

Wilhelm Ketteler and the Birth of Modern Catholic Social Thought

A Catholic Manifesto in Revolutionary 1848

von
Martin O'Malley

1. Auflage

[Wilhelm Ketteler and the Birth of Modern Catholic Social Thought – O'Malley](#)

schnell und portofrei erhältlich bei beck-shop.de DIE FACHBUCHHANDLUNG

Utz, Herbert 2009

Verlag C.H. Beck im Internet:

www.beck.de

ISBN 978 3 8316 0846 1

Martin O'Malley
Wilhelm Ketteler and the Birth of Modern Catholic Social Thought



Wilhelm Ketteler and the Birth of Modern Catholic Social Thought

A Catholic Manifesto
in Revolutionary 1848

Martin O'Malley



Herbert Utz Verlag · München

ta ethika

herausgegeben durch

*Prof. Dr. mult Nikolaus Knoepffler, Universität Jena
und
Prof. Dr. Elke Mack, Universität Erfurt*

Band 7

*Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Bibliothek:
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der
Deutschen
Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet
über <http://dnb.ddb.de> abrufbar.*

*Dieses Werk ist urheberrechtlich geschützt.
Die dadurch begründeten Rechte, insbesondere die der Übersetzung, des Nach-
drucks, der Entnahme von Abbildungen, der Wiedergabe auf
photomechanischem oder ähnlichem Wege und der Speicherung in
Datenverarbeitungsanlagen bleiben – auch bei nur auszugsweiser Verwendung –
vorbehalten.*

Copyright © Herbert Utz Verlag GmbH · 2008

ISBN 978-3-8316-0846-1

Printed in Germany

*Herbert Utz Verlag GmbH, München
089-277791-00 · www.utzverlag.de*

1 Table of Contents

Preface.....	5
1 A Manifesto with Modern Rights Language in Revolutionary 1848	9
1.1 A Catholic Manifesto on the Social Question.....	9
1.2 The Term ‘Right’ and the Concept of Subjective Rights in Ketteler’s Writing.....	13
1.3 Ketteler’s Innovative Mix of Thomistic and Romantic Political Theories.....	18
2 The 1848 Frankfurt Parliament:	25
2.1 Political Catholicism in Revolutionary 1848 Germany:	25
2.2 The German Catholic Context: Distinct from both Liberal.....	31
2.3 Church and State in 1848: Election to the Frankfurt Parliament after the Revolutions.....	35
2.4 Decisive Step into Modernity: The Catholic Caucus	45
2.5 In the Parliament, Ketteler Performatively Affirmed Representational Politics in his Subsidiary Defense of the Organic Model.....	55
2.6 Ketteler’s Graveside Oration and Catholic Day Address: The Need for Christ in the Context of Conflict	59
3 The 1848 Advent Sermons: A “Catholic Manifesto” on the Social Question.....	65

3.1	The Sermons Use a Rights Discourse within a Thomistic Natural Law Social Philosophy.....	65
	<i>The Christian Vision of Freedom and the Romantic Organic Analogy.....</i>	68
	<i>Church, State and Society in the Rechtsstaat.....</i>	72
3.2	Outline of Sermons: Social Theory and Rights Language with a Christological Foundation.....	76
	<i>Society's Pillars as Outlined in the Sermons.....</i>	83
4	The First Sermon on Justice: Catholic Social Principles in a Modern Rights Language	91
4.1	Justice Is 'To Each His Own,' but in a Christ-Centered Context.....	91
4.2	Private Property Is the Pivotal Social Theory Concept....	95
4.3	Rejecting the Communist Threat to Private Property Rights with Thomas Aquinas.....	99
4.4	Examining Ketteler's Interpretation of Thomas Aquinas.....	105
	<i>Ketteler's Modern Rights Language Is a Development of Aquinas' Principle of Practical Reason from His Discussion on Justice</i>	105
	<i>A 'Right' Is the Sovereign's Prudence Applied to Society's Proper Ordering: the Common Good</i>	110
	<i>Absolute Rights Violate the 'Golden Mean' of the Virtues and Endanger Social Flourishing.....</i>	112
4.5	A 'Social Imagination' Rooted in Faith and Preached in the New Romantic Manner.....	116
4.6	Critiquing Communism with 'Prudent' Rights	121
	<i>Ketteler's Early Response to Poverty: Protecting Human Dignity and Christian Charity.....</i>	128
5	Love and Courage in Changing Times	131

5.1	Second Sermon: The ‘Times’ Reveal that Christian Charity (Liebe) Is Needed to Reconcile Destructive Social Indifference.....	131
	<i>Signs of the Times: The Pressing Social Problems and the Moral Poverty that Causes Them.....</i>	<i>133</i>
5.2	Third Sermon: The ‘Fortitude’ of Christian Freedom in God’s Law vs. Rationalist Law of ‘Ungläubige’	140
	<i>Natural Law Applied to Social Evolution and Historical Development</i>	<i>145</i>
	<i>Foundations of Human Society Depend upon Faith that Reveals True Human Freedom and Rights within the Context of Social Relationships, Not in the Individual Per Se.....</i>	<i>147</i>
6	The Pillars of Hope and Temperance	155
6.1	Fourth Sermon on Hope: Our Destination Is with God – or Not	155
6.2	Fifth Sermon on Temperance: Sustaining Society, the Family, Women, and the Person.....	158
7	Final Sermon on Faith: Religious and Public Authority	163
7.1	Faith, Authority and Reason in Möhler’s Sacramental Philosophy	163
7.2	Christmas Present: Challenge to Absolutism Inspired by the Incarnation	170
7.3	Respect for the Person Is Distinctly Modern and Instituted in Law as Rights	173
	Conclusion	179
8	Bibliography	187

Preface

Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler responded to the vacuum of social consensus in 1848 with a series of six sermons, the *Advent Sermons*, and thereby laid the theoretical groundwork for “Modern Catholic Social Thought”. It was a ‘manifesto’ delivered within a year of Karl Marx’s and Friedrich Engel’s famous *Communist Manifesto*. Yet, Ketteler’s achievement was one that remained essentially rooted in Catholic traditions as he articulating his forward-looking social theory, used a modern language of subjective rights, and ‘performatively’ acknowledged the value of representational politics. He did this while rejecting the individualism and atomism often associated with liberalism, rights, and democracy.

Ketteler’s *Advent Sermons* declared the social principles, concerns and goals for Roman Catholicism as the church confronted both the opportunities and dangers of modern secular politics. The *Sermons* outlined principles that articulated timeless Christian beliefs for a world dealing with revolutionary changes. Ketteler read the signs of the times with remarkable clarity and saw the danger posed by radical social solutions such as communism. And his response was distinctively modern in that he refused to hide behind a defensive or nostalgic rejection of representational politics or the emerging democratic institutions. He addressed the public sphere in a way that recognized that governments rule legitimately only if they represent the will and interests of the people. And further, he used a language of rights that recognized the claims of the church and of individuals in a way that was clearly modern. He set forth the principles, concerns and goals that created a template for the church regarding the ‘Social Question.’ And thus it is fitting to call the sermons a Catholic manifesto and to understand this moment as the birth of modern Catholic Social Thought.

My own study of Ketteler and 19th century German Romanticism began while I was finishing doctoral coursework at Boston College under the direction of David Hollenbach, SJ. I was interested in contemporary rights discourse and the debate regarding whether that discourse was entirely dependent upon a single philosophical history. My own reading of such authors as Brian Tierney had convinced me that rights language has a medieval tradition and does not necessarily carry with it the baggage of modern liberal philosophy. A friend of mine, Tom Lynch, was doing doctoral work at Catholic University in church history and he pointed me in the direction of Ketteler as a figure whose relevance for Catholic thought was little understood in the United States. I owe a great deal of gratitude to Tom because his advice led to my doctoral dissertation topic and to the appreciation of the debt that Catholic Social Thought owes to Ketteler and the 19th century German Catholic Church. The following work is a revised section from the dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Boston College PhD (May, 2007). The PhD dissertation is titled: "Catholic rights discourse in nineteenth-century Germany: Bishop Ketteler protected religious and social freedoms from the equal threats of secularizing liberalism and anti-catholic absolutism."

This work is the fruit of many years of research and writing and my debts of gratitude have accumulated over those years. I thank David Hollenbach, SJ for his wisdom, expertise, and extraordinary generosity in reading and correcting my drafts. Donald Dietrich kept me on track while I delved into the mysterious depths of nineteenth-century German history and jurisprudence. Norbert Brieskorn, SJ read a draft of the dissertation and gave me quite helpful corrections and suggestions. Nikolas Knoepffler provided me with a place of work, funding, and supported the present publication in the "ta ethika" series of publications in ethics, for which he is the editor. I thank my parents, sisters and brother for their patience and support. And a special thanks goes to my wife Simone, who read and corrected many drafts, translations and wild ideas. She kept me sane and happy during the

difficult times and she made it possible to celebrate the wonderful times. We have dedicated this book to our little Eva Aine. I extend my gratitude to all. Naturally, any errors remaining in the text are my own responsibility.

Author



Martin J. O'Malley, Editor and Research Fellow at the Center for Applied Ethics, EthikZentrum, at the Friedrich Schiller University, Jena.

A graduate of Hamilton College, (BA 1988), he received an MA in Philosophy at St. Louis University (1993), after which he taught for two years in the history and philosophy departments at LeMoyne College, New York. Studying at the Weston Jesuit School of Theology in Cambridge, MA, he received a Masters

of Divinity (1998) and a Licentiate in Moral Theology (2008). He received a doctorate from Boston College in Theological Ethics (2007). Teaching positions include Teaching Fellowships at Harvard University (1996, 1998) and Boston College (2004, 2005), and Instructor in Theology at Loyola College, Maryland (2004–2006). Research positions include Visiting Fellowships at The Woodstock Theological Center, Washington DC (1995, 1998), and at the Institut für Gesellschaftspolitik an der Hochschule für Philosophie, Munich (2003, 2005).

ta ethika

herausgegeben von

Prof. Dr. mult. Nikolaus Knoepffler, Universität Jena
und
Prof. Dr. Elke Mack, Universität Erfurt

- Band 7: Martin O'Malley: **Wilhelm Ketteler and the Birth of Modern Catholic Thought** · A Catholic Manifesto in Revolutionary 1848
2008 · 200 Seiten · ISBN 978-3-8316-0846-1
- Band 6: Sabine Odparlik, Peter Kunzmann, Nikolaus Knoepffler (Hrsg.): **Wie die Würde gedeiht** · Pflanzen in der Bioethik
2008 · 318 Seiten · ISBN 978-3-8316-0818-8
- Band 5: Martin O'Malley, Antje Klemm (Hrsg.): **Cancer Research is a Social Endeavor** · An Interdisciplinary Introduction to Ethics in Cancer Research
2008 · 130 Seiten · ISBN 978-3-8316-0755-6
- Band 4: Peter Kunzmann, Sabine Odparlik (Hrsg.): **Eine Würde für alle Lebewesen?**
2007 · 148 Seiten · ISBN 978-3-8316-0741-9
- Band 3: Dirk Preuß: **... et in pulverem reverteris?** · Vom ethisch verantworteten Umgang mit menschlichen Überresten in Sammlungen sowie musealen und sakralen Räumen
2007 · 104 Seiten · ISBN 978-3-8316-0739-6
- Band 2: Nikolaus Knoepffler, Antje Klemm (Hrsg.): **Ernst Abbe als Unternehmer und Sozialreformer – Ein Beitrag zur Wirtschaftsethik**
2007 · 74 Seiten · ISBN 978-3-8316-0705-1
- Band 1: Elke Mack: **Familien in der Krise** · Lösungsvorschläge Christlicher Sozialethik
2005 · 106 Seiten · ISBN 978-3-8316-0543-9

Erhältlich im Buchhandel oder direkt beim Verlag:
Herbert Utz Verlag GmbH, München
089-277791-00 · info@utzverlag.de
Gesamtverzeichnis: www.utzverlag.de