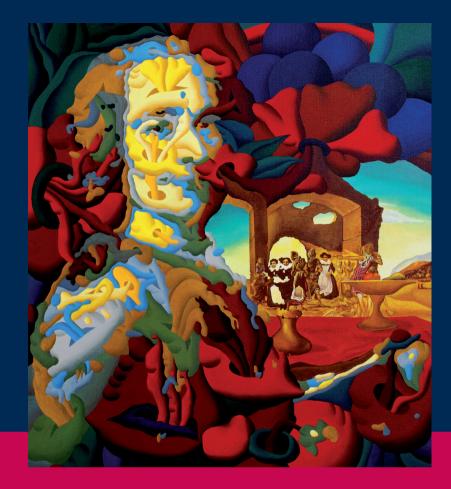
Studies in Early Modern European Culture Studi sulla cultura europea della prima età moderna ~



# Fabrizio Lomonaco Tolerance

Stages in modernity from Holland to Italy

Peter Lang

What does it mean to reflect on tolerance today in a global world? What meanings does the word *tolerance* contain? This book aims at defining the thematic and lexical fields of tolerance in the Dutch and Italian culture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, taking into account works of Grotius and Locke, Spinoza, Bayle and Noodt, Voltaire and Barbeyrac, Conforti and Tamburini. It shows the progression from the ancient *virtue* of tolerance of an exclusively Christian theme to the *right* of freedom of religion and conscience. This study may be a useful point of reference for understanding the myths and misunderstandings, the ambiguities and contradictions on which the rights of our time are based.

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Tolerance

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For my Mother Clara Fallace with great affection and gratitude *in memoriam* 

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## Premise

The key word *tolerance* implying as it did with its classical (i.e. Ciceronian) meaning of a personal capacity to put up with taxes or endure the pangs of hunger ("tributa et famem tolerare") implies an objective disparity. That is to say, the presence of values that are not shared by the *tolerator* (i.e. the one who tolerates) who allows them to exist in *the tolerated* (i.e. the person who is tolerated), and yet refrains from finding fault with and criticising them for reasons of prudence or for practical convenience.

Meaningless in a context of war, the *tolerator's* assumed superiority matures only in a climate of mediation and moderation, indirectly attesting the negative character of the tolerance virtue, as it implies what it should contribute towards creating. And yet it is opportune to examine more closely this first negative meaning of the term, which is nevertheless most widespread in common language, without dwelling on abstract narrative or historiographic formulae like those, albeit authoritative ones, of Bainton-type origin which, under the banner of the "struggle for religious freedom", have accepted irenical, ecumenical and libertarian theories that are worlds apart from each other<sup>1</sup>.

If the *word* in question has a highly evocative content directly proportional to its degree of imprecision and ambivalence, then it becomes ever more necessary to specify the setting of one's theoretical discourse and to define its chronological and geographical limits, as well as its thematic and lexical fields in the light of preestablished cultural, political, religious and philosophical contexts. In

<sup>1</sup> BAINTON (1951) 1961, esp. pp. 5–22 and 247–254. Cf. TEDESCHI 2002b. The translation of this and other texts was made by Albert Coward and is taken from the Italian versions.

our case this leads us on to state from the outset that the history of the 'difficult' times and the relative historical-philosophical *exempla* of *tolerance* (here briefly outlined for a mainly didactic rather than a 'general' purpose) has been reappraised from a certain viewpoint. In a word a setting and phase of modern Western culture have been selected, namely the seventeenth-eighteenth century Dutch and Italian culture that acted as backcloth to the complex transition from the *virtue* of tolerance to the codification of the right to religious *freedom* in the American Declaration of Independence (1776) and in the French culture of the *Rights of Man and Citizen*, sanctioned by the 1789 Revolution.

The story of tolerance during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has been studied and continues to be studied in its every aspect. And yet many studies, even the more recent ones, are based on the tacit or explicit assumption that the concept examined is in itself commonplace and generic, so that the inevitable consequence has been that of outlining an unforthcoming profile thereof, at the best one susceptible to merely descriptive historiographical analysis.

A real and proper refuge for dissident philosophers, politicians and theologians the fatherland of Erasmus was the country whose economic-commercial development between the 16th and 18th centuries was further enhanced by a contribution made through the complex web of political programmes and bitter philosophicaltheological disputes on certain questions. It is more appropriate to consider "un tableau unitaire où il n'est pas rare que s'opposent, tout en se nouant et en cohabitant, trois grands éléments: *irénismes* des différentes tendances; projets d'une *tolérance civile* distincte de la *tolérance ecclésiastique et entendue comme capacité de neutraliser les effets de l'intolérance ecclésiastique; revendications de la liberté de conscience*". Thus wrote Antonio Rotondò in 1992 when presenting the lines of a research programme of his on the theme "Europe et Pays-Bas: évolution, réélaboration et diffusion de la tolérance aux XVIIe et

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XVIIIe siècles"<sup>2</sup>. And it was from this initiative that the pages of this present study got underway, which expound on 18th century European culture (especially the Dutch and Italian) and on some symbolical figures of the epoch, namely Spinoza, Locke, Gerard Noodt, Jean Barbeyrac and Gianfrancesco Conforti. At the centre of the investigation is the progression from the ancient virtue of tolerance of an exclusively Christian mould to the right of the freedom of religion and conscience backed by the new civil virtue of prudentia. Hence, considerable room is given to the argumentations of *iurispru*dentia and, more especially, of modern natural law. The centrality of the seventeenth-century model of natural law founded by Grotius and Pufendorf has been emphasized by examining within a broad historical spectrum some wide-ranging themes of the contemporary debate, including: religious pluralism in the State; the definition of the obligations and limits of legislation, and the rights of sovereign power in religion; the rejection of the confessional State and the use of force against "revolutionary movements" of the human conscience; the justification of the right to resist, and the elaboration of the characteristics and limits of the new notion of *civil tolerance*; the voluntaristic and anti-Hobbesian perspective preferred by Barbeyrac in his commentary on Pufendorf through the critical use of Locke's teachings and the theory of *obligation*.

The encounter with the teachings of late-seventeenth century Dutch Arminianism (of Philippus van Limborch and Jean Le Clerc) and the continuous dialogue with Grotius regarding the origins and limits of *summa potestas* represent the underlying argument of the entire volume. By adhering closely to the specific theme of interest, the research has not failed to emphasize either explicitly or implicitly in the modern reflection on tolerance the presence of philosophical problems which developed on the fringe of late sev-

<sup>2</sup> Cf. ROTONDO 1992, p. 6. On the difference between *tolerance*, *irenicism* and *freedom of conscience* see respectively POSTHUMUS MEYJES, COTTRET and TURCHETTI, here cited in "Bibliography".

enteenth-century Dutch Cartesianesim, including the existence of *truth* and the possibility for human reasoning to reach and accept its relationships with the themes of *evidence*, *belief* and *error*, the disapproval of the outcomes of *historical Pyrrhonism* and the rejection of Pierre Bayle's theses. Hence Barbeyrac's reflection has been reconstructed by stressing the theoretical relevance of being in keeping with Jean Pierre de Crousaz's anti-Pyrrhonistic theses and the critical comparison with Matthew Tindal's deism in the pages of the "Bibliothèque raisonnée".

In the course of the 18th century the dialogue between Italian and Dutch culture comes about at several levels and from various theoretical viewpoints. The final Chapter of this volume dwells on late eighteenth-century Naples. The echo of the conflicts between State and Church in Holland and the respect for the dissident Church of Utrecht, the battle of Royalist and anticurial jurisdictionalism against Jesuitism and the ecclesiastial privileges, intolerance towards every form of despotism, the constant need for assurance for the political renewal of a religious content permeated by Jansenist-type Gallicanism make up the highly articulated picture of its cultural, political and religious life. Within it Gianfrancesco Conforti's personality takes shape and moves, as interpreter and reviewer of Bayle and Grotius, Gerard Noodt and Emer De Vattel. In his thinking and works the problem of tolerance is the central highpoint of a wider reflection on ecclesiastical power, and on the function and limits of sovereignty in religion. The investigation in Castigatio (1786) into Noodt's Dissertatio of 1706, supported by the analysis of Conforti's total output for the 1780s (both published and unpublished), led to the onset of the contradictions and the ingenuity of the Salernitan and of all the outmoded political culture beyond every historical limit in the positions of 'Royalism', considered as the only support to anti-curialism. Towards the close of the 1790s the change in, or evolution of, Conforti from Royalist to Republican brought about a radical theoretical revision of the problem of tolerance. In the changed interpretation of the relationships between civil

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society and religious community this problem is reformulated in terms of religious *freedom*, faithful to the ancient values of Christianity, but disposed towards exalting and protecting the modern rights of the individual man-citizen, opposed to the traditional prerogatives of the privileged State Order by earlier Royalist trends. Like many southern philo-Jansenists, Conforti had taken part in the government of the Parthenopean Republic in the hope that political renewal might favour the implementation of the ancient programme of religious reform that had been rejected by the monarchy. This proved to be a testimony to a desperate coherence, as well as to a dispassionate perception of the contemporary politico-cultural situation, confirmed by history but punished by the Bourbonic reaction, as borne out by the final events of the Salerno thinker's life.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Professor Antonio Rotondò, *in memoriam*, as a real master of studies for reading the various drafts of the work, and for offering me invaluable advice regarding method and content.

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Naples, 10 October 2012

### CHAPTER I

## Tolerance in Ancient Times?

Even in the thematically-restricted setting of these pages some reflection on the classical and Christian roots of the 'key word' in question appears indispensable, without claiming to identify all the problems associated therewith up to the end of the Middle Ages. Rather the aim is to isolate certain forms of evidence by pointing out their original inheritance from the humanistic (Erasmian) tradition and from the Protestant Reformation seen as ways for approaching civil and ecclesiastic tolerance in the modern setting.

In the Greek and Roman worlds the absence of the concept and practice of tolerance is in keeping with the very nature of their religious experience, the symbol of cohesion between the *polis* and the civitas, founded on a polytheistic system of beliefs. A real and proper public institution, the ancient religio was the exclusive prerogative of the community and not of the individual who enjoyed no right of conscience, as his sovereignty lay only in exercising his public functions as citizen, and as he was committed to recognising the collective good through his love and affection for the gods. Hence the acceptance of a "natural" trend towards participating in the rites of national religion. The ancient city had no need to be "tolerant", as there was no coercion towards proselytism. Every religion was considered acceptable not on account of respect towards an assumed orthodoxy or through the certainty of an absolute truth, but only if it conformed to the form and state of national feeling as well as to the safety and security of the people who practised it. It has been astutely observed by Arnaldo Momigliano that heresy did not exist in Greece since to react is "impiety" (asebeia), a term widely used in the 5th century B.C more for evidencing offences against the traditional religious practices rather than for rejecting dogma<sup>1</sup>. The content of the well-known Law of Diopites is to be referred to this meaning which in Athenian society penalizes the introduction of new doctrines as atheism, as well as for all that the trial against Anaxagoras (Plutarch, Pericles, 32) and, more especially, the condemnation of Socrates give evidence to. The accusation brought against the latter of having favoured new "demons" unauthorized by the public cult, represents a charge of an allegiance towards an individual religious vocation without the backing of conventional approval; the same brought later by Plato in his Laws (X, 15, 908-909), concerned as he was with safeguarding the close tie between the *polis* and the traditional religion by means of the "correctional prison" he had theorized which punishes the non-conforming practices of private cults with a very rigid imprisonment sentence and, in the case of recidivism, with the death penalty.

The *exemplum* of Rome which welcomes the gods of the conquered peoples into the Pantheon also serves to substantiate the religious syncretism and relativism of the classical world. Intimacy of religious life takes place in the ritualistic acts and ceremonies performed out of respect to the interest and control of the State. The "Republic's widespread tolerance in matters of religion" – Théodore Mommsen wrote – "was both cause and effect of the hegemony of Rome. The Roman State's passive attitude towards the acts of national religion together with the practice of a simple police surveillance over foreign cults, whether accepted into Rome or otherwise, reflect the unchangeable principles of Roman administration"<sup>2</sup>. Evidence of this "custom" is recognised in the famous *de Bacchanalibus* trial. Celebrated in Rome in 186 B.C. and confirmed by the text of a *senatusconsultus* found in 1640 and

<sup>1</sup> MOMIGLIANO 1971. For this theme and other topics in the following pages, including the current critical literature, see LOMONACO 2005.

<sup>2</sup> MOMMSEN 1907, p. 273. On this subject see GUTERMAN 1951, ADRIANI 1958 and MANNINO 2001.

handed down earlier by Livy (XXXIX, 15 ff.), the prohibition applied to the Italic Federates against practising foreign initiation rites and orgiastic ceremonies is considerably restricted by the permission granted by the urban praetor to celebrate them in secret nocturnal meetings in groups of no more than five people. Here, to distinguish the Roman from the Greek world is seen the relationship between the individual and his religion expressed in juridical terms in the light of the new criterion of inspiration, namely that of the *pax deorum* that induces the Roman State to consider the individual's rights of conscience at the very moment in which it disapproves of and punishes repression, yet at the same time limiting it so as not to violate the *ius divinum*.

Be this as it may, the Roman Empire may be claimed to have been "the battlefield between the outer peace of the empire and the inner peace of Christianity"<sup>3</sup>. It is the latter however that introduces a moment of profound differentiation and a radical break with the past. Against the pacific indifference of pagan religion is set the new incarnate "word" of a sole universal God, inherited from Judaism. A new awareness develops for the "different" in the name of a higher *auctoritas* and thus alternative to that of the State: the authority of the conscience of man who through the freedom of religion and cult introduces criticism against all the mundane life of the empire. No longer to be conceived merely as a State institution, religion now becomes a constituent experience of the individual in a spontaneous intimate relationship with the divine. The conflict between internal law and external regulation can no longer be resolved by advancing the argument of the State's greater need, but by submitting it to the human conscience which is redeemed in Christ by the sin of judging and criticising one's similar. Chapter XIV of St. Paul's Letter to the Romans in the Protestant tradition bears the sub-title "Precepts of Tolerance", and admonishes : "Let us not therefore judge one another [...]; but rather judge this that

<sup>3</sup> So Momigliano 1996, p. 59.

no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (XIV, 13). "But when ye sin so against your brethren" - the warning is given in the Letter to the Corinthians (I, 8, 12) -"and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ". With Paul's proclamation of the inviolable freedom of the Christian faith (1 Cor., X, 27-29; 2 Cor., III, 17) from the legal prescriptions of Judaism and from outward appearances of pagan rites a decisive blow is delivered against the ancient definition of religio as a moment of dominion and control by civil authority. Freed from every influence of nature and of the gods, Christianity asks man made new by the fall of the Son of God Made Man to have the courage to live in a free world and one completely indifferent to traditional material bonds. "Stand fast, therefore" - writes Paul to the Galatians (V, 1-6) - "and do not become bound up yet again with the yoke of bondage. [...] For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor non-circumcision; but faith which worketh by love". The choice of the Christian is a free act of love corresponding to the very same one of One who has offered His own Son for the redemption of all men in the linear process of history, as testimony of the progressive creation of the kingdom of God. In a vision of the world such as this, the pejorative accent is now explained which depends heavily on the expression hairesis, even when understood as needful experience for the salvation of the elect, it is noted, "that they who are approved may be made manifest among you" (1 Cor., XI, 19). Disagreements and divisions are in fact necessary for applying the characteristic features of Christian "tolerance": "charity" towards erring brothers; the patient, complicated attempt towards their progressive recovery in the community and non-violence in the extreme cases of intransigent deviance which implies the expulsion of those who are "perverted and sin" (Letter to Titus, III, 10-11). St. Paul's statement has as an implicit consequence as the first real and proper distinction between the significance of sin as an offence towards God and as crime inasmuch as a violation of the positive laws. With this,

earthly reality starts to be thought of as a division split into two distinct spheres of sacred and profane, whereas religious freedom becomes the basic premise for the fundamental principle of rendering "unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's" (Matthew, XXII, 21). This is the sentence which symbolically brings the classical world to a close, as it breaks the politico-religious monism thereof by attributing an autonomous sphere of action to civil authority, which is independent of spiritual motivations. Yet, the Pauline proposal of an integration of Christianity into the structure of the empire does not go far enough to avoid the clash. Refusal to worship the emperor is not considered a heresy nor a religious crime, but rather as an attack on the civil unity of the State. The 2nd century A.D. persecutions and the episodes of intolerance towards Christian orthodoxy provoke very hard responses among the Christians by urging a return to their original purity, which in its turn is a source of violent opposition. The experience of the apologist father Tertullian of Carthage may prove useful for clarifying their nature and their distinguishing features. In his Apologeticum (197 A.D.) when defending religious freedom and the "option in the world of sacred realities", to claim on behalf of Christians "the right to a personal religion", the author of De Corona (211 A.D.) considers the civil institution of military service as unacceptable, pagan in form and anti-Christian in its aims and objectives which degenerate human life. In a letter to the African pro-consul Scapula in 212 A.D. he appeals to the spontaneity of religious sentiment by referring it to the authority of "humani iuris et naturalis potestatis":

It belongs to the human law and to natural freedom of each to worship what he wants, nor can the religious sentiment of one hinder or help that of another. Nor can it be a religious sentiment to force one to a religion, which must be accepted spontaneously, and not by force, since even sacrifices are required of a soul which offers them willingly<sup>4</sup>.

These are considerations which lead on towards the complex question of heresy which Tertullian himself tackles with formulae of a juridical nature. In De Praescriptione Haereticorum (198-200 A.D. ca) recourse to the exceptio iuris serves to justify the thesis that dissident heretics cannot have the right to interpret the Sacred Scriptures in that they are separate from the apostolic discipline: "Most heretics do not even have churches: motherless and homeless without being believed by anyone, exiled wandering and exposed to insults on all sides"5. But with that the image of Christianity, which is the religion of liberty that is respectful of the individual conscience together with the community of believers, is destined to become more complex. In the 3rd century the polemic against heresy demands the consolidation of a Church organization in keeping with its spiritual auctoritas. In the theses of the De Catholicae Ecclesiae Unitate (251 ca) by Tertullian's disciple, Tascius Cecilius Ciprianus, Bishop of Carthage the Pauline aspiration takes on a hierarchical and unitary structure, coincidental with the "unanimity" of the church from its first origins, the only institution that holds a monopoly over salvation (extra ecclesiam nulla salus) which renders every form of dissent and pluralism intolerable.

The contemporary decline in the Roman State corresponds to this evolution of spiritual *potestas*. The need that is now met for the greatest possible unity which is imposed by the expansion of territory renders every defence against the onset of the new religious exclusiveness useless. "Finally" – as Momigliano has rightly pointed out – "the State is now obliged to accept the new faith, to accept the Christian faith as a foundation of the State. Society is now organized according to Christian rules"<sup>6</sup>. The Christianization

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<sup>4</sup> TERTULLIAN 1972, pp. 151, 153; 1974, p. 106. Cf. PORTOLANO 1971.

<sup>5</sup> TERTULLIAN 1974, pp. 169, 168. Cf. QUACQUARELLI [...].

<sup>6</sup> So Momigliano 1996, pp. 255–256.

of the empire implies the victory and together therewith the transformation of the principles of religious orientalism. The new concept of divine transcendence insists on the abandonment of the old mystic and non-rational rites, an authentic inner relationship between human and divine to oppose the oriental model of mystic contemplation, as well as the value of religion seen as an expression of individual reality. A solution to the political crisis of the 3rd century A.D. is ensured by Constantine and by the celebrated edict (signed by Licinius at Milan in 313 A.D.) which obliges the princeps to make himself formally guarantor of the principle of religious freedom as a fundamental political concern. The text is appositely reported by Lactantius in his De Mortibus Persecutorum (circa 314-320 A.D.<sup>7</sup>, the Christian writer persecuted by Diocletian and preceptor of Constantine's son, who, in the Divinae Institutiones opposes the illegal practice of coercing God's prerogatives in a religious setting, entrusting to Him only the task of punishing crimes and possible deviations from the true faith, exalted in its character of voluntarism:

It is not necessary to adopt violence and abuse, as religion cannot be imposed: it is necessary to try to reach the objective through persuasion rather than blows, so that adhesion is voluntary. [...] Religion must be defended not by killing but by dying, not with violence, but with constancy, not with iniquity but with fidelity [...]. And so when we tolerate wicked actions, we do not make any opposition even with words, but we entrust vengeance to God<sup>8</sup>.

But with the Christianization of the Roman Empire the controversial question of the prerogatives and limits to be established between the spiritual authority and the temporal one is destined to re-emerge. This is testified at the end of the 4th century by the polemic between the Christian Bishop of Milan, Ambrose and the

<sup>7</sup> LACTANTIUS 1923, pp. 82–83. After LOMBARDI 1991 cf. LOMONACO 2005, p. 16.

<sup>8</sup> LACTANTIUS 1973, pp. 451, 453, 455, 461.

Senator and Prefect of Rome, Quintus Aurelius Simmacus, both involved in the dispute on truth and the search for faith. In a Relatio (384 A.D.) to the Emperor Valentinian II, referring to the value of the religious patrimony of the Empire, a request is made to restore the altar of Victory in the Curia of Rome destroyed two years earlier in obeisance to the Christian Church, the triumphant faith of the State. Simmacus, Prefect of Rome, makes this claim not only in homage to the ancient cults but, more especially, for the rights of conscience of the pagan senators and not for an idea of absolute truth, searched for in various forms and all worthy of tolerance: "It must be admitted that all cults have a single foundation [...]. What does it matter if everyone searches for the truth after his own judgement? You cannot follow a single road to reach such a great mystery"9. St. Ambrose's reaction, which is immediate and successful, aims, in contrast, at recovering the value of absolute truth and not the dissembled one of faith inasmuch as word and wisdom of God: "What you do not know, we have learned from the very voice of God. And what you look for through conjectures, we know for certain from the very wisdom and truth of God"<sup>10</sup>.

It is the outcome of this polemic that explains the reasons for an ecclesiastic intolerance which is to make use of all the coercive instruments of civil *auctoritas*, when the transformation of Christianity into the State religion is formally approved in 380 A.D. by the Edict of Theodosius. In it the confutation of religious dissidence is associated with the elimination of the pagan cult. In heresy, doctrinal error coexists with moral perversion and the "crimen publicum" against the order and security of the empire to be sanctioned by punishment, and also by death. Representative of such a historic trend is the work of Aurelius Augustinus for the theoretical support guaranteed to the coercive action of State authority.

<sup>9</sup> SYMMACHUS 1969, p. 899. Cf. later AMBROSE-SYMMACHUS 2006. On this subject see CANFORA 1970.

<sup>10</sup> AMBROSE to Valentinian II, in *Epistula* VIII, 8, later in AMBROSE 1969, p. 908. Cf. CONSOLINO, 1984.

After the initial condemnation of the use of coercion in religion there follow the crimes of Donatist heresy to render the intervention of the imperial laws as necessary. In the celebrated response (407–408 ca) to the letter of the schismatic Bishop Vincenzo of Cartenna the familiar expression *compelle intrare* ("make them enter") of the evangelical parable of Luke (XIV, 23) is revived in order to give credit to coercion with regard to faith. This is not bad in itself, but useful and justified by the Church's objective, and by the love that drives toward the common good for gaining real freedom in the unity of the body of Christ:

You already understand therefore [...] that the fact must not be considered that one is coerced, but whether what is forced is right or wrong. I am not saying that one can be good through necessity! I mean that, through the fear of punishment that one is not prepared to undergo, either one abandons the hostility that keeps him from the truth he knows, or he is obliged to get to know the truth he does not know: fear, that is to say, could drive him towards repudiating the falsehood he struggled for, or to search for the truth he did not know, and finally to willingly support what he did not want to before<sup>11</sup>.

In this context the exegesis of the parable of discord (*Matthew*, XIII, 24–30; 36–43) also takes on significant consequences, being a metaphor of moral evil and sin which in the comment of the Bishop of Ippona is the consequence of a doctrinal error to be eradicated by force, its identity proving to all so certain as to deserve the "rigor of discipline", that is harmless for *charity*, *peace* and *unity* of the "multitude of the Church assembly"<sup>12</sup>. An implicit corollary of this argumentation is the appeal to civil power which "when [...] proclaims the truth, for the straying of the right-minded is a useful warning, while for the foolish it is a useless affliction". The Church's authority is not an alternative to that of the Em-

<sup>11</sup> AUGUSTINE to Vincenzo, *Epistula* XCIII, 5, 16, later in AUGUSTINE 1969, p. 829.

<sup>12</sup> AUGUSTINE to Vincenzo, in AUGUSTINE 1998, p. 205.

pire's, as the defence of the Augustine *Ecclesia* as *Civitas Dei* is the prerogative of secular power which places heresy among the crimes of lese-majesty: "One flock, one shepherd"<sup>13</sup> is the watchword of Augustinism, that is to meet with considerable success among the theories and practices of Christian intolerance between the Middle Ages and the Modern Age.

If it is still possible to separate the spheres of Church and State intervention in the 5th century A.D. by distinguishing the Augustine tolerantia from the positive and moderate value of patientia, from the beginning of the 8th century when the empire is but a memory and the historical form of Constantine-type Christianity is abandoned, and the desire to *tolerate* disappears. The equilibrium reached with difficulty by the need to adapt doctrinal intransigence (the dogma of salvation) towards respecting free will is weakened by the progressive affirmation of absolute Church jurisdiction and by the pontifex's consolidated power to repress sin by coercion. It is the model of Church sovereignty, sought after by the new theocracy of the Canonist popes which, beginning from the Gregorian reform solves the delicate question of the co-existence of spiritual authority and temporal power in the pontifex's undisputed *plenitudo* potestatis. From Gregory VII to Boniface VIII the Church becomes the only institution capable of expressing a unifying organizational sovereign structure also in temporal matters. In the age of the socalled "Political Augustinism" the papacy is destined to interpret the power granted to Peter by Christ in an all-engaging sense, annulling all possible distinctions between political and religious spheres<sup>14</sup>.

The decadence of the Western Roman Empire and the barbaric invasions accentuate this process. From the 11th century onwards the ancient dualism between State and Church is trans-

<sup>13</sup> AUGUSTINE to Vincenzo, *Epistula* XCIII, 6, 20; 5, 19, later in AUGUSTINE 1969, pp. 835, 833.

<sup>14</sup> FALCO (1933) 1977, p. 34. Cf. also FALCO (1942) 1968.