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RAPPORTI TRA PAPA PIO IX E IL PATRIARCA CALDEO GIUSEPPE AUDO

**AUTONOMIA DEL PATRIARCATO,
GIURISDIZIONE SULLA CHIESA MALABARESE
IN INDIA E INFALLIBILITÀ DEL PAPA**

VOLUME I: DAL 1848 AL 1865

A cura di

PAUL PALLATH

JOSY SCARIAH VATTOTHU





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Introductory Article

THE ROMAN SEE, THE CHALDEAN PATRIARCHATE AND THE MALABAR CHURCH IN INDIA: HISTORICAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL SITUATION IN THE XIX CENTURY

Introduction

This historical contextualization is common to the entire work, which is dedicated to the publication of documents concerning the relationship between Pope Pius IX and the Chaldean Patriarch Joseph Audo and is chronologically divided into three parts: Volume I from 1848 to 1865, Volume II from 1866 to 1874 and Volume III from 1875 to 1878, although some items particularly relevant to the first volume alone is also treated. In volumes II and III there will be a specific introduction which will reconstruct the immediate historical and ecclesial context of the events treated in them, respecting chronological order.

In this introduction, we briefly outline the situation of the universal Church during the pontificate of Pope Pius IX and also provide some information about the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith and the apostolic delegates of the Apostolic Delegation of Mesopotamia, Kurdistan and Lesser Armenia, who co-operated directly with the Pope in solving various problems in the aforementioned territories. This is followed by a brief historical assessment of the emergence and development of the Chaldean Catholic Patriarchate and the vicissitudes of Chaldean jurisdiction over the St Thomas Christians of the Malabar Church in India, the main source of conflict and tension between Pope Pius IX and Patriarch Joseph Audo, at least in the first period we have considered¹.

1. Pope Pius IX and the Situation of the Church during His Pontificate (1846-1878)

Giovanni Maria Mastai Ferretti, who later became Pope Pius IX, was born on 13 May 1792 in Senigallia (Italy). After completing his secular and

¹ Some sections of this historical introduction are taken from the work of P. PALLATH, *Rome and Chaldean Patriarchate in Conflict: Schism of Bishop Rokos in India*, Changanacherry 2017, pp. 21-115, but they have been revised and updated, with more documentation.

theological studies Mastai was ordained a priest on 10 April 1819. He successfully exercised the priestly ministry for about 8 years and then Pope Leo XII appointed the 35-year-old Mastai Ferretti Archbishop of Spoleto in 1827. In 1828 he was transferred to the Diocese of Imola, appointed cardinal *in pectore* on 23 December 1839 and was publicly announced as cardinal-priest of *Santi Marcellino e Pietro* on 14 December 1840².

After the death of Pope Gregory XVI (1831-1846) on 16 June 1846, the Conclave elected the then 54-year-old Mastai Ferretti as Pope, who assumed the name Pius IX³. The three most notable events during the long pontificate of Pope Pius IX (32 years of reign, the second longest of all popes in history) which had far-reaching repercussions on the Church and civil society in Italy and the world were the end of the Papal States, which terminated Pope's temporal sovereignty, the First Vatican Council (1869-1870) which promulgated the dogmas of primacy and infallibility, with the consequent centralization and consolidation of power in the Roman Curia and the Pope, as well as the curtailment of the autonomy of Eastern patriarchal Churches with the modification of the millennial canonical discipline on the election of patriarchs and bishops. Only the first point is dealt with in this article; the other points will be treated in the next volumes, also taking into account the chronology of events.

The temporal sovereignty of the Pope over some territories, which gradually began in the eighth century and was consolidated over time, was considered necessary for the autonomy of the Church and the freedom of the Pope in the exercise of his primatial power⁴. Since his election in 1846, Pope Pius IX was also sovereign ruler over some 3 million subjects in the Papal States, which comprised most of the present-day Italian regions of Lazio (including Rome, of course), Marche, Umbria and Romagna, as well as parts of Emilia⁵. The politically most important event during the Pontificate of Pius

² Cf. V. FARAONI e A. MENCUCI, *Vita del Venerabile Papa Pio IX*, Senigallia 2000, pp. 7-25; *Enciclopedia dei papi: Innocenzo VIII –Giovanni Paolo II* (vol. 3), Roma 2000, p. 560. For more information concerning the early life of Pius IX: G. SERAFINI, *Pio Nono, Giovanni Maria Mastai Ferretti I: Le vie della divina provvidenza (1792-1846)*, Città del Vaticano 1958; A. POLVERARI, *Vita di Pio IX*, vol. 1, Città del Vaticano 1988.

³ For information concerning the Conclave and the election of Pope Pius IX: G. MARTINA, *Pio IX (1846-1850)*, Roma 1974 (*Miscellanea Historiae Pontificiae*, vol. 38), pp. 81-96; R. AUBERT, *Storia della Chiesa XXI/1: Il Pontificato di Pio IX (1846-1878)*, seconda edizione italiana a cura di G. Martina (parte prima), Torino 1976, pp. 25-27.

⁴ L. DUCHESNE, *The Beginnings of the Temporal Sovereignty of the Popes A.D. 754-1073* (English translation from French by H. M. Arnold), London 1907, pp. 13-269.

⁵ For information concerning the activities of Pope Pius IX as the temporal sovereign and the situation of the Papal States: G. MARTINA, *Pio IX (1851-1866)*, Roma 1986 (*Miscellanea*

IX was the loss of the Papal States through the unification of Italy with the gradual annexation of various Italian kingdoms, including the papal territories, to the then Kingdom of Piedmont under the leadership of King Victor Emmanuel II⁶. On 17 March 1861, the new Kingdom of Italy, which also included the already annexed papal territories, was officially proclaimed. The unification process was then completed with the final capture of Rome by Italian troops on 20 September 1870, which marked the end of the Papal States and the Pope's temporal power⁷. Despite this tragic situation, which was characterised by fear and terror, the Pope decided to remain in Rome as a "prisoner of the Vatican" after discussions with the cardinals and all other parties involved, rejecting the suggestion of some to flee to a safe place in Italy or abroad⁸.

Obviously, Pope Pius IX refused to recognize the Kingdom of Italy, which he denounced as an illegitimate creation of the revolution. He excommunicated the Italian leaders, including King Victor Emmanuel II, whom he denounced as "forgetful of every religious principle, despising every right, trampling upon every law" whose reign over Italy was therefore "a sacrilegious usurpation"⁹.

On 1 November 1870 Pope Pius IX promulgated the encyclical *Rescriptores (ea omnia)*, in which he protested against the seizure of the Pontifical States. The encyclical contains a brief history of the wars and

Historiae Pontificiae, vol. 51), pp. 2-35 e 85-144; R. DE CESARE, *The Last Days of Papal Rome* (1850-1870), London 1909, pp. xvii-xviii, 198-217.

⁶ From the ample bibliography on the unification of Italy, here only a few works are indicated: A. M. BANTI, *La nazione del Risorgimento: Parentela, santità e onore alle origini dell'Italia unita*, Torino 2000; G. DI FIORE, *Controstoria dell'Unità d'Italia: Fatti e misfatti del Risorgimento*, Milano 2007; P. PIRRI, *Pio IX e Vittorio Emanuele II dal loro carteggio privato*, 3 voll., 5 tomi (*Miscellanea Historiae Pontificiae* VIII, XVI, XVII, XXIV, XXV), Roma 1944-1961.

⁷ Cf. R. AUBERT, *Storia della Chiesa XXI/1: Il Pontificato di Pio IX*, pp. 134-162; P. DALLA TORRE, *La difesa di Roma nel 1870*, in *Pio IX nel primo centenario della morte*, Città del Vaticano 1978, pp. 485-659; R. DE CESARE, *The Last Days of Papal Rome* (1850-1870), London 1909, pp. 439-460; H. JEDIN and J. DOLAN (ed.), *History of the Church, Volume VIII: The Church in the Age of Liberalism*, New York 1981, pp. 250-254. For ample documentation concerning the end of Papal States: N. MIKO, *Das Ende des Kirchenstaates*, 4 voll., Wien-München 1964-1970.

⁸ Cf. G. MARTINA, *Pio IX (1867-1878)*, Roma 1990 (*Miscellanea Historiae Pontificiae*, vol. 58), pp. 247-250; H. JEDIN and J. DOLAN (ed.), *History of the Church, Volume VIII*, pp. 254-255.

⁹ J. S. SCHAPIRO, *Modern and Contemporary European History (1815-1921)*, Cambridge 1921 (revised edition), p. 218.

attacks of the then Italian kingdom of Piedmont against the Papal States and expresses the Pope's sorrow and concern¹⁰. He begins the encyclical thus:

As We look back on all the things which for many years the government of Piedmont has undertaken in order to overthrow the civil rule which God granted Our Apostolic See, We are moved by profound sorrow. God's purpose in providing the successors of St. Peter with temporal jurisdiction was to enable them to perform their spiritual duties in complete freedom and security. This government, by force and contrary to all divine law, has finally executed the plan it has long considered: the sacrilegious invasion of Our dear City and the cities We continued to rule after the previous occupation. We, prostrate before God, cry out using the words of the prophet: "For these things I weep; my eyes flow with tears; for a comforter is far from me, one to revive my courage; my children are desolate, for the enemy has prevailed" (*Lamentations* 1, 16)¹¹.

Furthermore, in the said encyclical, the Pope reaffirmed and confirmed the excommunication of the Italian leaders: "Our warnings, admonitions, and expostulations had no effect; therefore by Our own authority and that of God and of the Apostles Peter and Paul, We declare to you and to the whole Church that any who have invaded or usurped Our provinces or Our beloved City (as well as those commanding these things and their partisans, helpers, advisers, and followers) have incurred excommunication and the other censures and ecclesiastical penalties imposed by the sacred canons, Apostolic Constitutions, and decrees of Trent (Sess. 22, c. 11 on Reform)"¹².

On 3 February 1871, Rome was declared the capital of the unified Kingdom of Italy, thus completing the long process of unification. On 13 May 1871, the Law of Guarantees was issued, in which the Italian government unilaterally granted the Pope the use of the Vatican, the protection of the Curia and the exercise of its spiritual authority, as well as a certain degree of freedom for the Italian Church vis-à-vis the State, but denied him sovereignty over Vatican territory, while granting him the right to send and receive ambassadors and permitting him a budget of 3.25 million lire annually¹³.

¹⁰ PIUS IX, encyclical *Respicientes*, in *Pii IX Pontificis Maximi Acta, Pars prima*, vol. V, pp. 263-277; English translation, <https://www.papalencyclicals.net/pius09/p9ubinos.htm>, visited on 13 June 2024.

¹¹ *Pii IX Pontificis Maximi Acta, Pars prima*, vol. V, pp. 263-264.

¹² *Pii IX Pontificis Maximi Acta, Pars prima*, vol. V, p. 275.

¹³ Cf. G. MARTINA, *Pio IX (1867-1878)*, pp. 254-256; R. AUBERT, *Storia della Chiesa XXI/2: Il Pontificato di Pio IX (1846-1878)*, seconda edizione italiana a cura di G. Martina (parte seconda), Torino 1976, pp. 565-573; S. GILLEY and B. STANLEY (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Christianity, World Christianities, C. 1815–C. 1914* (vol. 8), Cambridge 2008, pp. 19-20 and 248; A. BERSELLI, *La destra storica dopo l'unità, I: L'idea liberale e la Chiesa cattolica*, Bologna 1963, pp. 154-332.

On 15 May 1871 Pius IX published the encyclical *Ubi nos* in which he officially repudiated the aforementioned law of Guarantees, as it was a unilateral decision that did not grant international recognition to the papacy and could be changed at any time by the secular parliament¹⁴. According to the Pope, these “guarantees are compensation for stripping Us of Our civil rule; this they accomplished by a lengthy series of machinations and their unholy arms. We have already delivered Our judgment on these immunities and provisions, and stigmatized their absurdity, cunning and mockery [...]”¹⁵.

Moreover, he confirmed the necessity of the temporal power of the Pope for the exercise of his universal ministry: “Divine Providence gave the civil rule of the Holy See to the Roman Pontiff. This rule is necessary in order that the Roman Pontiff may never be subject to any ruler or civil power but may be able to freely exercise his supreme power and authority of feeding and ruling the entire flock of the Lord, and of looking after the greater good of this Church, its well-being, and its needs”¹⁶.

In this section, we merely want to show how the Papal States ended during the pontificate of Pope Pius IX, which had serious political and ecclesiastical consequences, not only in Italy but also in the world¹⁷. It is beyond the scope of this work to describe the further course of events and the relations between the Holy See and the Italian State, which were only finally settled by the Lateran Political Treaty and the Concordat of 1929, more than four decades after the death of Pope Pius IX. The treaty and concordat between the two parties, known as the Lateran Pacts were signed on 11 February 1929 in the Lateran Palace by Benito Mussolini, Prime Minister and Head of Government, on behalf of King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy and by Pietro Gasparri, Cardinal Secretary of State, on behalf of Pope Pius XI (1922-1939). The Lateran Treaty and the Concordat were ratified by the Supreme Roman Pontiff and His Majesty the King of Italy on 7 June 1929¹⁸.

¹⁴ PIUS IX, encyclical *Ubi nos*, in *Pii IX Pontificis Maximi Acta, Pars prima*, vol. V, pp. 306-316; English translation, <https://www.papalencyclicals.net/pius09/p9ubinos.htm>, visited on 12 June 2024.

¹⁵ *Pii IX Pontificis Maximi Acta, Pars prima*, vol. V, pp. 310-311.

¹⁶ *Pii IX Pontificis Maximi Acta, Pars prima*, vol. V, pp. 313-314.

¹⁷ Cf. For details: G. MARTINA, *Pio IX (1867-1878)*, pp. 257-301.

¹⁸ Cf. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 21 (1929) p. 295; for an analysis of the juridical nature of the Treaty and the concordat, see F. RUFINI, *Relazioni tra Stato e Chiesa*, Bologna 1974, pp. 190-215.