

Original Paper

Charles I of Spain and the Defense of Christianity in Europe: Scope and Perception in the 21st Century

Sophie SOLAMA-COULIBALY^{1*}

¹ Department of Iberian and Latin American Studies, University Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

* Sophie SOLAMA-COULIBALY, Department of Iberian and Latin American Studies, University Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

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Abstract

By conquering the Iberian Peninsula in the 3rd century, the Romans enriched it with their economic policy and land management. Also, the contribution of religious culture was important because it left traces until today. They entered first with their religious beliefs which they progressively abandoned in favor of Christianity in 313. But, if the peninsulars accepted this religion, it was confronted respectively from the 5th and 8th centuries to the Visigoth and Arab invasions. These situations of invasions have stopped its expansion. In 1492, after the Reconquest of territories by the Catholic Monarchs, they restored and defended it. Charles I of Spain (1500-1558) in turn consolidated this religion and defended it at the universal level to establish its power. But he was confronted with nascent Protestantism and the Turks he had to eradicate so as not to harm Christianity. From a historical perspective, in this analysis, it will be a question of showing the impact of religion; how religion was yesterday an instrument of domination and can still be today.

Keywords

Charles I, Christianity, defense, Europe, scope, 20th century

1. Introduction

Religion was one of the key elements of Rome's contribution to the Iberian Peninsula when it conquered it in the 3rd century. Entered with their religious beliefs (Jupiter and Devotio divinities) in the Iberian Peninsula, the Romans progressively abandoned them to convert to Christianity in 313, with the roman emperor Constantine I. His successor, Theodosius, strengthened Christianity to such an extent that he made it the religion of the empire. But the expansion of Christianity was difficult,

because it had to confront the Visigoth and Arab invasions. Indeed, by invading the Iberian Peninsula in 409, the Visigoths imposed their religious culture, which is Arianism (Note 1), in vain. As for the Arabs, they subjected almost the entire Iberian Peninsula to Islam in 711, except for certain areas in the North, such as Covadonga and Galicia. Upon ascending the throne after the War of the Castilian Succession (1475-1479), the medieval monarchs Isabella I of Castile and Ferdinand II of Aragon thought that their religion, the Roman one, was apostolic and that of God. For this reason, it was necessary for them to activate the reconquest of their land, which the precursors of the defence of the Christian cause had initiated with this resistance from the North since 718. The fall of Granada in 1492 was the culmination of this long but successful reconquest started 8 centuries ago. The Reconquest gave Spain almost the configuration we know today. He had a double objective, which was the reconquest of religious and territorial unity. The vision of the world that the Catholic monarchs had made them create the Court of the Inquisition that was in charge of preserving the Christian faith and solidifying the ecclesiastical building. In other words, they understood that it was necessary to protect the interests of “the old Christians” and repress the deviations of the “new converts” in order to affirm this means of domination that is religion. This mission of control of the purity of the faith strengthened Christianity, to such an extent that its apogee occurred. Pope Alexander VI (1431-1503) gave them the name of Catholic Kings, to reward their commitment to defend this religion. Charles I of Spain (1500-1558) wanted to spread it to the universal level to extend his power of domination. But he was confronted with the emergence of Protestant currents and the Turks that he had to eradicate so as not to harm Christianity.

Many reasons motivated us to analyse the subject *Charles I of Spain and the defense of Christianity in Europe: scope and perception in the 21st century*.

From past civilizations to the present day, religion continues to govern the cultural life of many societies. But this religion is at the base of many conflicts that the world knows. Certain individuals and communities feel the obligation to defend it and above all impose it on others to spread the faith or to dominate. It is precisely the fact proselyte that very often leads to conflicts between social groups.

But is religion a means of world domination? Is it necessary to use it to achieve this goal? How was the monarch able to fight to defend the Christian faith between the emergence of many Protestant currents and the Turkish and African threats? What is the impact of religion on world domination today?

Our hypothesis is that the defense of Christianity in Europe by Charles I of Spain had repercussions in the 21st century. From this main hypothesis two secondary hypotheses emerge. The first is that Charles I of Spain fought in Spain and in the world to impose Christianity. The second is that for Charles I of Spain, religion was a source of political domination. The fundamental reason for this contribution is that we want to show the impact in the 21st century of this defense of Catholicism by Charles I in the European religious dialectic. Charles I of Spain thought that it was necessary to spread religion to

dominate the world.

This analysis, which is part of a historical perspective and uses a dialectic method, will present Charles I of Spain. Later, we will see how he fought to impose Christianity against the Protestant threat. Finally, we will come to the extent and perception in the 21st century of this defense of Christianity.

It is necessary to say that we did all the translations in this text.

2. Method

2.1 Charles I of Spain and Charles V of Germany

To start this reflection, we opportunely take advantage of the following information collected in the history book of R. de La Cierva (2006, pp. 323-324):

«Los dos arzobispos designados por el testamento de Fernando el Católico como regentes en espera de la venida de Carlos I—el de Toledo y el de Zaragoza- ejercieron la regencia durante ...veinte meses que transcurrieron entre la muerte de Fernando el Católico y la llegada de Carlos» (Note 2).

From this sentence, you can easily imagine the interest that was given to Christianity in the Middle Ages during the reign of the Catholic Monarchs. Being Spanish meant identifying first with Catholicism. They were the two norms of a single national identity.

Given that this religion was that of the State and that the identity of the people was defined in relation to it, the excessive defense of the religious institution was fundamental. It had many aspects: within Spain, the territorial and religious unity after the successful reconquest of the territories occupied by the Arabs in 711. Then, it had to propagate the religion in conquered American lands. The acquisitions of the Catholic Monarchs constituted a legacy for their successors who wanted to ensure the perennially of the monarchs' work by preserving it. But the significant income of resources (Le Flem, 1990, pp. 423-438) in the reign of the Catholic Monarchs may suggest that the reason for the commitment to defend religion was both cultural and socioeconomic. Thus, based on these motivations, both Cardinal Cisneros and Ferdinand II during the regency in Castile and Zaragoza assumed a defensive and conservative attitude that achieved their fundamental objective: to deliver the kingdom unscathed to Charles (Le Flem, 1990, pp. 423-438).

But why this one?

2.1.1 Birth of Charles and inheritance

He is known more exactly under the name of Charles V ^(Ubieto, 1972, p. 354). His parents are Joan de Castilla, the daughter of the Catholic Monarchs and *Felipe el Hermoso* (Philip the handsome), the son of Emperor Maximiliano de Habsburg and María of Burgundy. Charles was born in Ghent in 1500 and inherited from the Crown of Spain with the name of Charles I after the death of his father on September 25, 1506. As mentioned above, the inheritance was ensured by Cardinal Cisneros until the young king

came of age in 1517. As of 1520, the Germanic Crown, which was called the Holy Roman Empire, was returned to him. There, it was called Charles V.

Thus, as the son of Philip the handsome and Joan de Castilla, Charles V was in charge of a vast inheritance: from his paternal grandparents, Emperor Maximiliano de Habsburg and María de Burgundy, he received the hereditary estates of the House of Austria, in the southeast Germany, the Burgundian duchy which, however, was in the hands of France, and in addition the Low Countries, the Franche-Comté, Artois, and the counties of Nevers and Rethel. From his maternal grandparents, Ferdinand the Catholic and Isabella the Catholic, he received the kingdom of Aragon, Naples, Sicily, Sardinia and its overseas possessions and the Castilian conquests in North Africa and the Indies.

2.1.2 The Catholic religion as the basis of Charles's education

Charles was born in an environment where Christianity was fervently practiced. He was educated by Hadrian of Utrecht with a Christian humanist profile and a reputation for holiness (*Archives* 2009). If from the Catholic Monarchs he received as an inheritance the energetic defense and propagation of religion, in his paternal family, the practice of Catholicism was also cultural (Note 3). Indeed, Charles V inherited the Holy Roman Empire from his ancestors who were committed to integrating Renaissance nations around the concept of "Sacred". They were nations that had Christian-Roman Catholic foundations and also a common goal. The religious character of the title of Holy Roman Emperor naturally influenced the later politics of the sovereign. But Charles V inherited an empire on the verge of fragmentation due to the serious political-religious problem.

2.2 *Martin Luther and the Birth of Protestantism*

2.2.1 Martín Luther

Martin Luther was born on November 10, 1483 in the German city of Eisleben in the State of Thuringia (Delumeau & Wanegffelen, 1997). He entered the University of Erfurt in 1501, where he received a licentiate in theology in 1505. Ordained a priest in 1507, he obtained a doctorate in that discipline in 1512 and later a professorship at the University of Wittenberg. From 1514, Martin Luther was a preacher of the Church in the same city.

2.2.2 Lutheranism: The main cause of the rebellion and its execution

More than the ecclesiastical abuses of his time (Lienhard & Arnold, 1999, p. 136), it is the obsession with eternal salvation that led Martin Luther to question the functioning system of the Roman Catholic Church. For him, original sin and the state of permanent (Note 4) fragility of man keep him in a situation of imperfection before God. But this sinful condition should not be a reason for resignation for man, because there is a means of purification for the salvation of the soul. This remedy is penance. And, the deep contrition followed by the firm resolution to expiate the sin and to avoid falling into it again, must only be done before God, the only Judge. Hence it follows that no man can replace God. From the above, the superiority and sovereignty of God over all mankind is derived.

Therefore, solving the problem of sin by paying indulgences (Note 5) to the ecclesiastical authorities is a fact that has nothing to do with devotion. They are goods to buy. In other words, the remission of sins obtained by trading indulgences is not true piety. On the other hand, according to the nascent Protestant ideology, Purgatory is an invented afterlife that is not found in the Scriptures (Le Goff, 1981, p. 15, p. 183). Piety should be centred on the figure of Jesus Christ. This firm position marks the beginning of the serious discrepancy of ideas between Martin Luther and the papal authority in 1517 and also the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, a tireless defender of Catholicity.

In 1517, Martin Luther rebelled against Pope Leo X who had decreed indulgences for the construction of the current Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome. On October 31 of the same year, Martin Luther would have pasted on the doors of the Church of the Saints of Wittenberg, ninety-five (95) theses that dryly condemn the trade in indulgences opened by the Roman Catholic Church and mainly by the Pope (Lienhard & Arnold, 1999, p. 136). It is the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. Also, Luther denied the infallibility of councils (Note 6).

This fact, the Church considered it as a great ignominy. In June 1520, while Rome was publishing the bull *Exsurge Domine* which threatened him with excommunication, his works were burned. Also, Luther reacted by burning on December 10 both the "bull of the antichrist" (de la Cierva, 2006, p. 335) and canon law. This sacrilege could not be forgiven. Then, Martin Luther was excommunicated on January 3, 1521 through the bull *Decet Romanum Pontificem* (Lienhard & Arnold, 1999, p. 136).

With the excommunication decision, Rome created (without knowing it in advance) the split of the Roman Catholic Church in the Golden Age that took more than many millennia to forge in Europe. Hence, also the starting point of the failure of this attempt by Charles V to integrate the European nations around Catholicism. The Reformation caused a long schism that progressively gave rise to many churches and organizations that we know today as the Protestant churches.

2.3 Catholic Resistance in European Religious Dialectics under the Reign of Charles V

We could title this part "European Christianity with two heads" because of what the Protestant Reformation generated during the Golden Age. Indeed, from this time, Christianity was divided into two irreconcilable positions. First, a part headed by the Roman Catholic Church that "arrogated" the paternity of Christianity, confirming the Pope as the head or direct representative of God on earth and the pastor of said institution. Then, the other led by Martin Luther who longed for a primitive Christianity, seeking an ideal only around Christ. These irreconcilable positions were accentuated at the end of the Council of Trent in 1563 under the reign of Felipe II, son of Charles V. The opposition of the latter group could be interpreted as the desire to create a typical Catholic church in Germany. In other words, the affirmation of the nationalism of different noble classes that defended their wealth and that also sought to seize the powerful heritage of the Germanic Catholic Church. But later, by popularizing their doctrine, it would be possible for them to defend God's sovereignty over humanity.

2.3.1 The fight against Protestantism

Hardly invested as Holy Roman Emperor in Germany, Charles V had to face an emerging Protestantism. In addition, within Spain he had to convince the subjects who were opposed to universalism that could affect a growing nationalism in the country. And yet, for him, the practice of Catholicism rather guaranteed this universality, a symbol of power that came before a small-scale nationalism. Endowed with a powerful dynastic power base, the sovereign could count on his deep attachment to the Catholic faith (de la Cierva, 2006, p. 335) and also with the status of “Catholic King” that he inherited from his grandparents, to fight against this “innovative” current of Christianity. Also, he thought that the newly emerging Protestantism was an organized small group that weighed little.

This last aspect could be an argument to minimize the influences of nascent currents that differed from the Christian religion. For the rest, we imagine that his obsession to integrate nations under the Catholic ideal was possible. But why? If it is evident that this project was economic, it cannot be denied that he wanted to strengthen international relations through Catholicism. Above all, religious culture in this globalization was an important aspect because Catholicism was one of the main representations of the moment that influenced politics. But it cannot be denied that the Catholic religion had lost its sacredness due to many deviations of the clergy (Note 7) and perhaps due to the inaccessibility of the preaching that was done in Latin. It was essential that this religion regain its noble status.

The burning of the bull and the denial of papal authority was a double affront to the glorious Christian tradition. The traditional mentality would have required that, for this betrayal, Luther be burned as happened later, Michael Servetus (born around 1511-1553), defender of another branch of Protestantism. In 1521, Charles V summoned the forerunner of the current in the Diet of Worms (Note 8) to ask him to return to profess his old faith, but he refused to respect the will of the Catholic Church. Then, considered as a cursed, he was banned by the emperor. Despite these events, the Nuremberg Diet was called, the Protestant leader rejected any rapprochement with the Catholic Church. The Protestant doctrine was already widespread in Germany, which was perceived almost as a national sentiment to defend. After a forced abandonment due to the war against his great rival Francis I of France, the Holy Roman Emperor (after having signed the Peace of Cambrai in 1529) resumed his policy of defending the ancient religion. However, the conflict between the King of Spain and France encouraged the Protestants because it meant the division of the Catholic camp; and as a result, the weakening of political power.

Indeed, in 1526 the creation of the Clementine League against the sovereign, headed by Pope Clement VII, had as its objective: «eliminar la influencia del Imperio y de los españoles en Italia, con la ayuda y el liderazgo militar del rey de Francia» (de la Cierva, 2006, p. 335) (Note 9).

Whatever the reason for this conspiracy against the emperor, it must be said that the Pope’s attitude strongly contributed to undermining the foundations of an already shaky universal Catholicism. The

sovereign's attempt to convince the assembly to recant and abandon the persecution of the Catholic Church at the Diet of Speyer in 1529 led to a rebellion by Protestant obedience participants. As for the Diet of Augsburg in 1530, it scuttled all hope of reunification of the Roman institution. The *Augsburg Confession* (Note 10) book exposed in this diet and that contained the exposition of the principles of Lutheranism written in 1530 revealed the refractory character of the Protestant princes towards Catholicism. They formed a political-military confederation against the emperor's ambitions for reunification in 1531 and were known as the *Schmalkalden League*.

It can be said that the formation of this league was possible because of the retreat that Charles V gave in the face of a dialogue of the deaf between the participants of the *Diet of Augsburg*. But the result of this setback was the definitive consolidation of the Reform (de la Cierva, 2006, p. 371). The path of discussion proved unsuccessful; it was not until 1546 that the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire engaged in an armed conflict against the Protestants. As the historian R. de la Cierva (2006, p. 371) says:

Carlos V...dejó en claro que no hacía la guerra a su propio Imperio, sino a los rebeldes contra su autoridad y contra el Papa; contra los que se oponían a las dos espadas tradicionales de la Cristiandad, unidas ahora, gracias a Trento, en su lucha contra herejía (Note 11).

Thus, Christianity had to be saved at all costs against Protestantism which threatened the stability of the empire. But his army totally defeated the *Schmalkalden League* in 1547 at the Battle of Mühlberg.

With the death of Luther already in 1546, the defeat of the *Schmalkalden League*, the death of Francis I of France in 1547, the conquest and the completed evangelization of India, it was logical that Charles V intended to realize the dream of religious reunification of his Empire around the concept of Catholic. But it may be that this "normalization" frightened the German noble classes who feared that these events would strengthen the power of the emperor. So, they conspired and rebelled against the monarch at a time when he was in Germany. He had no choice but to escape to Italy. The sovereign reluctantly accepted the main condition of the rebel nobles, which was the freedom to profess Protestantism. In 1555, he signed the Peace of Augsburg. Thus, Charles V saw his idea of a reunified Empire failed.

But, while Emperor Charles V was fighting against the expansion of Protestantism, he was confronted with the Turkish and African threat; these Islamized territories that tried to take over Europe, imposing the Muslim religion.

2.3.2 Turkish and African threats

The Islamized Turks, having conquered the Eastern Roman Empire in 1453, attempted to attack European Christendom. With the siege of Vienna, Charles V understood that the Turkish threat was close to his empire. The long tradition of fighting in the Iberian Peninsula against the Muslims could not even conceive of this act. It was therefore necessary that he make a truce in the negotiations for the restoration of Christian unity with the dissenting Protestant princes of Germany. Also, the signing of

the Peace of Cambrai in 1508 with France was forced in order to freely confront a great enemy of Christianity. For Charles V, this fight was to defend the identity of the Holy Roman Empire against the threat of the infidel Turks. Therefore, he yearned for a Christian unity to fight against this common enemy.

Unfortunately, Francis I, the Catholic King of France, opposed the emperor (Kennedy, 1989). He allied himself with the Turks to defend political interests because he wanted to expand his domains. But, faced with the advance of the great imperial army made up of the Spanish Tercios, German, Italian, Flemish, Czech, Portuguese and Dutch nobles, Suleiman (Note 12) he withdrew from Vienna in 1532. However, the direct confrontation between the Spanish and the Turks took place under the reign of Philip II.

This same year Barbarossa (Note 13) seized Tunisia in Africa. Later, this and the North African corsairs were a serious problem for the King of Spain because they organized frequent attacks against the Spanish coasts. In 1535, the campaign against Tunisia began with the conquest of Goleta. Later, the Spanish army advanced towards the city of Tunis to take it in the same year. Naturally, this complicity of the Ottomans with the Moors represented a double threat to Spain. Well, the Spanish king decided to persecute Barbarossa who had taken refuge in Algiers. In 1541, the Battle of Algiers began. This result was that the Algerian fighters prevailed. They inflicted an immense loss of human lives due to the stubbornness of Charles V in wanting to organize this battle despite the storm (Nordman, 2011). The emperor recorded his first great warrior disaster and the loss of prestige throughout Europe, although he tried to minimize the defeat. In 1556, Charles V abdicated in favour of his son Felipe II. His brother also benefited from patrimonial possessions.

3. The Results of the Choice of Religion by Charles V as a Means of Strengthening Power: Perception and Impact in the 21st Century

3.1 Failure of European Religious Reunification and the Look towards America

With the fragmentation of the Holy Roman Empire, it can already be said that European religious reunification under the Catholic concept was impossible under the reign of Charles V. But, once the dream of grouping European nations failed, his successor Felipe II had to accentuate his fight to defend the Catholicism in Spain, and also direct it to conquered American territories. Perhaps, carrying out this desire to create a Catholic Atlantic Empire could be a counterweight to European nations whose dissent had strongly weakened the Holy Roman Empire. With his inquisitorial policy, Felipe II made Spain the bastion of the Catholic Church, repressing the last pockets of Protestant resistance. Also, in other European territories such as the Netherlands (Note 14), Spanish sovereignty was restored through a repression of Calvinist insurrections (Note 15). The repression of the Moors and the Christian crusade against the Turks ensured the sovereign's victory at the Battle of Lepanto in 1571. Only England

remained to form the European trilogy (with Spain and the Netherlands) that defended the Catholic identity. But the Invincible Armada failed in its attempt to win England in 1588. This defeat of Felipe II in England contributed to the revival and expansion of Protestantism in that country. This Protestant wave also snatched the Netherlands.

3.2 The Impact of this Policy in the 21st Century

The configuration of Catholicism in Europe at the start of the 21st century has changed little. It remains as it was drawn at the end of the Golden Age although the current world challenges have changed. Indeed, the representations have changed, detaching from the religious sphere to privilege the economic-social, with the decrease in the cost of transport, communication and the denunciation of income inequality.

However, today there are certain community identities that express the superiority of their religious culture over others. Despite the fact that in Germany, the Catholic Church was affected by the Reformation, which had seemed to destroy it, it was remade thanks to the Counter-Reformation (1545-1563), preserving its importance on the socio-political chessboard. Also in the 20th century, after the Second World War, the influence of this institution on a majority of peoples was still noticeable. Catholicism first became social to serve the lower classes and then political. If Germany was strongly marked by its Lutheran cultural tradition, we note in this country the creation of one of the important political forces, the Zentrum, with a mission to represent Catholic interests in all their stratifications. Appeared in 1870, at the end of the 19th century, this party was very active in the 20th century with leaders such as Konrad Adenauer, although 20th-century Germany was a secularized country (Note 16). As for Spain, it preserved its religious culture in the 20th and 21st centuries. Indeed, although it suffered many convulsions due to its frequent interference in the political scene, the Catholic Church continued to be the foundation of the culture and history of Spain. Ideological State Apparatus, this religion survived with the successive monarchies that used it consciously or unconsciously as a dissuasive element for any political change that did not encompass the powerful religious institution. The long period of the monarchical Restoration (1874-1931) in which the leaders were concerned with serving the interests of a privileged minority, accommodated themselves to this institution, moving away from the base that ended up reacting. Then, the Second Republic proclaimed in 1931 considerably reduced the privileges of the Church. But this republic failed in 1939, after the atrocious Civil War, because the Spanish mentalities were always connected with their heavy religious tradition. At the end of the war, the victory of the nationalists and the Franco regime allowed a recrudescence of the faith that once again gave legitimacy to the Catholic religion. However, even if 95% of Spaniards declare themselves Catholic (there are hardly any more Jews and the Protestants could almost be counted on the fingers of one hand) (*World travellers*, 2022), at the end of the 20th century, a significant decline in religious practice was also noticeable in Spain in an increasingly secularized

world.

Even the Latin American countries in which imperial Spain had injected the virus of devotion, for example Mexico (whose population is still predominantly Catholic), rebelled against the Holy See, strongly implicated in a conflict between the government and the Church already in the first third of the 20th century (Redondo, 1993, p. 118). On the other hand, if in Peru the practice of religion was still in force, there was a religious syncretism (of Catholicism with Andean rites) that made this religious institution lose its primitive character. In addition, the effort to readapt Catholicism to the reality of the contemporary world, initiated by the Second Vatican Council in 1962, has not yet been able to have notable effects in Europe. This will to adjust stumbled upon a secularized and increasingly demanding world.

But paradoxically, despite the progressive extinction of the Catholic faith for several centuries, we can consider the 20th and 21st centuries as the new rise of Catholicism because its frequent interference and its opinion in world debates were important and sometimes feared. This has allowed it to regain capital importance despite the fact that the powerful Catholic unification bloc has been broken.

Indeed, the religious institution only centralized in the Vatican manifested itself through a diplomacy that allowed its voice to be taken into account. International opinion thought that the clergy should not intervene in political and ethical issues, such as the Church's position on contraception to avoid sexually transmitted diseases such as AIDS and homosexuality. He recognized that the unfavourable positions of the religious establishment on these matters had considerable repercussions. Thus, this could be an already existing influence of the Catholic religion on the spirits. B. Joubert (2017, p. 48) confirms this in these terms:

l'intérêt pour le Saint-Siège a dépassé le cercle des pays de tradition catholique. En 1805, la Prusse est la première puissance protestante à accréditer un ambassadeur, le baron von Humboldt ; en 1942, le Japon est le premier État non chrétien à le faire. Dans les deux cas, on relève que l'établissement de ces relations s'est inscrit dans le contexte de conflits qui poussent les puissances à rechercher le dialogue avec la Rome pontificale (Note 17).

In the same diplomatic framework, the Holy See intervenes to defend the interests of the Catholic Church, of the faithful and their rights in the world. In this, the visit of Pope Francis to the Moroccan monarchy in March 2019 praised the difference between the peoples and the warming of relations. Also, this Vatican diplomacy made it possible to avoid the insurrection of the Islamic and Arab world that could lead to a third world war. Faced with worldwide condemnation of the current Russo-Ukrainian war, he is accused of denouncing it without naming the aggressor. To this accusation, Pope Francis replies that: « les aboiements de l'OTAN autour de la Russie ont peut-être provoqué sa colère » (de Galzain & Ballanger, 2021) (Note 18). But, if the Pope could not prevent this war, he intervened to denounce an increasingly horrible cruelty in the Ukraine that should end.

The world hope of the opinion of the Holy See reveals its very important character. We could see in all the diplomatic engagements of the Vatican, a temporal and spiritual power of the Church; a universalism dreamed of by Charles V.

4. Conclusion

We can summarize the reign of Charles V, emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and also of Philip II by the unbridled search for a universal Catholicism. However, the birth of Protestant currents, such as Lutheranism and Calvinism that criticized ecclesiastical drifts, came to create a schism within the traditional church. The breakdown of this Christian unity and the spread of Protestantism greatly affected the millennial church. In addition to Germany, Belgium and the Kingdom of the Netherlands have been the illustration of this definitive rupture between the two churches in the 20th century. Thus, the situation of the Catholic Church in the world was worrying in the 20th and 21st centuries. But, despite this situation of constant and significant return of the Christian faith, this century has been marked by a strong Vatican diplomacy that allowed it to remain. So, from the above, it could be said that, despite the fact that the emergence of Protestantism and the Turkish and African threat were a danger to Christian unity in the Golden Age, the Catholic religion knew how to keep its importance on the world political board, through his position on socio-political debates in the 20th century.

But the effort to understand human reality must continue with concrete actions. Indeed, for this 21st century, in a world influenced by liberal ideologies, in order to expect a revival of the faith, it is necessary for the Catholic Church to reconsider some intangible positions (such as the excommunication of the divorced) that it adopted in the past and that contributed strongly to the desertion of said institution. But beyond all disagreement, Christianity has to favour unity around Christ who is the first church because division weakens it. Thus, it is necessary to salute the actions of Pope Francis in favour of this unity that, like one of his predecessors, Pope John Paul II, undertook to organize days for youth to be interested in the Christian faith. Also, we can salute his desire to bring the people together around sports such as soccer, in order to easily convey the message of peace. On the other hand, with the galloping unemployment rate, the money collected among the faithful in the parishes should not be wasted. The Church has to arouse the confidence of the poor. In addition, the irreproachable character of the priests and pastors and also the creation of aid funds to contribute to the supply of the populations would be an investment for the Church of the third millennium. In short, the criticism of resigning governments in the face of the pauperization of populations, the denunciation by the local Church of the will of leaders to change the Constitution in order to remain in power (in countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Ivory Coast , Burkina Faso and also Vladimir Putin's manoeuvres in Russia) will contribute more and more to the populations reconsidering their position towards the religious institution, and finally to the revival of the Christian faith. Perhaps,

a resized church, above suspicion, could become the moral reference of many governments throughout the world. That will be to arrive at a form of globalization.

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Notes

Note 1. The founder of this heterodox doctrine is a priest from Alexandria (Egypt) named Arius (256-336). He denied Jesus Christ the fullness of divinity. He argued the supremacy of God the Father, saying that The Father and The Son were two totally different persons.

Note 2. «The two archbishops designated by the testament of Fernando the Catholic as regents awaiting the coming of Carlos I—the one from Toledo and the one from Zaragoza—exercised the regency during...twenty months that passed between the death of Fernando the Catholic and Charles's arrival ».

Note 3. Holy Roman Emperor was the title given to the elected and crowned monarch of the Holy Roman Empire. The first emperor was Charlemagne with his coronation on December 25, 800. The pope gave the King of the Franks the position of defender of the church, being its military representative.

Note 4. Sin is part of the daily life of man. He cannot be the equal of God who is an immaculate being.

Note 5. Total or partial remission of temporary sentences for acquittal.

Note 6. Solemn assembly of bishops dealing with the affairs of the Church.

Note 7. The enrichment of the cleric with donations from the faithful, the concubinage of the clergy...

Note 8. Political assembly that brought together the different princes of Germany.

Note 9. «Eliminate the influence of the Empire and the Spaniards in Italy, with the help and military leadership of the King of France».

Note 10. It was fundamentally about faith and the correction of abuses and the entry of heresies in the Roman Catholic Church.

Note 11. « Charles V...made it clear that he was not making war on his own Empire, but on the rebels against his authority and against the Pope; against those who opposed the two traditional swords of Christianity, now united, thanks to Trent, in their fight against heresy ».

Note 12. Suleiman I the Magnificent was probably born in 1494 in Turkey. Only son of Selim I Yavuz, he was the second sultan of the Ottoman dynasty from 1520 until his death in 1566.

Note 13. Khairuddin Barbarossa, busy Ottoman corsair.

Note 14. At first, the Low Countries correspond to the seventeen provinces that form in 1548, with the Franche-Comte, the imperial circle of Burgundy. They included the territory of the current Kingdom of the Netherlands, current Belgium, Luxembourg and a tiny part of the north of current France.

Note 15. Calvinism, Jean Calvin's ideology that is based on predestination. For him, every human being is predestined only to eternal salvation or hell.

Note 16. It should be noted that with the reestablishment of German unity in 1990, the influence of Catholics over the Federal Republic decreased considerably. Meanwhile, this German reunification strengthened the power of the Protestants. Indeed, attendance at Sunday masses, the number of baptisms and weddings experienced a vertiginous drop. Youth participation in religious activities and

voluntary associations showed a marked decline. Also, the Netherlands and Belgium offered the same picture of the worrying situation of the Catholic Church as the Federal Republic of Germany.

Note 17. «Interest in the Holy See has gone beyond the circle of countries with a Catholic tradition. In 1805, Prussia was the first Protestant power to accredit an ambassador, Baron von Humboldt; in 1942, Japan was the first non-Christian state to do so. In both cases, we note that the establishment of these relations took place in the context of conflicts which push the powers to seek dialogue with papal Rome».

Note 18. «NATO's barking around Russia may have angered him».