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The College of Cardinals

MILES PATTENDEN

The College of Cardinals is one of the papacy's most distinctive constituent institutions. Indeed, its members are among the most recognizable holders of "second tier" office in any institution: even non-Catholics can usually spot them, if only on account of their distinctive red robes. Cardinals have been intimately associated with the figure of the pope for nigh on a thousand years now, having begun as clerics who supported him in a range of liturgical and pastoral functions. However, the cardinal's role became more political from the eleventh century, when those holding the rank began to conceive of themselves as a College – a corporate body with its own legal identity. This development marked cardinals out from the members of many of Europe's secular aristocracies because it meant they claimed a status independent of the monarch who created them: the pope chose them, but they, as the pope's electors, also choose popes. Of course, the aristocracies of some other elective monarchies, such as Poland–Lithuania, also held similar opinions about how the body politic operated at various times. But the cardinals articulated their agenda within an arguably more complex institution, at greater length, and over a longer period. The paradox of the cardinals' claims to status as sovereign electors induced tensions which were a major driving force in the papacy's wider history at various times: they were a significant factor in the Western Schism of 1378–1417 and also in the dynamics which later surrounded the rise of curial congregations. For a long period, the College of Cardinals drew up so-called electoral pacts before each papal conclave: documents which set out their collective demands and which each cardinal solemnly swore to abide by in the event that he became pope.[1]

Study of the cardinals and their College has been substantial for many historical periods: Giuseppe Alberigo, Stephan Kuttner, Werner Maleczek, and Agostino Paravicini Bagliani have been pioneers of the College's medieval history; Paolo Prodi, Christoph Weber, Barbara McClung Hallman, Maria Antonietta Visceglia, Wolfgang Reinhard, and Antonio Menniti Ippolito for the period between 1500 and 1800; Philippe Boutry and François Jankowiak for the nineteenth century.[2] Handbooks or research companions now also exist for each of the medieval, early modern, and modern periods, and they complement John F. Broderick's overview of the College's changing demographics across all of them.[3] The former librarian at Florida State University, Salvador Miranda, has maintained a searchable online database of all known cardinals, which has become an indispensable research tool for any scholar who studies such figures, either individually or in the collective.[4] In sum, this scholarship has emphasized the diversity of the backgrounds of the men who became cardinals, the changing profiles which dominated within the College over time, and the impact this has had on the cardinals' collective role in papal government. This chapter addresses those topics and uses its summary of them to consider a related question: how the College's historical composition has affected papal policies in the local Italian context and for the wider Catholic Church.

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[1] Walter Ullmann, "The Legal Validity of the Papal Electoral Pacts," *Ephemerides Iuris canonici* 12 (1956): 246–78.

The Origins of the Cardinalate and the Cardinals' Role in the Papacy

The first point to address when discussing cardinals is where the idea for them comes from.[5] The word *cardinalis* is not an ancient one: it emerged only at some point towards the end of the first millennium for reasons that remain obscure. The term was used as an honorific for the seven suffragan bishops of the Roman province – originally, the Bishops of Ostia, Albano, Palestrina, Porto-Santa Rufina, Silva Candida, Gabii, and Velletri – as early as the latter half of the eighth century.[6] The priests of Rome's twenty-eight *tituli* (parish churches), who also assisted the pope in his liturgical functions in the city's great basilicas, adopted, or were accorded, the same title soon after. However, the cardinal deacons, who served the pope in the Lateran basilica, or by administering his charitable activities, had to wait until the mid-eleventh century to receive their own version of the distinction. Leo IX (r. 1049–54), under whose papacy the three orders of cardinals begin to seem prominent, postulated that the title "cardinal" originally came from the Latin *cardo* (hinge): cardinals were the hinges (*cardines*) on which the great door of the *Ecclesia Universalis* swung.[7] Yet, even in Leo's lifetime, these cardinals were still thought of as three separate groups – the term "Sacred College," which denoted them in the collective, being used for the first time only at the Council of Rheims in 1148.[8] The train of events which set that convergence in motion began only in 1059, when Nicholas II elevated these clerics to the august position of papal electors, excluding all other clerics and laymen. Even so, equality between cardinals of different ranks – such that membership of one order was not much different in practical terms to membership of the others – still took some time. Originally, only the cardinal bishops could nominate popes, with the other two orders of cardinals confined to a role confirming or rejecting their choices. Only in 1179 – after that arrangement had proved intolerable – did Alexander III (r. 1159–81) effectively cement their combination into a single body by establishing that his successors were to be chosen by a simple two-thirds majority vote from amongst all recognized cardinals.[9]

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[2] Works by these scholars are cited at length in the notes below.

[3] Jürgen Dendorfer and Ralf Lützelschwab (eds.), *Geschichte des Kardinalats im Mittelalter* (Stuttgart, 2011); Jürgen Dendorfer, Ralf Lützelschwab, and Jessika Nowak (eds.), *Die Kardinäle des Mittelalters und der frühen Renaissance: Integration, Kommunikation, Habitus* (Rome, 2013). Mary Hollingsworth, Miles Pattenden, and Arnold Witte (eds.), *A Companion to the Early Modern Cardinal* (Leiden, 2020); François Jankowiak and Laura Pettinaroli (eds.), *Les Cardinaux entre Cour et Curie: Une élite romaine (1775–2015)* (Rome, 2017); Philippe Boutry, *Souverain et Pontife: Recherches prosopographiques sur la curie romaine à l'âge de la restauration 1814–1846* (Rome, 2002); Christoph Weber, *Kardinäle und Prälaten in den letzten Jahrzehnten des Kirchenstaates, 1846–1878* (Stuttgart, 1978); Christoph Weber, *Quellen und Studien zur Kurie und vatikanischen Politikunter Leo XIII.* (Tübingen, 1973); John F. Broderick, "The Sacred College of Cardinals: Size and Geographical Composition (1099–1986)," *Archivum historiae pontificiae* 25 (1987): 7–71. Information about extant cardinals can also be found in the *Annuario pontificio per l'anno* [Pontifical Yearbook] which has been published officially or semi-officially since the mid-nineteenth century.

[4] Salvador Miranda, "The Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church." A digital resource created and produced by Salvador Miranda, consisting of the biographical entries of the cardinals from 492 to 2015 and of the events and documents concerning the origin of the Roman cardinalate and its historical evolution: http://cardinals.fiu.edu/cardinals.htm.

[5] For a more detailed discussion of the material in these first two paragraphs, see Barbara Bombi, "The Medieval Background to the Cardinal's Office," in Hollingsworth, Pattenden, and Witte, *Companion to the Early Modern Cardinal*, 9–22, which summarizes much of the older literature also cited below.

Late medieval cardinals often considered themselves more than mere papal functionaries or flunkies: they were the men who accompanied the pope, advising him, but they were also the men who elected him. Popes too soon regarded cardinals as having a status which went beyond their original or nominal duties. From Urban II's pontificate onwards (r. 1088–99), the pope routinely instructed cardinals to assist as judges in Consistory; from the 1120s, he delegated to them as deputies and substitutes *in partibus*; from the time of Celestine II (r. 1143–44), he empowered them to judge cases (*causae maiores*) brought before the papal curia.[10] Yet cardinals, as the pope's electors, could easily be argued to hold an independent corporate status. As early as the twelfth century, Bernard of Clairvaux told his fellow Cistercian Eugene III (r. 1145–53) that, though the cardinals have no power but that which he permitted them, they could also consider themselves a separate and powerful Senate of the Church: "those whom you did not choose, but who chose you."[11] Later canonists elaborated such claims as "corporation theory": the Church was a single legal body with the pope as its head but the cardinals as its limbs (*membra*), without which it could hardly be expected to function.[12] Innocent III (r. 1198–1216) modified this theory to identify the cardinals, not as mere limbs, but as "parts of the head" (*membra capitis*), a formulation which implied that they did not, in fact, enjoy full independence.[13] Later popes were even more reluctant to concede on this point – hence this beautiful piece of equivocation on the subject by Boniface VIII (r. 1294–1303):

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[6] The suburbicarian dioceses are currently Ostia, Albano, Frascati, Palestrina, Porto-Santa Rufina, Sabina, and Velletri; however, between 1150 and 1914 the sees of Ostia and Velletri were combined.

[7] Stephan Kuttner, "Cardinalis: The History of a Canonical Concept," *Traditio* 3 (1945): 134–45.

[8] Auguste Molien, "Sacré College," in *Dictionnaire de droit canonique*, ed. Antoine Villein and Étienne Magnin, 7 vols. (Paris, 1924–35), 3:990.

[9] On the history of the cardinals' voting rights in the papal election, see Josep Colomer and Iain McLean, "Electing Popes: Approval Balloting and Qualified Majority Rule," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 29 (1998): 1–22. Miles Pattenden, *Electing the Pope in Early Modern Italy, 1450–1700* (Oxford, 2017), 56–67.

> Some might say that the cardinals do not have status. They do and they do not, since he who is established in plenitude of power over all and has the power to loose and to bind, as the Vicar of Jesus Christ, is chosen by and proceeds from their canonical election. Indeed, there is no one, after the Roman pontiff himself, who has such an elevated status as this. It is well known that they are members of our head. However, they do not have the same status of pre-eminence that the pope himself has. No one else has this kind of status except the pope himself alone, since he is not beneath that of anyone inferior

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[10] Giuseppe Alberigo, *Cardinalato e collegialità: Studi sull'ecclesiologia tra l'XI e il XIV secolo* (Florence, 1969), 52–63; Werner Maleczek, "Die Kardinäle von 1143 bis 1216: Exklusive Papstwähler und erste Agenten der päpstlichen plenitude potestatis," in Dendorfer and Lützelschwab, *Geschichte des Kardinalats*, 124–26.

[11] Bernard of Clairvaux, *De consideratione*, IV.4.9, Jacques-Paul Migne, Patrologia Cursus Completus, Series Latina, 221 vols. (Paris, 1841–55) (*PL*) 182:778; Christoph Egger, "Curial Politics and Papal Power: Eugenius III, the Curia, and Contemporary Theological Controversy," in *Pope Eugenius III (1145–1153): The First Cistercian Pope*, ed. Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt and Andrew Jotischky (Amsterdam, 2018), 69–100.

[12] Norman Zacour, "The Cardinals' View of the Papacy, 1150–1300," in *The Religious Roles of the Papacy: Ideals and Realities, 1150–1300*, ed. Christopher Ryan (Toronto, 1989), 419; Brian Tierney, *Foundations of the Conciliar Theory: The Contribution of the Medieval Canonists from Gratian to the Great Schism* (Leiden, 1998), 62–80.

[13] Maleczek, "Die Kardinäle," 127–28.

> to him. But the cardinals who have status are beneath the Roman pontiff, who has the power to correct and to punish them.[14]

The popes at Avignon tempered Boniface's position, growing cardinals' responsibilities by employing them, for example on diplomatic missions and legations. Eventually, however, that move further emboldened them to pretend at a form of papal oligarchic rule.[15] The dispute over status reached its climax under Urban VI (r. 1378–89).[16] Urban demanded that his cardinals formalize their subordination to his *plenitudo* and the Schism which followed lasted forty years. Yet the Schism was in many ways even more damaging for the cardinals' pretensions than it was for the pope's (or popes'). The papacy survived the Schism but calls were repeatedly made for the College of Cardinals itself to be reformed or even abolished.[17]

The fifteenth century was thus a period of rebuilding for cardinals as much as it was for the papacy as a whole.[18] Indeed, the risks of provoking a second schism were all too apparent to many within the reunited College. The sixteenth century also witnessed a further major development in the cardinals' role within the papacy after popes began to assign them to commissions.[19] At first such commissions were ad hoc, dealing with specific questions of how papal policy should be formulated or implemented in a specific area: the administration of the rapidly consolidating Papal States, curial reform, or the governance of the wider Church. After Trent, these commissions institutionalized further into formal committees known as Congregations. Sixtus V (r. 1585–90) legislated to acknowledge this new status quo in his bull

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[14] "Gesta Boemundi archiepiscopi Treveriensis," quoted in Zacour, "The Cardinals' View of the Papacy," 435–36.

[15] See the respective essays of Bernard Guillemain, Edith Pàsztor, and Henri Bresc, in *Genèse et débuts du grand schisme d'Occident: Colloque international*, ed. Jean Favier (Paris, 1980), 19–30, 31–44, 45–64.

[16] See, for example, Stefan Weiß, "Luxury and Extravagance at the Papal Court in Avignon and the Outbreak of the Great Western Schism," in *A Companion to the Great Western Schism (1378–1417)*, ed. Joëlle Rollo-Koster and Thomas Izbicki (Leiden, 2009), 67–87.

[17] Étienne Anheim, "Zur Legitimation des Kardinalats im 14. Jahrhundert," in Dendorfer and Lützelschwab, *Geschichte des Kardinalats*, 248–63. See also the remarks of William of Ockham, in Alberigo, *Cardinalato*, 140–44 and Pierre d'Ailly, in Francis Oakley, *The Political Thought of Pierre d'Ailly* (New Haven, CT, 1964), 328.

[18] See Carol Richardson, *Reclaiming Rome: Cardinals in the Fifteenth Century* (Leiden, 2009).

[19] Paolo Prodi, *The Papal Prince: One Body and Two Souls. The Papal Monarchy in Early Modern Europe*, trans. Susan Haskins (Cambridge, 1987), 86 (and 79–102 on the general discussion within this paragraph). Prodi traces the roots of this development back perhaps as far as Paul II.

Immensa aeterni Dei (1588).[20] In theory, the pope retained absolute authority over all Congregations, including the right to confirm or reject their decisions. A Venetian ambassador explained it in 1578:

> [Cardinals] are employed by the pope to advise him, since having [been] appointed [to] different congregations in accordance with their professions and the experience which they have … in such a way that, the pope having heard someone's demand, either decides himself, when the need arises, or puts the affair in the hands of whichever congregation suits him, and then resolves it himself, after having listened to whichever opinion of the cardinals pleases him most.[21]

In practice, the pontiff's personal control over these committees was highly variable. A skilled political operative at the height of his powers could exercise considerable coercive influence over the cardinals.[22] Yet, at other times (especially when the pope was near to death), cardinals enjoyed flexibility over the role they played within a given Congregation or in respect of its functions. Like other rulers of the *ancien régime* in Europe, popes were far from always aware of what their deputies said or did in their name. And, as elsewhere, cardinals, and the wider elite from which they were so often drawn, consented to such theoretically "Absolutist" political systems precisely because of the discretion this afforded them to pursue their own strategies and agenda under the guise of a higher cause.[23]

Modernity has substantially altered the cardinals' role within the papacy again. The College still retains its status as the formal legal body that comprises the pope's electors. However, since 1970, only cardinals under the age of eighty have been eligible to vote, which leaves older cardinals with what amounts to a purely honorific title. At the same time, a significant number of cardinals – typically now a majority – hold primary appointments as bishops or metropolitans within the global Catholic Church: their status as cardinals is important now largely for the venerability and moral authority it confers on them. It is also symbolically significant in binding their local Church to the Vatican. Only since 2013 has Pope Francis I begun to signal intent to move away from this model towards one in which cardinals are, once again, appointed for their individual merits. The College's new tripartite division – curial cardinals; global cardinals; emeritus cardinals – which grew after 1870, and has hardened since 1970, may well transform the cardinal's role further, nevertheless. Cardinals can hardly be close papal advisors if they rarely see the pontiff – something that even Francis I's new non-metropolitan global cardinals do not do often. There must be a risk that the status of non-resident cardinals becomes more marginal over time because of this – and also that cardinals become less familiar with each other (with all kinds of further consequences to that). Recent scandals, particularly financial scandals surrounding leading curial cardinals such as Giovanni Angelo Becciu, already suggest significant centralization of knowledge and power has occurred within the Vatican and that the ability of individual cardinals to shape or influence papal policy is as variable as ever. Tensions between "insiders" and "outsiders" are now well known and fuel their own conspiracy theories: media reports have even intimated that high officials within the Vatican conspired in the prosecution of the Australian cardinal George Pell for historical child sexual abuse in retaliation for his investigations into Vatican finances.[24]

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[20] Sixtus V, "*Immensa aeterni Dei*," January 22, 1588, in *Bullarium Romanum: Bullarum diplomatum et privilegiorum sanctorum romanorum pontificum: taurinensis editio*, ed. Luigi Tomassetti et al., 24 vols. (Turin, 1857–72), 8:985–99. See also, Miles Pattenden, "The Roman Curia," in *A Companion to Early Modern Rome, 1492–1692*, ed. Pamela M. Jones, Barbara Wisch, and Simon R. Ditchfield (Leiden, 2018), 44–59 at 47–51.

[21] Antonio Tiepolo, "Relazione," in Eugenio Alberì, *Relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti al Senato*, ser. 2, 5 vols. (Florence, 1839–63), 4:248.

[22] See, for instance, the well-known excerpt from Paolo Paruta's, "Relazione," from 1595, in Alberì, *Relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti*, 4:413–14; Maria Teresa Fattori, *Clemente VIII e il Sacro Collegio: Meccanismi istituzionali ed accentramento di governo* (Stuttgart, 2004); Miles Pattenden, *Electing the Pope in Early Modern Italy, 1450–1700* (Oxford, 2017), 204–12.

[23] James Collins, "State-Building in Early Modern Europe: The Case of France," *Modern Asian Studies* 31 (1997): 603–33.

Appointing Cardinals

The question of how a cleric becomes a cardinal has vexed the Church almost much as general uncertainties about cardinals' precise roles. There have been two aspects to this issue: the procedural (by what means is a cardinal made) and the jurisdictional (who can make cardinals). The procedural would appear to have had the more settled answer, although even this is not as settled as might be supposed. Medieval popes evolved an elaborate creation ceremony for cardinals, the earliest surviving description of which comes from Giacomo Caetani Stefaneschi's *Ordinarium sanctae Romanae ecclesiae* (*c*.1300).[25] By the sixteenth century, the ceremony typically took place in the presence of the College's existing members over a period of several days.[26] The pope proposed the names of new cardinals to existing members of the College in a secret consistory. Having secured their consent, he then gathered all cardinals, new and old, together so they could bear mutual witness to an act of obeisance.[27] And yet, whether a cleric who had gone through this ceremony could be said to be a cardinal at this point was still a matter of contention. The pope presented the cleric with broad-brimmed *galero* hat as a token of his new identity, simultaneously absolving him of his previous responsibilities. However, the new cardinal did not yet enjoy his full rights as a member of the College (including, crucially, the right to vote). Those rights came only after a further consistory session at which the pope "opened the mouth." If pope or cardinal died before the mouth was opened, the cardinal's status was left ambiguous. Notably, this happened to Ascanio Sforza on the eve of the 1484 conclave, following Sixtus IV's untimely death – on that occasion the other cardinals deigned to include him in the conclave.[28] In some cases where political sensitivities have been involved (most recently in 2003), popes have chosen to create cardinals secretly (*in petto*) without publishing their names. As with cases in which the named cleric has refused the honor of his promotion (an occasional occurrence across various periods), this obviously complicates the question of whether the cardinal is or is not a full member of the College either at the moment of the non-announcement of his name or the pope's death.

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[24] www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/religionandethicsreport/could-former-vatican-staffer-have-bribed-to-tilt-the-pell-case/12738792.

[25] Giacomo Caetani Stefaneschi, "*Ordinarium Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae*," in *Musei Italici*, vol. 2, *Complectens Libros Rituales Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae*, ed. Johannes Mabillon and Michaele Germain (Paris, 1724), 243–443.

Regarding the question of who makes cardinals, medieval popes seem to have largely assumed that they enjoyed an exclusive right of creation – and most popes, from Leo IX (r. 1049–54) onwards, exercised this right to reward relatives or supporters, or else to shape the College as they saw fit. Augustinus Triumphus, one of the more pro-papal canonists of the era, was unequivocal about the pope's prerogatives in this regard: "the pope can choose as cardinals whomever, from wherever, and of whatever qualities he so wishes," he wrote in 1320.[29] Yet other canonists, including both Huguccio (d.1210) and Hostiensis (d.1271), mused that the existing cardinals themselves might invite others to join their ranks in the absence of a pope and if the decision to do so might break the deadlock of a papal vacancy.[30] Others observed that popes, even if sovereign in the choice of cardinals, ought to be guided by appropriate criteria over whom to promote. Bernard of Clairvaux, for instance, argued that the pope should look for men of worth and experience, "not youths but men of mature age, such as you know to be the elders of the people, reckoning age more by virtue than by years."[31] Later, the Council of Constance (1414–18) demanded cardinals be representative of Christian nations and the Council of Florence–Ferrara–Basel (1431–49) demanded that new cardinals be better qualified for their office through the possession of at least a doctorate in canon law or theology.[32] Various third parties have also claimed a right to influence the pope's choices of candidates for the cardinalate. Efforts to persuade Innocent III that all abbots of Vendôme were entitled to the dignity *ex officio* constitute an early example.[33] In 1551, Charles V pressured Julius III (r. 1550–55) to allow him both to nominate and veto candidates for the College as part of negotiations surrounding the future of the Council of Trent. Henry II of France soon made similar demands, even threatening to withdraw France from papal obedience if Julius did not comply.[34] Philip II of Spain went even further. He declared that he would permit only those of his subjects whom he himself had proposed to be made cardinals at all.[35] Seventeenth-century treatises pointed out how Catholic princes had had a hand in nominating cardinals more or less constantly since the time of Charles V and one such document urges them to set about "fixing the number and the timing of any promotions at the Crown's instigation" to protect against the risk that this generated controversy in the future.[36]

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[26] Jennifer Mara DeSilva, "The Rituals of the Cardinalate: Creation and Abdication," in Hollingsworth, Pattenden, and Witte, *Companion to the Early Modern Cardinal*, 40–57.

[27] Marc Dykmans, *L'Œuvre de Patrizi Piccolomini, ou, Le Ceremonial papal de la premiere Renaissance* (Vatican City, 1980), 143, 166–68.

[28] Johann Burchard, *Johannis Buckardi Liber notarum ab anno MCCCCLXXXIII usque ad annum MDVI*, ed. Enrico Celani, 32 vols. (Città del Castello, 1907–42), 1:45.

[29] Augustinus Triumphus, *Summa de potestate ecclesiastica* (Rome, 1584), 504–5 (Quaestio 102, article 4).

The efforts of third parties to influence or control appointments to the College have met with mixed success over the centuries. The cardinals themselves were never in practice able to add to their number, although they did sometimes use the papal vacancy to cancel the late pope's proscription of an individual member. In 1294, by contrast, Charles of Anjou did succeed in persuading Celestine V to allow him both to propose the names of candidates for the College and also to substitute those names at the last minute.[37] Clement VII (1378–94, of the Avignon obedience), desperate for political support during the Schism, also created nineteen of his thirty-three new cardinals expressly at princes' behests.[38] And, most famously, John V of Portugal struck just such an agreement with Clement XII (r. 1730–40) whereby he established that candidates he, as king, appointed as Patriarch of Lisbon would be made cardinals by the pope at the next consistory.[39] Yet, on other occasions, attempts to control papal appointments triggered a backlash. Paul IV (r. 1555–59), in a characteristically choleric outburst, railed against such political chicanery in 1555:

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[30] John Watt, "The Constitutional Law of the College of Cardinals: Hostiensis to Joannes Andreae," *Medieval Studies* 33 (1971): 127–57 at 130.

[31] Bernard of Clairvaux, *De consideratione*, IV.4.10, *PL* 182:779.

[32] Hubert Jedin, "Vorschlage und Entwurfe zur Kardinals-reform," in idem, *Kirche des Glaubens, Kirche der Geschichte*, 2 vols. (Freibourg im Breisgau, 1966), 118–21.

[33] Kuttner, "Cardinalis," 175n.

[34] Ludwig Pastor, *The History of the Popes from the Close of the Middle Ages*, trans. Ralph Francis Kerr, 40 vols. (London, 1891–1953), 13:171. Frederic J. Baumgartner, "Henry II and the Papal Conclave of 1549," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 16 (1985): 301–14.

[35] Pastor, *History of the Popes*, 21:238n.1.

[36] "Discorso sopra l'obbligo che hanno i Sommi Pontefici di creare cardinali nationali a richiesta de' Signori Ambasciatori delle Corone," Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, *Ottob. Lat. 3185*, 68r–73r, quotation at 71v.

> What a disgrace that princes should have servants in the Sacred College! How can secrecy be kept or impartiality be hoped for in such a dependent position? To speak plainly, what sort of people have received the purple on such terms?[40]

At other times, formulae were found to allow princes to make their preferences clear without compromising the legal fiction that the appointment had been an exclusively papal decision. This was probably the dynamic behind Pius II's reform bull of 1460 (never published), which stipulated that he would "promote none but worthy men to the purple … born in lawful wedlock, at least thirty years of age, Doctors of Theology or of Canon Law, of blameless life, and experienced in business."[41] By the eighteenth century, a more formalized mechanism for "nominations" existed. Indeed, under Benedict XIII (r. 1724–30), the King of Sardinia became the seventh ruler to acquire a right of nomination after the Emperor and the kings of Spain, Portugal, France, Poland, the Duke of Savoy, and the Republic of Venice.[42] A treatise from the reign of Benedict XIV illustrates that such objections as popes raised at this time were not about substance but only language. As Maria Antonietta Visceglia has noted, it was presented as a victory that a practice of princes "recommending" had replaced the older "abusive" one of them "nominating." But the recommended prelate still got his red hat.[43]

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[37] Peter Herder, *Cölestin V (1294)* (Stuttgart, 1981), 97–104.

[38] Martin Souchon, *Die Papstwahlen in der Zeit des Großen Schismas: Entwicklung und Verfasungskämpfe des Kardinalats von 1378 bis 1417*, 2 vols. (Braunschweig, 1898–99), 1:173–74.

[39] Clement XII, *"Inter praecipuas apostolici ministerii,"* December 17, 1737, *Bullarum Romanum*, 24:313–15.

[40] Bernardo Navagero to the Senate, December 19, 1555, in Daniele Santarelli (ed.), *La correspondenza di Bernardo Navagero, ambasciatore veneziano a Roma (1555–1558)*, 2 vols. (Rome, 2011), 1:105.

[41] "Generalis Romanae curiae reformatio facta tempore Pii PP. II," reproduced in Pastor, *History of the Popes*, 3:397–403 (Appendix, n.42), 399.

[42] "Memoria sulle lettere scritte dai Principi ai Sommi Pontefici per la promotione dei cardinali detta delle Corone," Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, *Vat. Lat. 9712*, 135–210.

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw the influence of secular governments over the process of creating cardinals recede. In part, this reflected a growing belief across Catholic societies in the need to separate Church and state, but it was also due to the resurgence of assertions of the Holy See's political independence in the wake of the pope's temporal power in Italy going extinct. Ultramontanism too undoubtedly strengthened papal prerogatives over the appointment of cardinals. After all, if the pope could not appoint his own advisors and electors then in what sense was the Church independent? Today, the only state that would seem to claim overt control over the creation of cardinals is the People's Republic of China. The terms of the 2018 agreement between China and the Holy See allow the Chinese Communist Party to appoint bishops within China, one or more of whom could be expected to join the cardinalate as the recent Archbishops of Hong Kong Joseph Zen (b.1932) and John Tong Hon (b.1939) have done. Pope Francis I is yet to promote a Chinese bishop to the College (except from Hong Kong), since the agreement came into force, which means this particular form of Chinese influence remains, for now, largely theoretical. Of course, other states can still let their opinions about the candidatures of particular bishops or archbishops be known. In 1878, Leo XIII invited the French government to nominate Charles Lavigerie as a cardinal but President MacMahon refused.[44] By contrast, the Duke of Norfolk seems to have been highly influential in persuading Leo to offer a red hat to John Henry Newman.[45] More recently, a greater proportion of appointments of non-resident cardinals have become automatic based on the "tradition" that the incumbent of a particular metropolitan see gains promotion (either immediately or when his predecessor dies or when he loses his voting rights in the conclave). Only occasionally, as with Benedict

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[43] Maria Antonietta Visceglia, *Morte e elezione del papa: Norme, riti e conflitti*, vol. 2, *L'Eta moderna* (Rome, 2013), 239–40. "La creazione de' nuovi cardinali," Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, *Vat. Lat. 9712*, 10.

[44] J. Dean O'Donnell Jr., "Cardinal Charles Lavigerie: The Politics of Getting a Red Hat," *Catholic Historical Review* 63 (1977): 185–203, at 187. Lavigerie was created cardinal four years later, after the end of MacMahon's term.

[45] Ian Ker, *John Henry Newman: A Biography* (Oxford, 2009), 715.

XVI and Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster, does the pope's personal opinion for, or in this case against, a prelate seem to have trumped this prerogative.[46] Of course, popes have continued to appoint curial cardinals apparently without external interference but based on the need to use the rank as a reward within an effective system of patronage and reward within the Vatican bureaucracy.

The College's Changing Demographics: Size

The College's size has fluctuated considerably over the centuries: from various low points in the Middle Ages, when the number of cardinals barely registered in double figures, to the current preponderance of over two hundred. The College's initial quotas of seven cardinal bishops and twenty-eight cardinal priests (later joined by the nineteen cardinal deacons) were filled only rarely even during periods when cardinals first came to prominence. Indeed, while popes like Paschal II in 1118 and Eugene III in 1145 had around forty-five cardinals, others like Alexander III and Innocent III often made do with little more than twenty. Yet it is hard to present definitive statistics for the cardinals of this or indeed any era. A lack of clear records means a great deal of uncertainty hangs over questions concerning who should be counted as a cardinal at this time and also over whether all who should be counted have been. Early modern historians of the Sacred College, such as Alfonso Chacón (1530–99) and Lorenzo Cardella (1734–1822), tended to overcount medieval cardinals because they were strongly incentivized to maximize numbers. Yet, overall, the trend governing promotions seems to have gone downwards during the thirteenth century. John Broderick was able to count over 300 cardinals from the period 1099 to 1198, but only 138 cardinals for the period from 1198 to 1304.[47] This may reflect longer average tenure and/or the absence of records; however, it most likely also shows pressure to reduce the number of cardinals rose as the status of individual cardinals, and the College as a whole, increased. This situation pertained throughout the Avignon period, which would appear to lend further weight to that interpretation. Just 134 cardinals over the course of seventy-four years ensured that the College remained small (normally between twenty and thirty at any one time, but occasionally lower).

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[46] Ruth Gledhill, "No red hat for Westminster; Archbishop Vincent Nichols' name does not feature in the Pope's latest list of new cardinals," *The Times*, January 6, 2012. John Bingham, "Could Archbishop of Westminster get a last-minute conclave call-up?," *Daily Telegraph*, February 26, 2013. Pope Francis eventually created Nichols a cardinal on February 22, 2014, eighteen months after his predecessor had turned eighty and after the 2013 conclave.

[47] Broderick, "The Sacred College of Cardinals," 12.

The early modern period witnessed a period of considerable expansion for the Sacred College. We might think this to have been a result of the Western Schism, after which the two then three extant colleges had to be merged back into one. Yet a sustained increase in the College's size in truth began only under Alexander VI (r. 1492–1503), a correlation which has caused Marco Pellegrini to ask whether his pontificate was a "turning point" in its history.[48] The number of cardinals rose steadily through the sixteenth century, reaching a high point of seventy-six in 1565.[49] In 1586, Sixtus V capped the total number of cardinals at seventy "in imitation of the elders of Israel."[50] A total of between fifty and seventy cardinals remained normal for the rest of the papacy's *ancien régime*, although the numbers occasionally dipped lower (e.g., to forty-nine before Clement XIII's promotions of September 1759 and to forty-five at the time of the Conclave of Venice in 1800). The critical questions in all this are why popes found this the optimal size for the body of their subordinates and what factors guided them towards that decision. Of course, cardinals themselves were frequently against the prospect of additions to their ranks. Pius II reports a scathing rebuke he earned from Ludovico Trevisan when he announced plans to promote new men in 1460:

> I am ashamed to sit in this place which every man thinks due him. The path to this eminence used to be open only to the most illustrious … You have named a number whom I would not have as servants in my kitchen or stable. Nor do I see the necessity for the creation of new cardinals. There are enough of us already … We are cheapened by too great numbers. We have not enough resources for ourselves, and you wish to add others to take the bread out of our mouths. Further, you have not yet mentioned anyone whom I consider worthy of the red hat.[51]

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[48] Marco Pellegrini, "A Turning-Point in the History of the Factional System in the Sacred College: The Power of Pope and Cardinals in the Age of Alexander VI," in Gianvittorio Signorotto and Maria Antonietta Visceglia (eds.), *Court and Politics in Papal Rome, 1492–1700* (Cambridge, 2002), 8–30.

[49] Marco Pellegrini, "Il Sacro Collegio Cardinalizio tra Rinascimento e Controriforma: Orientamenti tematici e Bibliografici," in Jürgen Dendorfer, Ralf Lützelschwab, and Jessika Nowak (eds.), *Die Kardinäle des Mittelalters und der frühen Renaissance: Integration, Kommunikation, Habitus* (Rome, 2013), 322.

[50] Sixtus V, "*Postquam verus*," December 3, 1586, in *Bullarium Romanum*, 8:808–16.

[51] Margaret Meserve and Marcello Simonetta (eds.), *Pius II: Commentaries*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 2003–7), 2:229–30.

Even Sixtus V, generally regarded as a powerful and wily politician, had to face open dissent against his plans to create cardinals in 1588.[52] Such episodes were in fact quite common throughout the sixteenth century – and part of the reason was the essentially zero-sum game existing cardinals played with new colleagues: the exclusivity of their status was still what gave them their political power so they were loath to see it diluted. Popes too faced a surprisingly similar calculation, which varied little in the centuries after Trent: insofar as they wanted to dilute opposition within the College they were incentivized to add new cardinals, but the more cardinals they created the more they cheapened the favor of giving a given cleric a red hat.

The College did not increase in size between 1800 and 1958 and this is, in some ways, just as interesting a phenomenon as its growth from 1400 to 1800. This was an era of enormous institutional change in the papacy, and the Catholic Church as a whole. And yet, no pope until John XXIII in 1958 dared broach Sixtus V's limit of seventy cardinals. Benedict XV even let it be enshrined in the Code of Canon Law of 1917.[53] What might that reflect? Perhaps, first, a reactionary desire on the part of nineteenth-century popes to preserve as much of the papacy's pre-1798 constitution as possible: if there was no good reason to add to the number of cardinals then why do so? Yet the backgrounds of members of the College changed markedly in this period (on which, more below), meaning that the new cardinals simply displaced cardinals from more traditional backgrounds rather than augmenting them. This might have been an ideological decision on the part of popes from Leo XIII onwards, although their own conservative and Italian backgrounds suggests that as unlikely. More probably, it reflects the fact that the rationale for popes to create cardinals from traditional backgrounds had in fact weakened: why make cardinals out of Italian or European princes when that old order had been weakened or swept away by revolution? Equally, why listen to political demands for "national" cardinals from European governments who were also preaching the virtues of a separation of Church and state? Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century popes had little need to increase the numbers of senior prelates at the heart of their administration: there was a financial cost to doing so which the Vatican was not well placed to bear until the Lateran Accords of 1929.[54] Popes also had other priorities such as establishing a more effective network of diplomatic connections across the globe.

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[52] Pastor, *History of the Popes*, 21:239–41.

[53] "Sacrum Collegium in tres ordines distribuitur: episcopalem, ad quem soli pertinent sex Cardinales, dioecesibus suburbicariis praepositi; presbyteralem, qui constat Cardinalibus quinquaginta; diaconalem, qui quatuordecim" (Canon 231, 1).

John XXIII finally broke the taboo of allowing more than seventy cardinals when he created twenty-three new cardinals in 1958, thus taking their overall numbers to seventy-four. John explained his decision in terms of the good it would do for the Universal Church (i.e., the Church globally) and all subsequent increases in the College's size have also been justified with reference to this same agendum. Paul VI grew the College to 120 members; John-Paul II to 183; and Benedict XVI to 207. At the time of writing (October 2023), under Francis I, there are currently 241 cardinals. Francis I has been creating cardinals annually throughout his pontificate at a rate of around twelve or thirteen per year. What may matter now more than the overall number is the number of cardinals with voting rights in the conclave, which has breached the limit of 120, set by Paul VI, with increasing regularity (136 cardinals are eligible to vote as I write). Suggestions that the number of voting cardinals should be increased, or that the number of cardinals overall should be reduced, have actually been remarkably few and far between. Only recently, in the wake of financial scandal and the economic turbulence of the Covid-19 pandemic has Francis I moved towards cutting the College's costs. Yet for the moment this exercise has apparently focused on reducing per capita benefits – media reports indicate that individual cardinals in Rome now "earn" up to €5,000 each month, in addition to receiving free or subsidised accommodation – rather than more structural change.[55] Of course, the proliferation of cardinals in recent decades will have had another effect: with nearly four times as many living cardinals as a hundred years ago, popes necessarily struggle to know them all personally – and they likewise must struggle to know each other. All this must have had substantial effects on how the pope manages his cardinals and also how they approach their collective responsibilities – not least the supreme one of selecting the papal successor when that time arrives.

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[54] See John F. Pollard, *Money and the Rise of the Modern Papacy: Financing the Vatican, 1850–1950* (Cambridge, 2005), 45–50.

[55] "Pope Cuts Pay for Cardinals as Vatican Finances Hit by Pandemic," BBC News, 24 March 2021. www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-56515367.

The College's Changing Demographics: Backgrounds

Our knowledge of the profiles and backgrounds of most cardinals from before 1400 is strictly limited. Few come with complete names or family histories. We can identify a place of origin for little more a third of those known from the twelfth century: a large majority of these (80 percent) were Italians, with Frenchmen making up the next largest block (13 percent), and six Germans, two Englishmen, and two Burgundians completing the mix.[56] Native Romans were the most numerous geographical category of all (27 percent), which may also reveal something about the College's predominant social background: they were probably, for the most part, the sorts of aristocratic figures who also monopolized episcopal office across Europe in this era. Nevertheless, we have little sense of why these particular men became cardinals – that is, what career paths they had followed to arrive at the red hat or by what criteria they had been deemed worthy. Information about the thirteenth-century College is more plentiful. Indeed, we can identify origins for over 90 percent of its members and we can say that the majority were still Italian (65 percent), with minorities of Frenchmen (22 percent), Englishmen (6 percent), and Iberians (5 percent), registering alongside two Germans and a lone Hungarian.[57] The rise in the proportion of French cardinals probably reflects the growing influence of the Capetians and their cadet branch, the House of Anjou, in Italian politics. By contrast, as John Broderick has noted, the collapse of the Hohenstaufen dynasty and the ensuing decline in imperial influence in Italian politics must explain the relative absence of German cardinals in this period (the two named by Honorius III in 1219 and 1225 were to be the last for over two hundred years).[58] Nevertheless, the caveat about understanding these individuals in wider context applies to these cardinals as much as to their twelfth-century predecessors. Only from the fourteenth century, during the Avignon papacy, do cardinals' social backgrounds start to become clearer. The records tell the story of the growing importance of patronage and nepotism in securing promotion to the College.[59] Of the 134 Avignon cardinals, 113, like all the Avignon popes themselves, were French; and ninety-six of them came from the same area of southern France that produced all the popes.[60] Thirty-three of them were even relatives of the pope who created them, which was probably a substantial consolidation even of any pre-existing trend.[61]

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[56] Helene Tillmann, "Ricerche sull'origine dei membri del collegio cardinalizio nel XII secolo: Identificazione dei cardinali del secolo II di provenienza romana," *Rivista di storia della Chiesa in Italia* 24 (1970): 441–64, 26 (1972): 313–53, 29 (1975): 363–402.

[57] Konrad Eubel et al., *Hierarchia Catholica medii et recentioris aevi*, 8 vols. (Regensberg, 1898–1978), 1:3–13; Agostino Paravicini Bagliani challenges and corrects some of Eubel's data in *Cardinali di curia e "familiae" cardinalizie dal 1227 al 1254*, 2 vols. (Padua, 1972) and *I Testamenti dei cardinali del Duecento* (Rome, 1980).

[58] Broderick, "The Sacred College of Cardinals," 18–19.

The cardinals of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries are much better attested, ironically, for two quite contradictory reasons. On the one hand, the post-Tridentine impetus to write Sacred History inspired a number of scholars to document what they could about contemporary cardinals in encyclopedic fashion. On the other hand, many of these cardinals, especially in the Renaissance era, left behind substantial administrative records because they were highly preoccupied with what David Chambers describes, euphemistically, as their "worldly" pursuits.[62] The fifteenth-century College is liminal in this respect: we know the names of all cardinals and some further information about each one; however, precise statistics about their profiles are hard to compile because many small anomalies and lacunae relating to the more obscure amongst them remain. Only in the sixteenth century, and the seventeenth, do we get a complete sense of exactly who these men were and how they secured their position within the papal court. Most cardinals in this period were Italian (70 percent), and a high proportion of them also came from within the Papal States itself. The vast majority were also related to each other by blood or marriage. Barbara McClung Hallman, who studied the subset of Italian cardinals created between 1492 and 1563, found that 81 out of 102 had familial links with at least one other cardinal.[63] Christoph Weber, who has undertaken yet more extensive prosopographical analyses, has traced whole lineages of cardinals from the individual popes who reigned during this period: an astonishing forty out of the fifty-six cardinals who took part in the conclave of 1721 were descended from one or more of Innocent

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[59] For prosopograpical studies of the Avignon papacy, see Bernard Guillemain, *La Cour pontificale d'Avignon, 1309–1376: Étude d'une société* (Paris, 1962). For the period of the Schism, see Philippe Genequand, *Une politique pontificale en temps de crise: Clément VII d'Avignon et les premières années du grand Schisme d'Occident* (1378–1394) (Basel, 2013).

[60] Eubel et al., *Hierarchia Catholica*, 1:13–22.

[61] On nepotism in the College of Cardinals until the thirteenth century, see Sandro Carocci, *Il nepotismo nel medioevo: Papi, cardinali e famiglie nobili* (Rome, 1999) and Arnold Esch, *Rom: vom Mittelalter zur Renaissance* (Munich, 2016).

[62] D. S. Chambers, *Renaissance Cardinals and their Worldly Problems* (London, 1997).

[63] Barbara McClung Hallman, *Italian Cardinals, Reform, and the Church as Property, 1492–1563* (Chicago, 1985), 5.

VIII, Alexander VI, Julius II, Paul III, Pius IV, and Gregory XIII.[64] Weber shows other interesting phenomena, such as a rise and then gradual decline in underage cardinals and cardinals who admitted to fathering illegitimate children. In this sense, the College was "sanitized" after Trent: promotions that risked causing scandal within the Church became noticeably rarer after 1563.[65] However, cardinals with a conspicuous reputation for piety nevertheless remained a minority – only three cardinals plus one pope from this period were actually made saints – and most were distinguished by their legal qualifications rather than pastoral experience.[66] Italian princes remained a major subset of all cardinals throughout this time: Rome's famous Colonna family, for instance, produced fourteen cardinals between 1417 and 1799 and had its own representative within the College for 254 years of these 382 years.[67]

An unwinding of Italian dominance within the College began only in the second half of the nineteenth century. Of the 205 new cardinals appointed by the popes from Pius VII to Gregory XVI, a full 78 percent were still Italian; under Pius IX and Leo XIII, this dropped to just 58 percent (156 out of 270 cardinals), and under the popes of the early twentieth century (Pius X to Pius XI), it dropped slightly again to 55 percent. Much of the dilution of the College's Italian identity came about because prelates from elsewhere in Europe were promoted more generously. Ten Englishmen, for instance, received red hats between 1830 and 1939, eight more than over the previous two and a half centuries (that is even when counting Henry Benedict Stuart as "English"). However, France was once again the biggest beneficiary, with 55 cardinals from 1846 to 1939, well ahead of Germany (17 cardinals), Austria (20 cardinals), Hungary (10 cardinals), Spain (36 cardinals), Portugal (7 cardinals), Poland (8 cardinals), and Ireland (5 cardinals). In 1875, the Archbishop of New York, John McCloskey (1810–85), became the first of six American cardinals in this era – and, more significantly still, the first cardinal to have been appointed from the Church beyond Europe and the Near East. McCloskey was not, however, the first cardinal to have set foot in the Americas: that honor had already gone to Jean-Louis Anne Madelain Lefebvre de Cheverus (1768–1836), a Frenchman who had become Bishop of Boston in 1808 but had returned to

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[64] Christoph Weber, *Senatus Divinus: Verborgene Strukturen im Kardinalskollegium der frühen Neuzeit (1500–1800)* (Frankfurt am Main, 1996), 124.

[65] Weber, *Senatus Divinus*, 36–43; see also, Jennifer Mara DeSilva, "Politics and Dynasty: Underaged Cardinals in the Catholic Church, 1420–1605," *Journal of Royal Studies* 4 (2017): 81–102.

[66] Pamela M. Jones, "Life-Writing and the Saintly Cardinal," in Hollingsworth, Pattenden, and Witte, *Companion to the Early Modern Cardinal*, 470–92.

[67] Pattenden, *Electing the Pope*, 19.

France several years before he received his cardinal's hat in 1836. The contrast between Lefebvre de Cheverus' career and McCloskey's is important, for it shows how the dynamics of the relationship between the papacy and provincial leaderships outside Europe changed. In 1886, Elzéar-Alexandre Tascherau (1820–98) became the first of four Archbishops of Quebec to enter the College in this period. Patrick Moran (1823–95), an Irishman by birth but by then Archbishop of Sydney, had already become Oceania's first collegiate member in 1885. Andon Bedros Hassoun (1809–84), Patriarch of the Armenian Uniate Church, became the first cardinal of the Oriental Rite since Basilios Bessarion in 1439, and in 1935 Pius XI created Ignace Tappouni, Patriarch of Antioch of the Syrian Rite (1879–1968) as a second. The first Latin American cardinals appeared around this time too: two Brazilians, in 1905 and 1930 respectively, and an Argentinian in 1935. In 1911, the Dutchman Willem Marinus van Rossum became the first modern curial cardinal from a predominantly Protestant country.[68]

The years since the end of the Second World War have seen a further decisive rebalancing of the College away from Italians and other Europeans. Indeed, Pius XII, who is often seen in other contexts as a decidedly conservative figure, was at the vanguard of this diversification of his subordinates: only 25 percent of the cardinals he promoted were Italian and only 64 percent even European. Africa received its first cardinal under him (Teodósio Clemente de Gouveia of Mozambique, 1889–1962); so too did India and China. John XXIII maintained the pace of change under Pius, appointing the first cardinals from Japan and the Philippines. Paul VI created cardinals from all six continents and from a total of forty-nine countries. Of particular note is the beginnings of the College's ethnic diversification at this time. The first extra-European cardinals in the nineteenth century, and even up to Gouveia in Mozambique, were white Europeans, often born in Europe. Laurean Rugambwa (1912–97) became the first black African cardinal only in 1960. However, today there are 30 (18 with voting rights), in conjunction with 105 cardinals from Europe (53 voting), 35 from North America (23 voting), 24 from South America (14 voting), 27 from Asia (16 voting), and 6 from Oceania (4 voting). In 2018, Toribio Ticona Porco (b. 937) became the first indigenous cardinal from Latin America and in 2020 Wilton Gregory (b.1947) became the first African American cardinal. The promotion of these two men also reflects an underlying shift in the social origins of members of the College away from men from wealthy backgrounds towards others from humbler backgrounds. Francis I and his successors seem likely to accelerate further as they seek to fulfill an ambition to make the College more representative of the global Church. In 2022, to signal that all Catholic communities, no matter how small, should feel included in the College, Francis I created the first "Mongolian" cardinal: Italian bishop Giorgio Marengo, who serves as Apostolic Prefect of Ulanbataar.

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[68] Vefie Poels and Hans de Valk, "A Stranger in the Sacred College of Cardinals: Contextual and Heuristic Problems in Investigating Cardinal van Rossum," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome* 128 (2016): http://journals.openedition.org/mefrim/2395.

The College of Cardinals and the Papacy

The College of Cardinals, and its composition, have had significant impacts on papal history over the long term, most notably through the cardinals' ability to influence, and even shape, papal policy. Politics has long been a primary field for such interventions, often because cardinals lobby popes to be supportive of particular third parties at particular times or in particular contexts. Thirteenth-century cardinals divided in their support for a papacy that was closely allied to the House of Anjou (a cadet branch of the French royal family) and one that was opposed to it: the succession of pro- and anti-Angevin popes who ascended St. Peter's Throne in the 1270s and 1280 reflected the balance of opinion within the College at the moment of each conclave. Avignon cardinals, by contrast, as French subjects, were strong advocates of ongoing alliance between the papacy and the Valois monarchy. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century cardinals were more divided in their loyalties between France and Spain. Eventually, after 1655, a further faction (the *squadrone volante*) emerged to advocate a complete rejection of such political partiality.[69] Yet even this group of cardinals was not so impartial as we might first suppose: its cardinals came from elite Italian families and their position can as easily be interpreted as an attempt to close ranks, to protect their own oligarchic control of the papacy, as it can be as a principled defence of the pope's political neutrality. In any case, questions about which political actors the pope should favor have never gone away. Only the names of the actors have changed: from Spain to Austria, then from France to Italy. The papacy's relations with Britain and the USA have also become increasingly significant since the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and cardinals, through their viewpoints and connections, helped to shape them too. Popes since the

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[69] Gianvittorio Signorotto, "The *squadrone volante*: 'Independent' Cardinals and European Politics in the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century," in Signorotto and Visceglia, *Court and Politics in Papal Rome*, 177–211.

Second World War may have made a more conscious effort to present themselves as politically neutral, but cardinals are still liable to shape their views of particular regimes, if only because the one or more national cardinals from a given country can be some of the Vatican's best resources for intelligence and insight into all manner of questions about it.

Cardinals have been just as influential over the centuries in shaping the papacy's internal governance as they have been its external relations. An earlier section noted how many medieval cardinals were inclined to see themselves as an ecclesiastical Senate. They may not have succeeded in formalizing that role in constitutional law but their efforts to do so probably increased the prominence and standing of the Consistory as the key space for articulating and advancing papal agenda. Cardinals also secured their own share of papal revenues – unofficially and begrudgingly from late thirteenth-century popes, at first, but eventually as a customary expectation of how the papal finances were to be administered. Cardinals who sat on Congregations after Trent were in prime position to affect not only the individual policies which the papacy pursued in different areas of its jurisdiction but also the legal and verbal architecture through which such policies came to be articulated. Giambattista de Luca (1614–83) may be the most significant figure of the seventeenth century in this respect: his descriptions of the processes by which different parts of the curia operated became their own practical manual.[70] Individual cardinals have been no less influential in persuading popes of the merits of reform (or of resistance to reform) in modern times. Bartolomeo Pacca's (1756–1844) influence on Pius VII and Giacomo Antonelli's (1806–76) on Pius IX are key nineteenth-century examples; Eugenio Pacelli's (aka Pius XII) on Pius XI is one from the twentieth century. Whether cardinals have exercised so strong a collective influence on nineteenth- and twentieth-century popes as a College is a more difficult question to assess. However, a case can be made that they have moderated papal instincts on subjects as diverse as the status of the Holy Office (now the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith) and the Vatican Bank.

That cardinals have been crucial to the papacy's religious policy perhaps ought to be thought of as axiomatic – and yet, as in these other areas, the collective and individual influence of members of the Sacred College has been quite variable over time. Splits within the College during the key decades of the German and English Reformations – notably between the so-called *spirituali* and *zelanti* – may explain a certain amount of the papal hesitancy towards decisive actions at this time (Paul III and Julius III had to do what was needed to maintain authority and collegiate unity). The ascendancy of the *zelanti* during the pontificates of Paul IV (r. 1555–59) and Pius V (r. 1566–72) was no less consequential, especially for relations with England. Later, new generations of theologically trained cardinals were also key figures in the battles over Jansenism, supporting Clement XI in the formulation and implementation of the apostolic constitution *Unigenitus* (1713). However, as Jean-Pascal Gay has pointed out, the proportion of theological cardinals was actually consistently low, even to the end of the eighteenth century; moreover, many of the cardinals with theological expertise lived beyond Rome, which limited their influence on papal policy.[71] Theology was simply never as important in papal Rome as it was in other European intellectual centers (which some may find ironic in and of itself). The rise of the cardinal theologian as a figure with significant influence – for example, Joseph Ratzinger (1927–2022) after 1981 – might well therefore be taken to be a more recent phenomenon. And individual cardinals have recently been able to exercise considerable influence on other theological questions, turning popes away from Liberation Theology or towards particular positions on such subjects as the ordination of women. Such influences have often been personal, but they have also proceeded through institutional channels. The Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, which currently includes eighteen cardinals, remains the preeminent forum for formulating the papacy's theological responses to questions of the day – see, for instance, its report *Dignitas personae* on doctrines surrounding bioethics – however, even that congregation now includes lay consultors, which limits the influence of cardinals specifically. Of course, the pope still always has the final say, which is a further constraint.

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[70] Giambattista de Luca, "Relatio romanae curiae forensis eiusque tribunalium et congregationum," in *Theatrum veritatis et iustitiae*, 18 vols. (Venice, 1734), 15, Part 2:218–394; Agostino Lauro, *Il cardinale Giovan Battista de Luca: diritto e riforme nello Stato della Chiesa (1676–1683)* (Naples, 1991).

Finally, cardinals have manifestly also played a major part in determining what we might term the papacy's moral leadership or values, because they were often the papacy's most visible vessels: historically, far more people have been able to observe one or more cardinals than the pope, especially outside Rome. Back in the Renaissance, cardinals styled themselves as "Princes of the Church" – and their efforts in this respect shaped outlooks and perceptions of what the papacy was about at this time as much as popes' own designs.

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[71] Jean-Pascal Gay, "Cardinals and Theology," in Hollingsworth, Pattenden, and Witte, *Companion to the Early Modern Cardinal*, 154–71.

Later, a series of treatises on "the ideal cardinal" sought to recast the prototypical profile within the College in more pious and spiritual terms and thus to influence the perceptions of the papacy as a whole. Nineteenth-century cardinals such as Cesare Brancadoro (1755–1837) and Bartolomeo Pacca played a key role in forging the papacy's "reactionary" identity after Napoleon's fall: they were responsible for, among other things, restoring Rome's ghetto, banning street-lighting, and replacing the twenty-four-hour clock with the old "Italian" system of time-keeping. More recently, in the twentieth century, cardinals have been responsible for promoting Catholic activism of various kinds and its priorities for social justice, racial justice, environmentalism, and so on. At a time when the pope's personal cult of celebrity is as ascendant as ever, the value that cardinals have brought to papal efforts to broadcast and disseminate the Catholic message may not seem as obvious as once it was. Nevertheless, that could well change in the twilight of Francis I's pontificate, or that of any other elderly or infirm pope who becomes substantially incapacitated. A pope now more than ever needs his lieutenants to be the physical embodiments of his office, and the lived examples of its values. Cardinals will likely consolidate that supporting role, and their identification with the institution will remain as strong as ever. Just wait for the media fascination over them during the next conclave.