A Historiographical Critique of *The Inquisition* by Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh

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Abstract

Butterfield defined Whig historiography as studying "the past with reference to the present" to make a simple binary categorization of the good and the evil and make history a story of progress. Originally, the Anglo-American historians used Whig historiography to present the Catholic Church as the antithesis of modernity and liberalism in a reductive manner. Baigent and Leigh further this kind of historiography in *The Inquisition*.

In their eponymous book, Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh present the Inquisition as an institution of malevolent cruelty, depraved indifference and prurient backwardness.[1] Furthermore, the authors associate the negative discourse conventionally attributed to the Inquisition with the Catholic Church of today as well. Baigent and Leigh thus portray the Inquisition and the Church in the way that Herbert Butterfield labeled as "Whig" in *The Whig Interpretation of History*. Butterfield defined Whig historiography as "[studying] the past with reference to the present" to make a simple binary categorization of the good and the evil and make history a story of progress.[2] Originally, the Anglo-American historians used Whig historiography to present the Catholic Church as the antithesis of modernity and liberalism in a reductive manner. Baigent and Leigh further this kind of historiography in *The Inquisition*.

Historiographically, *The Inquisition* does not offer significant contribution to the field, as it is a non-academic work written by amateur historians. Nonetheless, it demonstrates the threats that sensational and popular history works pose to the discipline and to the public. Baigent and Leigh take advantage of the discursive power that history provides to further their own biases about the Catholic Church. Baigent and Leigh have worked together on another sensational history, *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail* (1982). The use of the hypotheses put forth in *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail* by Dan Brown in his work, *The Da Vinci Code* (2003), sparked a plagiarism controversy in 2005 that led to a legal battle.[3] Considering the rising popularity of sensationalist works that claim to be "history," I found it necessary to deconstruct and critically assess *The Inquisition* to demonstrate the dangers of this trend.

The Inquisition is conventionally known as a series of ecclesiastic tribunals first established by the Roman Catholic Church for the purpose of upholding religious orthodoxy and stopping the spread of heresy in response to the rise of Catharism in the thirteenth century. People today associate the Inquisition most strongly with the Spanish Inquisition, but in fact it is only one of the many forms that have existed in the past. In *The Inquisition*, Baigent and Leigh start from the First Christian Crusade of the eleventh century and end with a commentary on today's Papacy. The Inquisition was formally abolished in 1834, but the authors implicitly claim that it exists even today, as the

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[1] Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh, *The Inquisition* (London: Penguin Books, 2000).
[2] Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1965), 11.
[3] Dan Brown indeed acknowledged the influence of Baigent and Leigh's work on *The Da Vinci Code*. See BBC, "Author Brown 'did not plagiarise'," 6 August 2005, *BBC News*, accessed 22 November 2011, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/4126710.stm>.

Congregation of the Doctrines of Faith, a current papal organization that oversees the Church doctrine. In fact, Baigent and Leigh dedicate the last one-third of the book to elaborate on the purported "Inquisition" of today and the errors of the Papacy—basically commenting on the Catholic Church itself.

Clearly, Baigent and Leigh have negative opinions towards not only the Inquisition, but also the Catholic Church itself, which they attempt to undermine by presenting it as the embodiment of illiberalism. These opinions and the objective are embedded in construction of the historical narrative. I will support my claim by utilizing Hayden White's theory of narrative structure presented in *Metahistory*, which includes the mode of emplotment, mode of formal argument, ideological (discursive) position, as well as the poetic tropes, to deconstruct the narrative of *The Inquisition*.[4] Also, I will use Herbert Butterfield's Whig historiography to bring together the arguments as I proceed. In terms of organizational structure, I will first categorize the poetic tropes and the different levels of conceptualization of the narrative. Then, I will demonstrate their implications on the historiography by comparing this narrative to others in different secondary sources.

The key poetic tropes of *The Inquisition* are the synecdoche and the metaphor. According to White, the tropes "permit the characterization of objects in different kinds of indirect, or figurative discourse."[5] Thus, the trope reveals the dominating discourse of the authors as affecting the construction of the narrative. As such, the authors' tropological prefiguration in *The Inquisition* highlights the liberal discourse of the narrative. At the beginning, the authors primarily represent the Inquisition as the synecdoche—"using the part to symbolize some *quality* presumed to inhere in the totality"—of the Church, but as the narrative progress into the nineteenth century, after the abolition of the Inquisition, Baigent and Leigh start to explicitly present the whole Catholic Church as the metaphor of illiberalism and backwardness.[6] Thus, there are two poetic tropes present in the narrative.

Such tropological prefiguration is a direct implication of the authors' discursive position. According to White, the explanation by ideological implications "reflect the ethical element in the historian's assumption of a particular position on the question of the nature of historical knowledge and the implications that can be drawn from the study of past events for the understanding of the present ones."[7] In my essay, I will replace the word "ideological" with "discursive," as the latter highlights the fluidity of ideas while the former suggests their fixedness—namely the existence of the "Truth." In the narrative, Baigent and Leigh stress the importance of individual liberty, the central value in liberal discourses. It influences the tropological prefiguration of the Inquisition as the synecdoche of the Church and the Church as the metaphor of illiberalism. Also, the authors urge the Church to implement changes that suit the liberal discourse—the "fine tunings," as White put it. Thus, the discursive position and the tropological prefigurations operate in concert.[8]

In terms of the mode of emplotment, Baigent and Leigh have employed two different ones in the narrative. According to White, the mode of emplotment "[provides] the "meaning" of a story by identifying the *kind of story* that has been told."[9] In *The Inquisition*, two different kinds of *stories* coexist—that of the Inquisition (virtually the Church), and that of humanity. The authors made a clear division between these two and implicitly contrasted one from another. They suggested that

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[4] Hayden White, *Metahistory* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 1-42.
[5] Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History*, 34.
[6] Ibid., 34.
[7] Ibid., 22.
[8] Ibid., 24.
[9] White, *Metahistory*, 7.

the history of Church is tragic in that, despite the "possibility of at least partial liberation from the condition of the Fall and provisional release from the divided state in which men find themselves in the world," the Church has failed to take advantage of it.[10] Also, the narrative lacks "festive occasions, except false or illusory ones," which is characteristic of the tragic mode of emplotment.[11] Most importantly, Baigent and Leigh suggest that the Church, backward and regressive, has defied the currents of modernity and that it has brought about its own decline. In fact, the authors are rather explicit in suggesting the upcoming fall of the Church.

On the other hand, Baigent and Leigh suggest that the history of humanity is romantic. Hayden White defined the Romance as "a drama of self-identification symbolized by the hero's transcendence of the world of experience, his victory over it, and his final liberation from it."[12] The secular world stands as the antithesis of the backwardness of the Catholic Church, and as the book progresses, the former gradually slips away from the powerful grasp of the latter. The authors suggest that the history of humanity gradually subsumes the history of the Inquisition and the Catholic Church, which is parochial, limited, and regressive. As such, the history of humanity is a story of "transcendence." Also, the explicit representation of the Church as the enemy of the progress and modernity—and therefore of humanity, evokes the "drama of the triumph of good over evil, of virtue over vice, of light over darkness."[13] The liberal discourse is certainly in play here as well.

Lastly, the mode of formal argument is formist. White states that the mode of formal argument "[explicates] 'the point of it all' or 'what it all adds up to' in the end."[14] As mentioned above, the objective of Baigent and Leigh is to undermine the Catholic Church by furthering the Whig agenda. They thus focus on "[establishing] the uniqueness" of the Inquisition and of the Catholic Church in a "dispersive" and "diachronic" manner.[15] In other words, the narrative covers various locations scattered around the world and a wide time frame (the First Crusade to the twentieth century), and it shows the evolution of the Church throughout history, as opposed to the synchronic description in a closed time frame. The authors describe in detail the procedures and the implications of the Inquisition—tortures, death of thousands of people, authoritarian censorship by the Church—focusing on the "uniqueness" of the Inquisition and the Catholic Church, to set these apart from other institutions to prove that they are backward and hinder the progress of humanity in their distinctive way. For the purposes of this essay, I believe that it will not be necessary to elaborate further on the mode of formal argument, as the formist conceptualization, dispersive and diachronic, is evident as the narrative ranges from the eleventh century to the present and covers a variety of Inquisitions around the world.

Thus, the narrative conceptualizations of *The Inquisition* explicitly reflect the authors' agenda of undermining the Catholic Church. Now, I will analyze the narrative and historiography of *The Inquisition*, proceeding in the same chronological manner as presented in the book. The book is divided into sixteen chapters, each presenting different aspects of the Inquisition. I will focus on specific chapters that emphasize the implications of the narrative conceptualizations on the historiography.

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[10] Ibid., 9.
[11] Ibid., 9.
[12] Ibid., 8
[13] Ibid., 9.
[14] Ibid.,11.
[15] Ibid., 14-15.

Baigent and Leigh use the First Christian Crusades (1096-1099), an exemplar of Catholic barbarism and oppression, as the inaugural motif of the narrative. They suggest that the supply of men with "expertise in arms, in the techniques and technologies of warfare, in fighting and killing" after the Crusades provided the necessary manpower to carry out the Inquisitorial tortures and genocide—"if the Holy Land failed to offer adequate recompense for a man's newly acquired aptitudes, he could always bring them back to Europe and turn them to account there."[16] Thus, beginning in the first chapter, the authors establish that the Inquisition is primarily rooted in violence, rather than faith.

The authors then proceed with the history of the Cathars after making that connection between the Crusades and the Inquisition. They refer to the Cathars as "the earliest targets of organized and systematic genocide" to further the association of the Church with violence in a rather exaggerated manner.[17] Baigent and Leigh assert that "the Cathars were generally perceived by their contemporaries as conspicuously virtuous," as opposed to the Catholics who were "shamefully corrupt."[18] They thus put the Catholics in a relatively less favorable light and suggest that the Church, facing "defections and a noticeable drop in revenues,"[19] undertook the Albigensian Crusade to regain power over the people—presenting it as a megalomaniac oppressor antithetical to liberalism. Bernard Hamilton, on the other hand, provides a more detailed explanation of the complexity of the matter.

In *The English Historical Review*, Hamilton, an English historian specializing in Medieval Religious history, criticizes Baigent and Leigh for exaggerating the power of the Inquisition by representing it "as though it was an autonomous power which could impose its will on recalcitrant rulers and their subjects by brute force."[20] Thus, he suggests that the authors victimized the secular subjects by presenting extremely unbalanced power relations between the two. In fact, Hamilton asserts that there was a more complex reason than the Church's mere desire to subordinate the Cathars that eventually led to the Albigensian Crusade. The Ecclesiastical authority at first believed that the Cathars were no threat to society as they would not reproduce due to their "abhorrence of sex," and also because "few were prepared to emulate them and embrace the austere life of the perfect."[21] However, the Church started to persecute the Cathars when they started to "administer *consolamentum* to dying believers," which, according to the Catholic tenets, would hinder them from getting the salvation, and the Pope was compelled to act because he was "answerable before God for the souls of everybody in his charge."[22] Thus, Hamilton provides a more comprehensive sketch of the Church's interaction with the Cathars that contrasts that of Baigent and Leigh, which is reductive and aimed to solely highlight the oppressive aspect of the Church.

The emphasis on oppression by the Inquisition is a recurring motif in the narrative. The authors juxtapose words and expressions like "genocide,"[23] "precursor of Stalin's secret police, of the Nazi SS and Gestapo,"[24] and "modern police forces,"[25] constructing the representation of the Inquisition as the ultimate antithesis of liberalism. Furthermore, the authors suggest that the violence is an

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[16] Baigent and Leigh, *The Inquisition*, 1-4.
[17] Ibid., 4-5.
[18] Ibid., 7-8.
[19] Ibid., 10.
[20] Bernard Hamilton, "Rev. of The Inquisition by Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh," *The English Historical Review* 116 (2001): 474-475.
[21] Bernard Hamilton, *The Medieval Inquisition* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1981), 26.
[22] Ibid., 27.
[23] Baigent and Leigh, *The Inquisition*, 5.
[24] Ibid., 30.
[25] Ibid., 33.

inherent aspect of the Church when they state that "torture and execution of heretics was nothing new in Christian history."[26] The language chosen by the authros supports my claim that Baigent and Leigh attempt to transfer the negative notions attributed to the Inquisition to the entire Catholic Church—presenting the Inquisition as the synecdoche of the Church representing everything that is opposed to liberalism.

Baigent and Leigh proceed to describe the atrocities of the Inquisition with the subsequent persecution of the Cathars, Brethren of the Free Spirit, and the Knights Templar. The authors start to present missed opportunities for the Church's "reconciliation," which in this context would be the its turning towards liberalism. For instance, the authors juxtapose "Rome's wealth, extravagance and corruption" with the execution of Jan Hus, who "demanded a redistribution of Church property, and insisted on other ecclesiastical reforms as well."[27] Baigent and Leigh thus suggest that there was an opportunity for reform. The authors furthermore invoke the name of Martin Luther, the central figure of Whig historiography. By doing this, the authors juxtapose the persecution and execution of Jan Hus to ultimately suggest that the Church weakens itself by refusing to reform. Thus, the authors perpetuate the notion of the tragic history of the Church.

Baigent and Leigh then commence the narrative of the infamous Spanish Inquisition, from which "the Inquisition attained new dimensions of bigotry, nastiness, and terror."[28] The authors again portray the Inquisition as oppressor by invoking Nazism, which, again, highlights the presence of synecdoche as the key tropological prefiguration in the narrative. They state that the Spanish Inquisition "was to anticipate the pathology of twentieth-century Nazism."[29] Furthermore, Baigent and Leigh explicitly evoke the imagery of the Jewish persecution during World War II when they refer to the persecution of the Spanish Inquisition as the "holocaust of conversos."[30] As such, the authors perpetuate the representation of Inquisition as the synecdoche of the Catholic Church that embodies illiberalism.

Baigent and Leigh further highlight the oppressive nature of the Church represented through the Inquisition in the New World. The authors put great emphasis on Colombia's struggle for independence. The portrait of revolution and independence is part of the liberal discourse exemplified in the American and the French Revolutions; it represents the romantic struggle of the people for liberty and democracy—another step towards progress. The authors stress that during the revolution, the Cartagena Inquisition "became a primary target," and that the new Colombian government "pronounced the Inquisition 'extinguished forever and never to be re-established.'"[31] Thus, Baigent and Leigh portray the Inquisition as the antithesis of liberalism again.

In the chapter titled "Fighting the Heresy of Protestantism," Baigent and Leigh discuss the Protestant Reformation, and the Counter-Reformation. They explicitly further Whig historiography by employing the very example that Butterfield used in *The Whig Interpretation of History*—Martin Luther as the father of modernism. Again, the authors emphasize the association of the Church with oppression by stating that it "wielded power largely through the knowledge it monopolized, commanded, controlled and made available to the lay populace only, as it were, by drip feed."[32] Baigent and Leigh further the conventional Whig history by asserting that there was "a veritable

[26] Ibid., 26.
[27] Ibid., 44-46.
[28] Ibid., 62.
[29] Ibid., 75.
[30] Ibid., 80.
[31] Ibid., 97.
[32] Ibid., 124.

explosion of knowledge" after the Reformation, and that "Luther's translation of the Bible into the vernacular […] were to make scripture available for the first time to the layman—who could read it for himself, without the interpretation and filtering apparatus of the priesthood."[33] The authors thus evoke Orwellian imagery in depicting the Church by highlighting its antithetical nature to liberalism. However, Andrew Gow points out that despite various disagreements on the degree of influence of the Lutheran translation of the Bible, historians generally agree that there were various vernacular translations available which predated it.[34] Baigent and Leigh further claim that "Rome's previous hegemony over Europe's spiritual life had effectively been shattered" through the rise the Protestantism.[35] Thus, they once again emphasize the tragic course that the Church is treading on and at the same time, further Whig historiography.

Facing the rise of Protestantism, the Catholic Church attempted to stall its spread by a series of movements collectively known as the Counter-Reformation, which Baigent and Leigh present as another missed opportunity for "reconciliation" in a tragically emplotted narrative. The authors claim that the Council of Trent, the representative event of the Counter-Reformation, "opened with an attempt […] to conciliate and accommodate Protestantism," but that at the end, it only widened the "rupture" with it.[36] They further reinforce the imagery of oppression and the tragic course of the Church by suggesting that it attempted to strengthen its grip on power by supporting the militant Jesuits and asserting religious orthodoxy through the establishment of the Sacred Roman Congregation and Universal Inquisition (also known as the Holy Office).[37] Also, Baigent and Leigh thus attribute the notion of modernity and progress to the *others* of the Catholic Church, specifically to the Protestantism in this case, and suggest the weakening of "Rome's hegemony over Europe's spiritual life."[38] Protestant Reformation, like the abolition of the Inquisition in Cartagena, represents the victory of liberalism. The history of the Church and the secular clashes; the Reformation becomes a breakthrough for the latter, which had thus far been dominated by the former. The authors thus highlight the tragic trajectory of the Church by representing the Reformation as a point of decline for the Church.

Baigent and Leigh dedicate a whole chapter to present the persecution of freemasons under the title "Freemasonry and Inquisition."[39] They associate the religious independence of France from Rome after the Thirty Years War with the consequent rise of Cartesian rationalism and the *philosophes* who "not only repudiated, but openly, scandalously and blasphemously mocked" the Church.[40] Then, they present the establishment of Freemasonry as "a challenge of comparable magnitude" to the Cartesian rationalism and the writings of *les philosophes*," who are directly associated with liberalism.[41] As such, Baigent and Leigh present the Inquisitorial persecution of the freemasons as another evidence of the Catholic backwardness and anti-liberal nature. In fact, the authors state, "[while] the Church looked backwards, Freemasonry looked forwards."[42] Furthermore, according to Henry

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[33] Ibid., 124.
[34] Andrew Gow, "The Contested History of a Book: The German Bible of the Later Middle Ages and Reformation in Legend, Ideology, and Scholarship," *The Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 9 (2009): 2-7.
[35] Baigent and Leigh, *The Inquisition*, 137.
[36] Ibid., 133.
[37] Ibid., 134-136.
[38] Ibid., 137
[39] Michael Baigent is a freemason and the editor of the magazine *Freemasonry Today*. See "FREEMASONRY TODAY–Editorials, Autumn 2010," Grand Lodge Publications, accessed December 13, 2010, http://www.freemasonrytoday.com/public/editorials.php.
[40] Baigent and Leigh 162.
[41] Ibid., 162.
[42] Ibid.,164.

Kamen, the Inquisition only brought "very few individuals to trial" for the accusation of being a freemason in Spain,[43] and Bethencourt merely mentions that their persecution was directed by the curia, a Church organization,[44] suggesting that it was of incidental importance. Thus, Baigent and Leigh provide an unusually detailed description of the persecution of the freemasons to further the image of the Church as the oppressor and antithesis of liberalism.

In the last third of the book, the main poetic trope shifts from synecdoche to metaphor. Instead of referring to the Inquisition, which started to lose its power upon secular subjects with the rise of nation-states between the eighteenth and the nineteenth century, Baigent and Leigh directly refer to the Church, as a metaphor for illiberalism. Baigent and Leigh assert that by the late nineteenth century, the Church "had become uncomfortably beleaguered" by "increasing freedom of speech, the dissemination of education and the proliferation of newspapers, journals and popular literature," making yet another reference to the illiberal nature and decline of the Catholic Church in the face of the liberalizing world. [45] Also, Baigent and Leigh juxtapose the development in science—the publication of *The Origin of Species*, for instance—to the Church's comparative lack of power, which they describe as "enraged impotence."[46] They contrast the rise of the independent unified Italian Republic with the Church, which had become "as impotent in the secular world as it had been in the semi-legendary days of the 'early Christians,'" presenting both as possessing antithetical natures.[47] The authors not only highlight the illiberalism of the Church, but also its loss of influence to secular forces, thus adhering faithfully to its tragic trajectory.

The Inquisition, which was diffused to various locations, was completely abolished by 1834, mainly due to the political pressure of the secular states.[48] The organizations that engendered the images of cruelty and backwardness were thus abolished by the mid-nineteenth century, but Baigent and Leigh transfer the negative qualities attributed to them to the Holy Office, which performed completely different tasks. The Holy Office thus becomes a link that the authors use to perpetuate their negative discourse about the Catholic Church. Therefore, Baigent and Leigh suggest that the Inquisition continues even today.

Baigent and Leigh then proceed to criticize the Pope who reigned after the abolition of the Inquisition: Pius IX. Depending on the perspective, Pope Pius IX may be perceived as either a charismatic leader, or an oppressive tyrant. Baigent and Leigh regard him as the latter. They are especially scathing in regards to his declaration of Papal Infallibility. They suggest that the popular revolution of 1848 that forced him to flee from Rome "in ignominious disguise" affected his conservative stance against "liberalism or reform."[49] However, Ciarán O'Carroll claims that Pius IX only opposed "what he viewed as false liberalism, which he believed threatened to destroy the essence of faith and religion," and suggests that the conservative stance of the pope stemmed from the necessity of providing a focal point for Catholics worldwide, whose number was increasing

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[43] "Between 1780 and 1815 there were only nineteen prosecutions, followed by 25 in 1815, and then down to fourteen in 1817, nine in 1818 and seven in 1819." See Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition* (New York: New American Library, 1965), 264-265.

[44] Francisco Bethencourt, *The Inquisition: A Global History, 1478-1834* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 321.

[45] Baigent and Leigh, *The Inquisition*, 181.

[46] Ibid., 182.

[47] Ibid., 186-191

[48] Bethencourt, *The Inquisition: A Global History, 1478-1834*, 416.

[49] Ibid., 197

significantly during his reign.[50] Thus, O'Carroll acknowledges the necessity of a religious leader to assert orthodoxy, especially during such a volatile period as in the mid-nineteenth century, however controversial it was. On the other hand, Baigent and Leigh simply represent Pius IX's actions as mere antithesis of liberalism. On a similar note, O'Carroll concedes that the declaration of Papal Infallibility was controversial and unpopular, but at the same time emphasizes that it was a volatile period and that the Pope acted out of a sense of responsibility as "the highest teaching authority in the Church."[51] Baigent and Leigh, on the other hand, simply emphasize the fact that the decision was controversial and "[against] the tide of history,"[52] placing emphasis on what might be perceived as authoritarian and oppressive in Pius IX's decision. At the end of the chapter, Baigent and Leigh emphasize the unpopularity of Pius IX, describing that "[mobs] gathered and yelled abuse."[53] O'Carroll, on the other hand, asserts that his unpopularity was limited to Italian "revolutionary nationalists," and that in fact, he was "deeply revered by many Catholics worldwide" for his attempts to reach out to the believers around the world.[54] Clearly, O'Carroll is inclined to defend Pius IX by presenting the complexity of the situation—especially the Pope's sense of responsibility as the spiritual leader during a turbulent era—while Baigent and Leigh simply paint him as the enemy of modernity who defied the currents of time.

The narrative then transitions into the twentieth century, and Baigent and Leigh start to make explicit critiques of the contemporary Catholic Church. They boldly refer to Cardinal Ratzinger, who is now the Pope Benedict XVI, as "the Grand Inquisitor of today," evoking the qualities of the Medieval Inquisitor in him.[55] The authors explicitly condemn the *Universal Catechism of the Catholic Church*, a document that asserts the religious orthodoxy of the Catholics produced under the leadership of then-Cardinal Ratzinger. They highlight the acts that it prohibits, such as the use of birth control, abortion, prenuptial cohabitation, divorce, and masturbation and comment that the Church "made no pretense to democracy," pointing out what might be regarded as an assault on individual liberties.[56] Again, Baigent and Leigh present the Church as the oppressor and hindrance to the progress.

In the narrative, the tragedy of the Church continues to progress. However, Baigent and Leigh foreshadow the coming end of the papacy, and thus suggest the victory of the secular world. They juxtapose the defection of Catholic believers and the dramatic decrease of ordinations to the adamancy of the late Pope John Paul II, Cardinal Ratzinger and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the faith in "their entrenched positions."[57] Also, Baigent and Leigh emphasize the backward nature of the Church by asserting that it is "concentrating resources in those regions of the globe where poverty, deprivation, meager standards of living and a general lack of education provide fertile soil for faith."[58] Thus, Baigent and Leigh make a rather generalized assumption about the nature of religion, specifically the Catholic Church, suggesting that they regard the Catholic faith as a sign of backwardness.

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[50] Ciarán O'Carroll, "Pius IX: pastor and prince," *The Papacy since 1500: From Italian Prince to Universal Pastor*, ed. James Corkery and Thomas Worcester (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 134-135.
[51] Ibid., 134.
[52] Baigent and Leigh, *The Inquisition*, 207.
[53] Ibid., 208.
[54] O'Carroll, "Pius IX: pastor and prince," 129.
[55] Baigent and Leigh, *The Inquisition*, 247.
[56] Ibid., 244-245.
[57] Ibid., 263-264.
[58] Ibid., 265

Then, the authors further strengthen their tragic insinuations about the Catholic Church by presenting the apparitions of the Virgin Mary and the prophecy of St. Malachi. Baigent and Leigh subtly suggest that the Third Prophecy of Fatima, a warning of the Virgin Mary to humanity that has not been disclosed to the public due to its terrible contents, might contain a prophecy about the fall of the Church—"the devil, or perhaps the Antichrist […] a general loss of faith, or a loss of faith specifically among the Catholic clergy."[59] Furthermore, the authors end the chapter about the apocalyptic visions of the Catholic Church with the prophecies of St. Malachi, who predicted that the Pope succeeding John Paul II—thus Benedict XVI—would be the last pontiff.[60] Thus, Baigent and Leigh suggest the upcoming fall of the Catholic Church, emphasizing its tragic history and implicitly contrasting it from the romantic notion of history for humanity.

The authors end *The Inquisition* with a moral tone—another Whig quality—emphasizing that the Catholic Church "was only one of numerous forms of Christian belief,"[61] and that "it is necessary to adapt" to the modern world.[62] They again present the anti-liberal picture of the Church, describing it as "a tyranny as great, as oppressive, as noxious, as monstrous as that of any secular dictatorship."[63] Also, they assert that the Church "must also repent and atone"[64] for its past errors. The suggestions for change, namely the "fine tunings" that White designates as characteristic of the liberal discourse, reflect the liberal discourse of the authors.

As such, Baigent and Leigh definitely have very strong opinions about the Catholic Church and they are undoubtedly embedded in the narrative structure. The authors perceive the Inquisition as the synecdoche of the Church, and the Church as the metaphor of illiberalism and hindrance to progress. Operating on a liberal discourse, the authors consider the Church, the paragon of illiberalism, to tread on a tragic trajectory of history, and contrast it to the romantic history of humanity. The analysis of this book clearly demonstrates the implications of the narrative conceptualizations of historiography and reminds the reader of the ability of historians to exercise discursive power.

[59] Ibid., 273
[60] Ibid., 281
[61] Ibid., 285
[62] Ibid., 288
[63] Ibid., 288
[64] Ibid., 289

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