venetian people to return to the Catholic fold.[89]

We can see how both authors responded to the Interdict exactly as we might have expected. For Baronius, then in the twilight of his life, the *Paraenesis* reiterates the same themes that he had developed over the preceding decades.

[85]"cosicché ciò che vale oggi sia valso sempre." Quoted in ibid., 62. Among the historians who have agreed with this assessment of Baronius's methodology, see Zen, 177; and Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defense of Republican Liberty*, 309.

[86]Zen, 229; Andretta, "Cesare Baronio e Venezia," 263.

[87]Zen, 133, 178. See also Sarpi's acerbic description of Baronius in a 1612 letter to Isaac Casaubon: "Ego illum Romae novi . . . Nunquam hominem vidi simpliciorem, quem unico verbo tibi exprimam. Nullas habebat opiniones proprias, sed eas e conversantibus sine delectu sumebat, quas tamen quasi proprias et bene perfectas pertinaciter defendebat, donec alias iussus potius fuisset, quam edoctus." Sarpi to Casaubon, Venice, June 8, 1612: Sarpi, *Lettere ai Protestanti*, ed. Manlio Duilio Busnelli (Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli, 1931), II, 220.

[88]On this pamphlet war, generally, see Filippo De Vivo, "La guerra delle scritture: Stampa e potere durante l'interdetto," in *Lo Stato Marciano*, 131–148; Paul F. Grendler, "Books for Sarpi: The Smuggling of Prohibited Books into Venice during the Interdict of 1606–1607," in *Essays Presented to Myron P. Gilmore*, vol. I: History (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1978), 105–114. On the specific relationships between certain authors, see the following. On the writings of Bellarmine, Fisher, and Sarpi, see Oakley, "Complexities of Context." On Bellarmine and Sarpi, see Tutino, 88–101; and Wootton, 51, 55–59. On Pallavicino and his response to Sarpi, see Bertelli, 109–116.

[89]Caesar Baronius, *Paraenesis ad Rempublicam Venetam* (Augustae Vindelicorum, 1606).

Like the *Annales*, the *Paraenesis* is built around scriptural quotations that Baronius uses to support his argument, which, in turn, was based on the premise that Venice ought to be obedient to the Roman see. Likewise, although Sarpi would not finish writing the *Istoria* until 1616, in his actions during the Interdict one can anticipate his later work. In defending the Venetians' claims against that of Rome, he makes arguments similar to those critiques of papal primacy noted earlier. That Sarpi also urged the Venetians to appeal to a general council also reflects his notions about church governance and how papal authority could best be checked.[90] Finally, the real issue at the center of the interdict was the relationship between secular and ecclesiastical power—whether Venice could try these clerics in a civil court—and Sarpi's vehement defense of the republic anticipates the position he would take in the *Istoria.*

In sum, this paper's analysis of the *Annales* and *Istoria* has considered how two Catholic historians from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century managed to produce such divergent histories based on fundamentally different conceptions of secular and ecclesiastical authority. Though both men sought to tell ecclesiastical histories, this article has suggested that in fact both authors were drawing upon models of secular government that they then imposed on the history of the church. For Baronius, monarchy was the best—or rather, the only—option, to the extent that even secular government could not exist outside the all-encompassing scope of the papal monarchy. Sarpi's preference for representative government appears throughout his analysis of ecclesiastical history: he highlights the abuses that stem from unilateral action, especially by the papal monarchy, and praises the moderate actions of corporate bodies such as the Imperial Diet. Nevertheless, even if Baronius was the quintessential papalist, Sarpi never broke with the Catholic Church and certainly never aligned himself with any protestant sect.[91] This

[90]Tutino, 90–93; Chabod, 70–71; Oakley, "Complexities of Context." For Sarpi's *consulti* during this period, see Sarpi, *Consulti, 1: I consulti dell'interdetto, 1606–1607*, ed. Corrado Pin (Roma: Istituti editoriali e poligrafi internazionali, 2001).

[91]Giuseppe Trebbi has perhaps said it best: "If on the one side there is no doubt of Sarpi's total aversion to the Roman papacy, nevertheless one cannot rule out a secret consistency in Fra Paolo's decision to continue to wear the habit of a Servite." Ulianich has demonstrated how Sarpi's theology is frequently at odds with that of the reformers, and even Manlio Busnelli, who concluded that Sarpi was undoubtedly heterodox, argued the Servite never aligned himself with any protestant denomination. More recently, Jaska Kainulainen has also reaffirmed Sarpi's religiosity, arguing that while he was committed to church reform and sympathized with Protestant reformers, Sarpi himself never became a Protestant. David Wootton's claim that Sarpi was the first atheist is debatable, being based on a reading of Sarpi's *pensieri*, the private notebooks no one ever saw while Sarpi was alive. Trebbi, "Paolo Sarpi in alcune recenti interpretazioni," in *Ripensando Paolo Sarpi*, 659; Ulianich, "Le Epistole paoline," 91; Manlio Dulio Busnelli, "Eterodossia e antiromanità di Fra Paolo Sarpi," in *Études sur Fra Paolo Sarpi: et autres essais italiens et français* (Geneva: Editions Slatkine, 1986), 198–199; Kainulainen, 126–163; and Wootton, 3, 120ff.

leaves two histories, completely different, but completely Catholic. That Sarpi managed to survive the Interdict (and an assassination attempt) demonstrates the limits of the Roman curia's ability to impose a uniform "Counter-Reformation" on the rest of the Italian peninsula. If anything, the *Annales* and *Istoria*'s competing claims to a legitimate interpretation of Catholic history suggests that such a Counter-Reformation was directed not only against protestants: it was also a phenomenon among Catholics themselves.