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ARTICLE

Mass Pilgrimage and the Usable Empire in a Napoleonic Borderland

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Abstract

This article analyses the biggest pilgrimage event of the Napoleonic era, showing how Catholics used imperial opportunities and imperial loopholes to progress on their path toward religious revival. In September 1810, more than 200,000 pilgrims rushed to the small provincial city of Trier to venerate one of Christianity's most important relics, the Holy Coat of Jesus. This pilgrimage could take place and grow to such gigantic dimensions because both clerical elites and laypeople deftly navigated territorial frameworks created by the Napoleonic state. In the Rhenish borderlands to which Trier belonged, French hegemony enabled the return of the relic to the city in the first place, but pilgrims subsequently exploited the malleability of public order that also characterized imperial governance. The great pilgrimage of 1810 represented neither a form of exclusively top-down mobilization orchestrated by the church and controlled by the state, nor an act of overt, politicized opposition – even as state officials, in turn, proved undeniably hostile to pilgrim mobility and 'superstition'. The article therefore argues that, in the more peaceful parts of Napoleon's empire, pilgrims and pilgrimage organizers accelerated post-revolutionary Catholic renewal by using that empire rather than either resisting or collaborating with it.

Apart from the imperial coronation of 1804, no religious event in Napoleonic Europe could match the scope and significance of the great pilgrimage to Trier in 1810. Between 9 and 27 September, more than 200,000 visitors rushed to this provincial city of roughly 10,000 inhabitants to venerate one of Christianity's most prestigious relics, the Holy Coat (*heiliger Rock* in German), said to be the seamless robe worn by Jesus at the time of his crucifixion. Catholics journeyed to Trier from the city's immediate hinterland, but also from other parts of the Rhineland, Luxembourg, and Lorraine. It was a gigantic show of piety, deeply embedded in an imperial context, officially planned and presided over by the French bishop of Trier, Charles Mannay, who served as one of

Napoleon's foremost ecclesiastical counsellors.[1] Pilgrim participation exceeded all expectations, surprising the bishop and unsettling state officials, although without triggering any severe tensions between pilgrims and police, or between Mannay and the government. How could this showing of the Holy Coat turn into a mass spectacle and a regional triumph of Catholicism on the imperial periphery, just one year after the pope had excommunicated Napoleon and been kidnapped by the French?

Raising this question means revisiting the links between Napoleonic imperial rule and the resilience of nineteenth-century European Catholicism, in which the flowering of pilgrimage played a uniquely prominent role.[2] Historians have compellingly emphasized these links for Italy and Spain, where Napoleon's armies and bureaucrats faced widespread opposition. In southern Europe, religious revival owed its beginnings largely to those Catholics who fiercely resented Napoleon's 'authoritarian centralism' and his sweeping programmes of Enlightenment-inspired religious reform.[3] North of the Alps and the Pyrenees, meanwhile, anti-imperial resistance occurred on a much smaller scale, and according to most scholars, genuine religious revival did not take off in France and Germany before the mid-nineteenth century.[4] With its focus on crises and resistance, this historiographical state of affairs has made it easy to overlook Napoleonic-era stirrings of Catholic renewal in the relatively peaceful, well-assimilated 'inner empire' or 'imperial core' that included most of France and western, Rhenish Germany.[5] Looking for major

[1] Josef Steinruck, 'Charles Mannay (1802–1816)', in Martin Persch and Bernhard Schneider, eds., *Auf dem Weg in die Moderne (1802–1880). Geschichte des Bistums Trier*, vol. IV (Trier, 2000), pp. 55–63.

[2] Antón M. Pazos, ed., *Nineteenth-century European pilgrimages: a new golden age* (London, 2020). Two classic reference points: Ruth Harris, *Lourdes: body and spirit in the secular age* (New York, NY, 1999); David Blackbourn, *Marpingen: apparitions of the Virgin Mary in nineteenth-century Germany* (New York, NY, 1994).

[3] On Italy: Michael Broers, *The politics of religion in Napoleonic Italy: the war against God, 1801–1814* (London, 2002). On Spain: Francisco Javier Ramón Solans, *La Virgen del Pilar dice... Usos políticos y nacionales de un culto mariano en la España contemporánea* (Zaragoza, 2014), pp. 79–128. On the Napoleonic 'tension between liberal reform and authoritarian centralism': Michael Broers, 'Introduction: Napoleon, his empire, our Europe and the "new Napoleonic history"', in Michael Broers, Peter Hicks, and Agustín Guimerá Ravina, eds., *The Napoleonic Empire and the new European political culture* (Basingstoke, 2012), pp. 1–17, at p. 9.

[4] A seminal synthesis that introduced that periodization for France: Gérard Cholvy and Yves-Marie Hilaire, *Histoire religieuse de la France contemporaine, 1800–1880* (Toulouse, 1985). More recent: Roger Price, *Religious renewal in France, 1789–1870: the Roman Catholic church between catastrophe and triumph* (New York, NY, 2018), which focuses almost entirely on the decades 1830–70. Likewise, since the 1980s, historians of modern Germany have debated whether the revival began during the *Vormärz* (1830–48) or after 1850, thus ignoring the first decades after 1800: Jonathan Sperber, *Popular Catholicism in nineteenth-century Germany* (Princeton, NJ, 1984); Christopher Clark, 'The new Catholicism and the European culture wars', in Christopher Clark and Wolfram Kaiser, eds., *Culture wars: secular-Catholic conflict in nineteenth-century Europe* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 11–46; James M. Brophy, *Popular culture and the public sphere in the Rhineland, 1800–1850* (Cambridge, 2007).

[5] Michael Broers, 'Napoleon, Charlemagne, and Lotharingia: acculturation and the boundaries of Napoleonic Europe', *Historical Journal*, 44 (2001), pp. 135–54. Broers's distinction among inner, intermediate, and outer imperial zones has proved quite helpful: see, e.g., Steven Englund, 'Monstre sacré: the question of cultural imperialism and the Napoleonic empire', *Historical Journal*, 51

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flashpoints of popular Catholic resistance, and finding none in these regions, historians have tended to move on quickly. By contrast, this article seeks to invigorate the religious history of Napoleonic France and Germany – and thus, inescapably, to contribute to their political history too.

Specifically, I argue that Catholics in the imperial core could and did make major headway in the post-revolutionary reassertion of their faith, not only by resisting the empire, but also by *using* it to their advantage. In other words, they harnessed the empire's power, adapted to its structural features, and exploited its loopholes. I also suggest that we stand to gain unique insight into these strategies through an analytical focus on territory and border regimes. Particularly in the Rhineland, to which Trier belonged, the spaces of usable empire constituted fertile ground for devotional renewal, even though most state officials remained openly hostile to 'superstitious' or 'overzealous' religious practices. Trier in 1810 makes for a compelling case study in this context, as the scope of the event and the available archival documentation allow for analysis of both elite and ordinary Catholics' actions.

As a pilgrimage centre, Trier benefited in three ways from the usable empire, and especially from what Napoleonic elites could and could not accomplish in their efforts to expand and manage France's borders.[6] First, by establishing the Rhine border and thus splitting the old archbishopric-electorate of Trier that had straddled the river, the French forced a reckoning over *trierisch* relics. As a result, Bishop Mannay managed to retrieve the Holy Coat for the episcopal city after it had spent most of the preceding 150 years on the other side of the Rhine. Second, the bishop responded aptly to the Napoleonic imperative of order, including spatial order, by using the boundaries of his diocese as a territorial frame to legitimize the pilgrimage of 1810. Yet who would enforce those boundaries, and what did public order mean in practice during the showing of the Holy Coat? Indeed, a third major aspect is that lay Catholics made massive use of loopholes to shape the contours of the pilgrimage in their own ways. Most notably, around 100,000 pilgrims came unauthorized, from outside the diocese, especially because its new territory largely did not coincide with the areas whose Catholic populations had regarded Trier as a holy city for centuries.

This case study seeks to make a conceptual contribution as well, by suggesting the idea of the usable empire as one way to transcend the binary of 'collaboration and resistance' with which Napoleonic scholars have wrestled for decades. This binary has structured analyses of relationships between the imperial centre and its peripheries, as well as between state and church. Under what circumstances did local populations outside pre-1792 France either resent and resist French 'occupation' or collaborate with French efforts to 'integrate'

(2008), pp. 215–50, at p. 218; Aurélien Lignereux, *Les Impériaux. Administrer et habiter l'Europe de Napoléon* (Paris, 2019), pp. 219–21.

[6] Michael Rowe has pioneered the approach of analysing Napoleonic history, and more particularly the Napoleonic Rhineland, with the tools of border(land) studies: Michael Rowe, *From Reich to state: the Rhineland in the revolutionary age, 1780–1830* (Cambridge, 2003); Michael Rowe, 'Borders, war, and nation-building in Napoleon's Europe', in Paul Readman, Cynthia Radding, and Chad Bryant, eds., *Borderlands in World History, 1700–1914* (Basingstoke, 2014), pp. 143–65.

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Europe? To what extent did Napoleon turn the Catholic church into a docile junior partner, and to what extent did Catholics oppose his religious policies? These undeniably crucial questions have generated excellent, nuanced answers.[7] That said, scholarship has simultaneously grown aware that the stark, fraught categories of collaboration and resistance are of little help in discerning various – and ubiquitous – subtler ways that people also developed to 'cope with the new constraints' created by French imperialism.[8]

In other words, passivity was not the only other option besides collaboration and resistance, and the actions of Europeans under Napoleon mattered even when they amounted neither to collaboration nor to resistance. As I will show, Mannay as a leading churchman did not simply collaborate with the state in making the pilgrimage possible and organizing it. Nor did lay Catholics offer any sustained or concerted resistance to the police forces who concerned themselves with pilgrims' mass movement to and from Trier. Rather, by using the empire in mildly subversive ways without genuinely challenging it, Mannay, his diocesan clergy, and lay pilgrims together created a milestone of Catholic renewal on a large regional scale.

I

As outlined above, three major borderland elements came together in the making of the 1810 pilgrimage: Trier's insertion into France's imperial orbit, the territorial framing of the pilgrimage in its planning stage, and lay pilgrims' tenacious, often transgressive mobility. This section discusses the first of those elements. More specifically, I will illuminate how Bishop Mannay succeeded in retrieving the Holy Coat for his cathedral church in 1810, largely because preceding shifts of borders had created an opportunity for Trier to regain some of its ancient prestige. Napoleonic imperial hegemony played a complicated role in this development. French expansion to the Rhine destroyed the Old Regime archbishopric and electorate of Trier, and thus the pillars on which the city's cachet had rested. Yet among the places with a plausible claim to the Holy Coat, Trier was now the only one situated in French imperial territory, due

[7] The relevant bibliography is vast. See, among others: Stuart Woolf, *Napoleon's integration of Europe* (London, 1991); Michael Broers, *Europe under Napoleon, 1799–1815* (London, 1996); Charles J. Esdaile, 'Popular resistance to the Napoleonic empire', in Philip G. Dwyer, ed., *Napoleon and Europe* (Harlow, 2001), pp. 136–52; Michael Rowe, ed., *Collaboration and resistance in Napoleonic Europe: state-formation in an age of upheaval, c. 1800–1815* (Basingstoke, 2003); Bernard Plongeron, *Des résistances religieuses à Napoléon, 1799–1813* (Paris, 2006); Guido Braun, Gabriele B. Clemens, and Lutz Klinkhammer, eds., *Napoleonische Expansionspolitik. Okkupation oder Integration?* (Berlin, 2013); Jacques-Olivier Boudon, Gabriele B. Clemens, and Pierre Horn, eds., *Erbfeinde im Empire? Franzosen und Deutsche im Zeitalter Napoleons* (Ostfildern, 2016).

[8] Lignereux, *Les Impériaux*, p. 135. Important critical reflections along these lines are given in Michael Rowe, 'Resistance, collaboration or third way? Responses to Napoleonic rule in Germany', in Charles J. Esdaile, ed., *Popular resistance in the French wars: patriots, partisans and land pirates* (Basingstoke, 2005), pp. 67–90. See also François Antoine, Jean-Pierre Jessenne, Annie Jourdan, and Hervé Leuwers, eds., *L'empire napoléonien. Une expérience européenne?* (Paris, 2014), although some of the contributors to this volume fall back upon the collaboration/resistance binary that the editors criticize in their introduction.

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to the emergence of the Rhine as the new border. Thanks to this geopolitical accident, Mannay could gain a decisive edge in the race for the relic by mobilizing French hegemony.

His success contributed to local and regional Catholic renewal, especially in the sense that it helped reverse a previous, decades-long downward trend in Trier's spiritual prestige. Throughout early modernity, the city had been one of three European 'pilgrimage capitals' alongside Rome and Cologne, combining the assets of a great pilgrimage place and a territorial centre.[9] Aside from the increasingly rare showings of the Holy Coat (none occurred at the cathedral between 1655 and 1810), Trier's best-known sacred site was the suburban St Matthias's abbey. Overall, before the French Revolution, more than 50,000 pious visitors per year came to the city, thus shaping and supporting the topos of *Sancta Treveris*, Holy Trier.[10] At the dawn of the revolutionary era, however, Trier's urban fortunes were waning, and the history of the Holy Coat reflects that decline.[11] The electors had removed the coat from Trier, keeping the relic at their fortress of Ehrenbreitstein, on the right bank of the Rhine opposite Koblenz. Archbishop-Elector Johann Philipp von Walderdorff (1756–68) organized the eighteenth century's only public showing of the relic right after its move to Ehrenbreitstein, on 4 May 1765, attracting many thousands of pilgrims.[12] Without the coat, Trier's status as a pilgrimage capital had become tenuous. The crisis of *Sancta Treveris* reached the next level due to more restrictive, hotly contested measures enacted in 1784 by Archbishop-Elector Clemens Wenceslaus (1768–1803) and in the 1790s by the French revolutionaries who conquered the city in 1794.[13] Only the Napoleonic takeover of the French Republic and the Concordat between Paris and Rome somewhat calmed the situation in Trier.

Yet the conditions for Catholic rebuilding remained difficult in Trier and its hinterland after 1802, the year the Concordat came into effect. As France restructured its Rhenish borderlands, Trier turned from the capital of an ecclesiastical electorate and one of Europe's most prestigious archbishoprics into a relatively minor episcopal see. Moreover, Clemens Wenceslaus and his cathedral

[9] Dominique Julia and Philippe Boutry, 'Rome, capitale du pèlerinage: traditions modernes et recompositions postrévolutionnaires', in Christophe Charle, ed., *Capitales européennes et rayonnement culturel, XVIII^e–XX^e siècle* (Paris, 2004), pp. 19–54.

[10] Wolfgang Schmid, 'Sancta Treveris: zur Bedeutung der Formel vom Heiligen Trier in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit', *Rheinische Heimatpflege*, 37 (2000), pp. 12–18. An estimate of 40,000 pilgrims a year for St Matthias alone is given by Gunther Franz, 'Geistes- und Kulturgeschichte 1560–1794', in Kurt Düwell, ed., *Trier in der Neuzeit* (Trier, 1988), pp. 203–373, at p. 329.

[11] Gabriele B. Clemens and Lukas Clemens, *Geschichte der Stadt Trier* (Munich, 2007), pp. 115–23.

[12] Jens Fachbach and Mario Simmer, 'Eine höfische Wallfahrt: die Ausstellung des Heiligen Rockes auf dem Ehrenbreitstein 1765', *Archiv für mittelrheinische Kirchengeschichte*, 65 (2013), pp. 235–80.

[13] Andreas Heinz, 'Prozessionen und Wallfahrten im Gegenwind der Aufklärung', *Kurtrierisches Jahrbuch*, 58 (2018), pp. 155–71; Wolfgang H. Stein, 'Polizeiüberwachung und politische Opposition im Saar-Departement unter dem Direktorium 1798–1800', *Rheinische Vierteljahrsblätter*, 64 (2000), pp. 208–65; T. C. W. Blanning, *The French Revolution in Germany: occupation and resistance in the Rhineland, 1792–1802* (Oxford, 1983).

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chapter had hidden away countless precious diocesan possessions – including the Holy Coat – east of the Rhine in the early 1790s.[14] Mannay's interest in retrieving the coat and organizing a spectacular pilgrimage stemmed in part from this sentiment of loss and lack. As the bishop put it in early 1810, the Holy Coat would help 'to cover the nudity and misery of my church'.[15]

By setting their sights on the relic, Mannay and his local confidants identified an opportunity within the crisis provoked by revolutionary turmoil and French expansion. The redrawing of boundaries in Napoleonic Europe furnished that opportunity by bringing to the forefront the questions of where the church of Trier really was and where the Holy Coat truly belonged. Both the old archdiocese and the electorate of Trier had straddled the Rhine. While the left-bank parts of the electorate fell to France, the ones on the right bank – including Ehrenbreitstein – were absorbed into the imperial county of Nassau-Weilburg, which would become part of the duchy of Nassau in 1806. By contrast, the right-bank part of the archdiocese subsisted, and Clemens Wenceslaus retained his spiritual jurisdiction there as archbishop of Trier.[16] Did this rump archdiocese form a more immediate legal successor to the old archdiocese of Trier than the new diocese of Trier governed by Mannay? Might the princes of Nassau have a stronger claim to the secularized treasures of the old electorate and cathedral chapter than the French government? Indeed, in 1803–4, Clemens Wenceslaus and the former cathedral canons accepted the transfer of nearly the entirety of these riches to the treasury of Nassau-Weilburg.[17]

Against such stiff competition from actors on the other side of the French border, it was by no means self-evident for Mannay to re-establish Trier as the place where the Holy Coat belonged.[18] Already in 1802 and 1803, the burghers of Ehrenbreitstein had claimed the Holy Coat for their parish church in petitions to their vicar general and to Clemens Wenceslaus, who hid the relic in

[14] Hans W. Kuhn, 'Zur Geschichte des Trierer und des Limburger Domschatzes: die Pretiosenüberlieferung aus dem linksrheinischen Erzstift Trier seit 1792', *Archiv für mittelrheinische Kirchengeschichte*, 28 (1976), pp. 155–207, at pp. 161 and 175–6.

[15] Charles Mannay to French embassy in Munich, undated draft, Bistumsarchiv Trier (BA Tr), Abt. 91, Nr. 265, p. 18. All translations from French and German are mine. I date the draft to early 1810 based on related correspondence: Bogne (secretary at the French embassy in Munich) to French minister of foreign affairs, 9 Mar. 1810, Archives diplomatiques, La Courneuve, France (ADipl), 16CP/186, fo. 102.

[16] Winfried Schüler, *Das Herzogtum Nassau, 1806–1866. Deutsche Geschichte im Kleinformat* (Wiesbaden, 2006), pp. 8–45; Alois Thomas, 'Die Verwaltung des rechtsrheinischen Bistums Trier 1802–1825', in Erwin Gatz, ed., *Römische Kurie. Kirchliche Finanzen. Vatikanisches Archiv. Studien zu Ehren von Hermann Hoberg* (Rome, 1979), pp. 913–79, at pp. 915–16.

[17] Kuhn, 'Zur Geschichte des Trierer und des Limburger Domschatzes', pp. 164, 170, 180–2.

[18] On this competition: Elisabeth Wagner, 'Die Rückführung des Heiligen Rockes nach Trier und die Heilig-Rock-Wallfahrt im Jahre 1810', in Erich Aretz, Michael Embach, Martin Persch, and Franz Ronig, eds., *Der heilige Rock zu Trier. Studien zur Geschichte und Verehrung der Tunika Christi anlässlich der Heilig-Rock-Wallfahrt, 1996* (Trier, 1995), pp. 219–36, at pp. 220–4.

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his castle near Augsburg.[19] The vicar general himself, meanwhile, tried to convince Clemens Wenceslaus to transfer the relic to the main church of Limburg, envisioned as the cathedral of a soon-to-be-erected separate diocese.[20] The archbishop-elector came under even greater pressure from the regency of Ehrenbreitstein, a branch of the Nassau government whose agents grew increasingly frustrated that Clemens Wenceslaus was withholding the prestigious relic from them.[21] In early July 1810, when the Holy Coat was already secretly on its way from Augsburg to Trier, the Ehrenbreitstein regency was still deliberating on what strategies and arguments to use in order to enforce Nassau's claims to the relic.[22]

French hegemony proved an important factor in determining the return of the Holy Coat to Trier in the summer of 1810.[23] A key piece of the puzzle was Clemens Wenceslaus's unwillingness to have the relic transferred to any place other than Trier. In addition, however, the old archbishop needed some reassurance that his decision against Nassau-Weilburg would not ignite a diplomatic scandal. Louis-Marie de Narbonne-Lara, then French ambassador to Bavaria, implied as much when he wrote that Clemens Wenceslaus required meetings with French diplomats to 'eliminate certain difficulties created by the pretensions of the Nassau princely regency'. In particular, the archbishop obtained a guarantee that the French government would handle any protests he might receive from Nassau. 'Our responsibility in this respect is unlikely to be an embarrassing one', Narbonne finished smugly.[24] In other words, the French knew that they could precipitate a decision about the relic without risking a damaging public backlash. In rebordered Europe, the duchy of Nassau represented a minor player within the Confederation of the Rhine created and controlled by France. Prince Friedrich Wilhelm of Nassau-Weilburg fumed with anger when learning that he had been outmanoeuvred by Mannay, but he did not dare to protest openly.[25]

So far, the picture offered here mostly corroborates historians' established understanding of church–state collaboration under Napoleonic rule – except that the initiative in this case proceeded from the ecclesiastical rather than the civil side. Mannay seems to have brought up the subject of the Holy Coat for the first time in August 1808, in a letter to the French minister for

[19] Meeting of 10 Dec. 1803, Diözesanarchiv Limburg (DAL), protocols of the general vicariate, vol. 20, entry no. 5822; Leo Weber, 'Der Heilige Rock und Augsburg', *Jahrbuch des Vereins für Augsburger Bistumsgeschichte*, 31 (1997), pp. 197–221, at pp. 210–11.

[20] Meeting of 20 Sept. 1809, DAL, protocols of the general vicariate, vol. 26, entry no. 8827. On Napoleonic-era projects for a new episcopal see in Limburg: Klaus Schatz, *Geschichte des Bistums Limburg* (Mainz, 1983), pp. 24–30.

[21] Resolution by Prince Friedrich Wilhelm of Nassau-Weilburg, 10 Nov. 1809, Landeshauptarchiv Koblenz (LHA Ko), Best. 332, Nr. 907, p. 69.

[22] Ibid., pp. 71–2, counsellor Coll to Ehrenbreitstein regency, 7 July 1810.

[23] Mannay's vicar general Anton Cordel journeyed to Augsburg to retrieve the relic. See his travel diary edited by Eduard Lichter, 'Die Rückkehr des Hl. Rockes aus Augsburg im Jahre 1810', *Kurtrierisches Jahrbuch*, 8 (1968), pp. 241–55, and 9 (1969), pp. 160–76, at pp. 248–51.

[24] Ambassador Narbonne to minister for foreign affairs, 28 May 1810, ADipl, 16CP/186, fo. 198.

[25] Resolution by Friedrich Wilhelm, 7 Sept. 1810, LHA Ko, Best. 332, Nr. 907, pp. 143–4.

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foreign affairs, Jean-Baptiste Nompère de Champagny. The bishop drew Champagny's attention to the issue and asked him to compel Nassau-Weilburg to renounce the old *trierisch* cathedral treasure, including its most prestigious relic. Mannay also provided the minister with various arguments he might need to employ in this diplomatic endeavour, specifically citing the Final Recess of 1803.[26] Later, Mannay mobilized his close friendship with Talleyrand, who had preceded Champagny as minister for foreign affairs. In late 1809, Talleyrand retained enough influence to convene a decisive meeting with Mannay and the Nassau-Weilburg diplomat Hans Christoph von Gagern in Paris. On this occasion, Mannay and Talleyrand coaxed Gagern into promising that the Ehrenbreitstein regency would not take any active steps to prevent the extradition of the Holy Coat from Augsburg to Trier.[27] Therefore, I suggest the value of flipping the established scholarly perspective on church–state collaboration, which calls for exploring 'to what ends Napoleon instrumentalized religion'.[28] Mannay's actions exemplify, conversely, how a churchman used the power of formal and informal French diplomacy in his quest to revalorize his episcopal see.

Overall, the return of the Holy Coat to Trier illustrates the ambiguities of Napoleonic rebordering in Europe. On the one hand, innumerable thorny questions arose as French expansion sounded the death knell for the Holy Roman Empire. The parallel existence of a rump archdiocese of Trier on the right bank of the Rhine and a new, French diocese of Trier figured among those issues, and the race for the Holy Coat exemplifies what was at stake. On the other hand, Napoleonic continental dominance helped decide such conflicts in favour of French interests – in this case, in favour of the city of Trier and its new bishop. On the revolutionized map of Europe, Trier could re-emerge as a great pilgrimage site during the Napoleonic era in part simply because the city was situated on the 'right' side of the new border. Yet the relic did not return to Trier automatically. The coat's fate remained undecided until 1810, when Mannay's interventions ended up bearing fruit. In short, this ambitious and well-connected prelate used the empire's diplomatic resources to great effect.

II

'Pilgrimages are morally dangerous, and I can barely recognize the bishop of Trier in all this foolishness.' These exasperated marginalia were penned by Pierre-François Réal, *conseiller d'état* at the Ministry of Police and former radical Jacobin, a few days after the showing of the Holy Coat had ended on

[26] Mannay to Jean-Baptiste Nompère de Champagny, 10 Aug. 1808, BA Tr, Abt. 52, Nr. 357, fos. 155v–156r.

[27] Excerpt from a letter by Count Klemens von Kesselstadt to his brother Philipp, 18 Dec. 1809, Paris, BA Tr, Abt. 91, Nr. 210, fo. 71; Hans Christoph von Gagern, *Mein Antheil an der Politik, I. Unter Napoleons Herrschaft* (Stuttgart, 1823), pp. 198–200.

[28] Jacques-Olivier Boudon, *Napoléon et les cultes. Les religions en Europe à l'aube du XIX^e siècle, 1800–1815* (Paris, 2002), p. 8.

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27 September.[29] Réal's note touches on two important facets of the event. First, his surprise at Mannay's involvement in 'foolishness' reveals how the bishop had used his wiggle room as a pilgrimage organizer in a way that was anything but foolish. Mannay understood that he needed permission from state authorities to realize his projects for a public showing of the coat. He knew that he could only obtain this permission by presenting the planned pilgrimage as a tightly controlled event under the auspices of *police du culte*, the policing of worship key to securitizing revolutionary and post-revolutionary France.[30] Therefore, he promised to deliver a policeable pilgrimage by framing it as a form of mobility that would avoid the transgression of departmental and diocesan boundaries. But the promise was illusory, not least because French expansion had created some highly irregular territorial subdivisions in the borderlands.

Second, Réal's frustration reflects not only the police's failure to predict or effectively contain pilgrim mobility around Trier, but also that Enlightenment-inspired Napoleonic elites held severely hostile views on pilgrimage. According to those elites, pilgrims formed potentially dangerous crowds, wasted their time instead of performing useful work, indulged in superstition, and undercut the spatial stability of parish worship.[31] In the French Rhineland, such perceptions gained even greater purchase after the truce between Paris and the papacy had broken down in the years before 1810.[32] Therefore, the making of the great pilgrimage to Trier is remarkable in part because of how that hostility was mitigated just enough by Mannay's promise of territorial containment and by the general tranquillity of the imperial core.

After securing the Holy Coat for Trier cathedral, the bishop and other local authorities took detailed steps to orchestrate and control the pilgrimage. On 22 August, in a printed pastoral proclamation, Mannay announced his plan to show the coat in the cathedral the next month.[33] He projected a strictly regimented pilgrimage. From among the nineteen days between 9 and 27 September, he allocated two days to each canton of the Saar department

[29] Dossier entitled 'Sarre – préfet – la vraie robe de Jesus Christ à Trèves', marginalia on a letter from Vincent-Marie de Vaublanc, prefect of Moselle, to Pierre-François Réal, 28 Sept. 1810, Archives Nationales, Pierrefitte-sur-Seine, France (AN), F/7/8069.

[30] See, e.g., Howard G. Brown, *Ending the French Revolution: violence, justice, and repression from the Terror to Napoleon* (Charlottesville, VA, 2006), pp. 345–8.

[31] On the Enlightenment's anti-pilgrimage agenda, see Dominique Julia, *Le voyage aux saints. Les pèlerinages dans l'Occident moderne, XV^e–XVIII^e siècle* (Paris, 2016), pp. 79, 175–7; Bernhard Schneider, 'Wallfahrtskritik im Spätmittelalter und in der "Katholischen Aufklärung": Beobachtungen zu Kontinuität und Wandel', in Bernhard Schneider, ed., *Wallfahrt und Kommunikation, Kommunikation über Wallfahrt* (Mainz, 2004), pp. 281–316; Derek Beales, *Joseph II* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1987–2009), II, pp. 314–26.

[32] Volker Speth, *Katholische Aufklärung, Volksfrömmigkeit und 'Religionspolicey'. Das rheinische Wallfahrtswesen von 1814 bis 1826 und die Entstehungsgeschichte des Wallfahrtsverbots von 1826. Ein Beitrag zur aufklärerischen Volksfrömmigkeitsreform* (2nd edn, Frankfurt am Main, 2014; orig. edn 2008), pp. 124–41.

[33] Brochure titled 'Exhortation aux fidèles au sujet de l'exposition de la Robe de Notre Seigneur', AN, F/7/8069.

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whose territory coincided with that of his diocese. On either of these two days, the inhabitants of a given canton would be allowed to come to Trier – in processional order and escorted by parish clergy, who were required to lead the processions back out of the city within two hours of their visit to the cathedral.[34] The mayor of Trier likewise publicized elaborate 'special police measures' to enforce 'public order' in the city during the time of the pilgrimage.[35] In this way, a state apparatus that appreciated disciplined devotion seemed to join forces with a bishopric that was trying to re-sanctify the city and episcopal see of Trier.

This appearance only became possible, however, because Mannay had given a promise of territorial containment to fit the pilgrimage event within the legal frameworks that constrained him as a bishop in imperial France. Napoleonic policies discouraged the processional form of pilgrimage that had become popular in early modern Catholic Germany. After 1802, no procession beyond the boundaries of the home parish could take place in the Saar department without the bishop's explicit permission and the prior knowledge of the sub-prefect.[36] But by the same token, the bishopric and the prefecture together did have the authority to designate the department as a legitimate space for pilgrimage processions to Trier. Therefore, when writing to the French minister of public worship, Félix-Julien-Jean Bigot de Préameneu, on 27 August, Mannay did not bother to ask the ministry for authorization to carry out the showing of the relic. Rather, he notified Bigot de Préameneu of a decision already made in accordance with the prefect of the Saar and the general who commanded the armed forces in the department.[37] Moreover, while the official pilgrimage timetable acknowledged the likelihood that some Catholics from the peripheries of neighbouring departments would join the processions that departed from nearby cantons of the Saar, Mannay mentioned this scenario only to the prefect and not to Bigot de Préameneu.[38] In other words, Mannay claimed to keep the pilgrimage within the bounds of legality by restricting it to the territorial limits of the diocese and the department.

This claim ignored persistent territorial irregularities in the borderlands. French administrators inherited from the Old Regime a long and complicated

[34] 'Règlement à l'occasion de l'exposition de la Sainte Robe', sent by Mannay to local civil and military authorities on 28 Aug. 1810, BA Tr, Abt. 91, Nr. 210, fo. 97. For the cantonal timetable, see BA Tr, Abt. 91, Nr. 211, fo. 13.

[35] Printed mayoral resolution of 27 Aug. 1810, Stadtarchiv Trier (StA Tr), Tb 18/292.

[36] Prefect Ormechville to general vicariate, 16 prairial an X (5 June 1802), LHA Ko, Best. 276, Nr. 594, pp. 125–6, and p. 35 for the acquiescent reply from the general vicariate, 18 prairial an X (7 June 1802). See also Elisabeth Wagner, 'Revolution, Religiosität und Kirchen im Rheinland um 1800', in Peter Hüttenberger and Hansgeorg Molitor, eds., *Franzosen und Deutsche am Rhein, 1789, 1918, 1945* (Essen, 1989), pp. 267–88.

[37] Mannay to Félix-Julien-Jean Bigot de Préameneu, 27 Aug. 1810, AN, F/19/1073/A, folder on diocese of Trier. Marginalia at the bottom of a letter from Mannay to the prefect of the Saar, 2 Aug. 1810, BA Tr, Abt. 91, Nr. 210, fo. 94.

[38] Mannay to Saar prefecture, 14 Aug. 1810, BA Tr, Abt. 91, Nr. 210, fo. 94.

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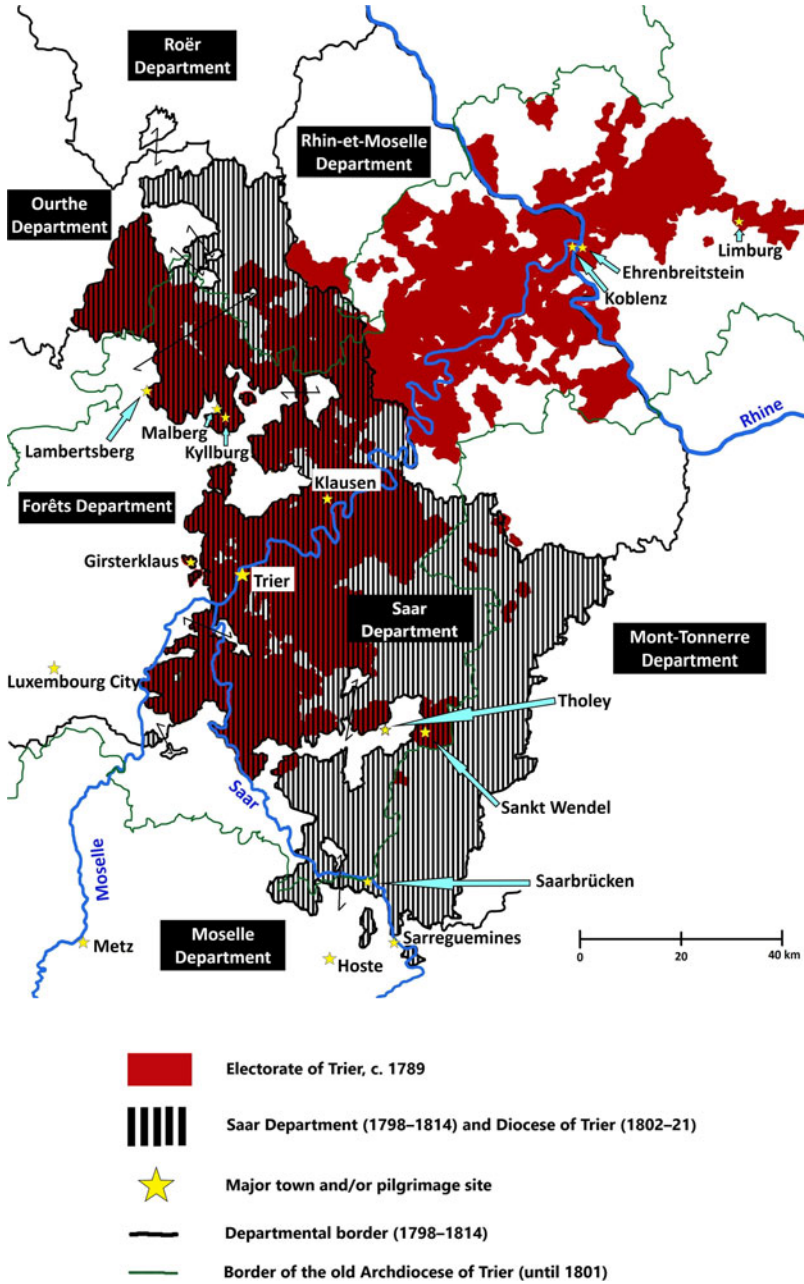

Figure 1. The Rhine–Moselle–Saar region, c. 1800. Map drawn by the author on the basis of: Franz Irsigler, *Geschichtlicher Atlas der Rheinlande, Lieferung V/1. Herrschaftsgebiete im Jahre 1789* (Cologne, 1982); Nikolaus Zimmer and Hans-Ernst Noack, *Archiepiscopatus Trevirensis. Das Erzbistum Trier bis um 1800*, Bistumsarchiv Trier (Trier, 1952); Adam Eismann, *Umschreibung der Diözese Trier und ihrer Pfarreien (1802–1821)* (Saarbrücken, 1941), map in endpapers.

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boundary between the Forêts and Saar departments (see Figure 1) and failed to introduce major simplifications.[39] Stretched thin along a north–south axis, the Saar department remained riddled with enclaves and territorial salients. It hardly lent itself as an effective spatial container for a pilgrimage that might bring to Trier 'a quarter of the population of the surrounding regions in a radius of thirty to forty [French] miles', as the prefecture suspected by early August.[40]

Little wonder that neighbouring prefectures took notice of the pilgrimage and sent messages of alarm to Paris after the showing had begun. The departmental administration of Rhin-et-Moselle, based in Koblenz, had been developing a hard-line anti-pilgrimage stance for several years – in part because the eastern limit of this department, the Rhine, also constituted the border of the empire, and the prefect suspected that pilgrims who visited right-bank shrines often engaged in smuggling.[41] Therefore, the prefecture at Koblenz reacted with vigour and frustration when confronted with the news that large crowds of pilgrims from the Rhin-et-Moselle were leaving for Trier to see the Holy Coat. A circular letter sent on 12 September instructed all mayors in the Rhin-et-Moselle to conduct rigorous controls and send back home any pilgrims who had failed to obtain passports.[42] This measure probably did not disrupt many people's pious travels: in October, the prefecture sent disillusioned reports to Paris, depicting the pilgrimage to the Holy Coat as a 'torrent' that had broken the dam erected against superstition.[43]

The prefect of the Moselle department, Vincent-Marie de Vaublanc, displayed the same impotent anger after he learned that many of his administrative subjects had decided to go and see the coat. In late September and early October, he bombarded the Ministry of Police with a series of reports that emphasized the chaos and dangers of this mass mobility.[44] But Vaublanc did not give any concrete orders to halt pilgrimage processions before

[39] See Martin Uhrmacher, 'Neue Staaten – neue Grenzen: die Rhein-Maas-Mosel-Region zwischen den Grenzbereinigungen des Ancien Régime und der Neuordnung durch den Wiener Kongress (1779–1816)', in Andreas Fickers, Norbert Franz, and Stephan Laux, eds., *Repression, Reform und Neuordnung im Zeitalter der Revolutionen. Die Folgen des Wiener Kongresses für Westeuropa* (Berlin, 2019), pp. 155–83.

[40] Saar prefecture to Anne-Jean-Marie-René Savary, 6 Aug. 1810, AN, F/7/8069.

[41] Adrien de Lezay-Marnésia (prefect of Rhin-et-Moselle) to Marc-Antoine Berdolet (bishop of Aachen), 9 July 1808, LHA Ko, Abt. 256, Nr. 7793, pp. 32–4. On Lezay-Marnésia's attempts to repress pilgrimage, see numerous other pieces in that dossier.

[42] Prefecture of Rhin-et-Moselle to *mairie* of Lutzerath, 12 Sept. 1810, LHA Ko, Abt. 655,117, Nr. 466.

[43] Beving to Ministry of Police, 2 Oct. 1810, AN, F/7/8068, dossier Rhin-et-Moselle; Fermath (another *conseiller de préfecture*) to Ministry of Police, 23 Oct. 1810, AN, F/7/8068, dossier Rhin-et-Moselle. On the regime's general failure to effectively police clandestine mobility (from smuggling to draft-dodging) in the Rhineland: Roger Dufraisse, 'La contrebande dans les départements réunis de la rive gauche du Rhin à l'époque napoléonienne', *Francia. Forschungen zur westeuropäischen Geschichte*, 1 (1973), pp. 508–36; Rowe, *From Reich to state*, pp. 180–1.

[44] Letters from Vaublanc to Ministry of Police, 24, 25, 27, and 28 Sept. and 1 Oct. 1810, AN, F/7/8069.

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24 September, so these measures could hardly be implemented by local administrators and police forces before the showing of the relic ended.[45]

If the prefectures of the Moselle and Rhin-et-Moselle faced the pilgrimage as an unpleasant surprise, it was because the Ministry of Police had not informed them beforehand, let alone taken any steps to co-ordinate various departments. The ministerial bureaucracy did suspect early on that the pilgrimage could cause 'regrettable scenes' and that 'these pilgrimages could at the very least foster laziness and serve as pretexts for vagabondage'.[46] The emperor's police council was even supposed to discuss Mannay's plan for the pilgrimage on 24 August.[47] Yet this agenda item does not appear in Napoleon's daily police bulletin, and the ministry lost sight of the pilgrimage until late September, when Vaublanc's letters arrived.[48] The reasons for this hiatus in attention are impossible to ascertain based on the archival documentation available to us. Might the transition from Joseph Fouché to the less competent minister Anne-Jean-Marie-René Savary in June 1810 have disturbed some relevant bureaucratic mechanisms?

In any case, the imperial government would hardly have treated the subject with such negligence if Mannay and his diocese had not enjoyed a favourable reputation in Paris to begin with. As early as 1806, Bigot de Préameneu's predecessor, Jean-Étienne-Marie Portalis, had described the diocese of Trier as 'perfectly calm' to Napoleon.[49] The prefect's *mémoire* on the state of the Saar department in 1809 characterized its inhabitants as 'naturally good and peaceful', and even prone to 'apathy' – not exactly the stuff of a police minister's nightmares.[50] To be sure, in the autumn of 1809, a rebellion of National Guards had affected large parts of the department, leading to some pillaging and to the execution of ringleaders after the army had crushed the revolt and brought many of its participants before a special military tribunal. That said, as Roger Dufraisse noted, many such short-lived 'local tumults' erupted in 1809, even in parts of pre-1792 France. In the Saar, Mannay was in fact able to shine by obtaining the emperor's pardon for more than a dozen of those condemned by the military tribunal.[51] The situation calmed down quickly: the Saar prefecture's reports on the first two trimesters of 1810 praised the *esprit public* and the 'most perfect union' in which 'the ministers as well as the faithful of the various confessions' co-existed in the

[45] Prefectoral *arrêté* of 24 Sept. 1810, Archives départementales de Moselle (ADM), 1 V 26.

[46] Note for police council, 22 Aug. 1810, AN, F/7/8069.

[47] Ibid., marginalia.

[48] Minutes of police bulletins, June–Aug. 1810, AN, F/7/3721; Nicole Gotteri, ed., *La police secrète du Premier Empire. Bulletins quotidiens adressés par Savary à l'empereur de juin à décembre 1810* (Paris, 1997).

[49] Report of 29 Jan. 1806, AN, AF/IV/1317, pièce 234, p. 120.

[50] Report from prefect Keppler to the government, undated, AN, F/20/253.

[51] Roger Dufraisse, 'Une rébellion en pays annexé: le "soulèvement" des gardes nationales de la Sarre en 1809', *Bulletin de la Société d'histoire moderne*, 68, no. 10 (1969), pp. 2–6, at p. 5. For additional context and on Mannay's intervention: Klaus Gerteis, 'Trier – Trèves: die "Franzosenzeit" in Trier 1794–1814. Ein Überblick', in Elisabeth Dühr, ed., *Unter der Trikolore. Trier in Frankreich – Napoleon in Trier, 1794–1814* (2 vols., Trier, 2004), I, pp. 59–83.

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department.[52] In short, Trier and its diocese belonged firmly to the imperial core, and this comfortable position made the empire quite manageable for Mannay in his planning of a mass pilgrimage – despite theoretical state hostility to such religious spectacles.

Ultimately, seen from above, the pilgrimage of 1810 did look rather messy, as the police approached it reactively rather than proactively. About two weeks after it ended, the ministries of Public Worship and Police sent letters of rebuke to Mannay and the Saar prefecture. Yet, in their respective responses, the bishop and the prefect simply asserted that pilgrims had not violated public order and had instead displayed great 'tranquillity' and 'moderation'.[53] Indeed, had not the state been justified in paying little attention initially, considering that the pilgrims behaved just as peacefully as one could expect from well-adjusted residents of the inner empire? While I will turn to pilgrims' actions in the following section, one thing should already be clear: Mannay, for his part, had deftly navigated the parameters of imperial territory. He had done so by promising to produce an orderly pilgrimage via police regulations and above all via spatial containment using departmental borders. In this sense, the smokescreen of an imperial 'hegemonic borderscape' proved crucial in the making of mass pilgrimage in 1810.[54]

III

The top-down picture of uneven concern and contrived claims to control raises the question of what the pilgrims themselves did, given that they could not be policed as tightly as state authorities would have liked.[55] In this section, to illuminate the pilgrims' own practices and especially their transgressions of borders, I begin by surveying their numbers and regions of origin. The pilgrims of 1810 overwhelmingly came from places where the imaginary of Trier as spiritual centre resonated through a centuries-old tradition. This tradition inserted the Holy Coat in a broader recognition of Trier's holiness, nourished by a history of archiepiscopal and temporal power, the presence of St Matthias's relics, and a more recent flourishing of Marian devotion. Moreover, the evidence allows some glimpses into how pilgrims tried – often successfully – to deflect

[52] Police reports from Trier, 29 May 1810 (for the first trimester of the year) and 1 Aug. 1810 (second trimester), AN, F/7/8391.

[53] Ministry of Police to Sainte-Suzanne, 10 Oct. 1810, AN, F/7/8069; Sainte-Suzanne to Réal, 17 Oct. 1810, AN, F/7/8069; Bigot de Préameneu to Mannay, 12 Oct. 1810, BA Tr, Abt. 91, Nr. 210, fo. 104; Mannay to Bigot de Préameneu, 19 Oct. 1810, ibid., fo. 105.

[54] I have borrowed this expression from Chiara Brambilla, 'Exploring the critical potential of the borderscapes concept', *Geopolitics*, 20 (2015), pp. 14–34, at p. 20.

[55] This question has received insufficient attention in what little work currently exists on the pilgrimage of 1810. Overall, this literature yields to clichés of pilgrim mobilization from above. See Wolfgang Schieder, 'Der "Heilige Rock" in Trier als Erinnerungsort', in Franz J. Felten, ed., *Erinnerungsorte in Rheinland-Pfalz* (Stuttgart, 2015), pp. 85–101, at p. 98; Anna Kallabis, *Katholizismus im Umbruch. Diskurse der Elite im (Erz-)Bistum Trier zwischen Aufklärung und französischer Herrschaft* (Boston, MA, 2020), pp. 398–404. More nuanced: Wagner, 'Die Rückführung des Heiligen Rockes', pp. 227–35.

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or overcome the challenges of being policed. Tactics in this regard ranged widely, from sheer disobedience to evasion to the gendered and classed self-presentation as honourable and harmless *dévotes*. For ordinary pilgrims, too, the empire proved usable, or at least manipulable. They seized the opportunity created by Mannay, and many of them did so in ways that the official, strictly territorialized framework of the pilgrimage had not stipulated.

Based on close analysis of contemporary estimates and pilgrim registers kept by the bishopric, more than 220,000 Catholics went to see the Holy Coat in September 1810, and at least 95,000 of them came from outside the Saar department.[56] In other words, at least 43 per cent of them did not come from the territory for which Mannay had officially intended the showing. The notion of a pilgrimage event carefully and successfully organized and controlled from above thus proves misleading. A remarkably large number of uninvited pilgrims participated, and conversely, a large minority of Catholics living within the diocese of Trier failed to do so. In a nutshell, Catholics tended to participate in the pilgrimage of 1810 only if they held pre-existing religious attachments to Trier. Many from the northern parts and some other cantons of the Saar department had never developed such ties and this lack corresponds to the low participation rates recorded in the pilgrim registers for these cantons, although physical distance from Trier also mattered. By contrast, remarkably large numbers of pilgrims came from regions *beyond* the borders of the department. The evidence from the registers corroborates Vicar General Cordel's note that these regions most notably included Luxembourg, Lorraine, and the hinterlands of Koblenz and Cologne.[57]

In these regions, Catholics cultivated centuries-old relationships with *Sancta Treveris*, based partly on practices of pilgrimage and long-distance procession and partly on Trier's former status as archiepiscopal see and capital of an imperial principality. The eastern and southern parts of Luxembourg were not only geographically close to Trier but had also belonged to its Old Regime archdiocese. Before the French Revolution, moreover, the dioceses of Lorraine had been part of the metropolitan church province of Trier; in the Napoleonic era, pilgrimage processions from Lorraine continued to pour into Trier year after year on the feast day of St Peter.[58] The environs of Koblenz had belonged to both the archdiocese and the electorate of Trier since the middle ages, and the Moselle river valley served as a natural infrastructure

[56] The key sources in this regard are the 'Registre sur les billets d'entrée à la cathédrale' and the register of information about cantonal processions in BA Tr, Abt. 91, Nr. 211, fos. 81–6 and 111–21. For a detailed, critical discussion of the numbers, see the appendix of my dissertation: Kilian Harrer, 'Places of power, spaces of peril: pilgrimage and borders in western central Europe, c. 1770–1810' (Ph.D. thesis, Madison, WI, 2021), pp. 301–13.

[57] Lichter, 'Die Rückkehr des Hl. Rockes', pp. 168–9.

[58] Wolfgang Seibrich, 'Das Erzbistum Trier als Teil der Gesamtkirche', in Bernhard Schneider, ed., *Kirchenreform und Konfessionsstaat (1500–1801). Geschichte des Bistums Trier*, vol. III (Trier, 2010), pp. 147–99. In 1802, the general vicariate of Trier mentioned among annual processions to Trier cathedral 'viele am St. Peterstage aus Lothringen und andern fremden Departementern': secretary and assessor Weber to prefect Ormechville, 18 prairial an X (7 June 1802), LHA Ko, Abt. 276, Nr. 594, p. 35.

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connecting Koblenz with Trier. Additionally, the left-bank Rhenish areas near both Koblenz and Cologne featured a high density of St Matthias confraternities, whose members were used to making an annual pilgrimage to Trier.[59] Overall, against the misproportioned territorial container of the Saar department, which served as the official frame for the 1810 pilgrimage, actual pilgrim participation reveals the contours of a different, devotional borderscape. These contours derived from older Rhenish pilgrimage patterns, and from the 'phantom borders' of the old electorate, archbishopric, and metropolitan province, as well as from sheer geographical proximity.[60]

Devotees to St Matthias, for instance, most likely built on their confraternal pilgrimage traditions in deciding to go and venerate the Holy Coat in September 1810. Throughout the early modern period, the Matthias pilgrimage confraternities had been led by laymen, the *Brudermeister*, and had been almost completely independent from the clergy.[61] In the Napoleonic period, Mannay saved the church of the dissolved St Matthias's abbey by repurposing it as a parish church. Both parish archives and printed pilgrim booklets suggest that pilgrimage to the apostle's tomb flourished in the first decade of the nineteenth century.[62] This evidence dovetails with a list of some two dozen large votive candles that pilgrimage processions from all over the Rhineland offered at St Matthias in the first decade of the nineteenth century.[63] What is more, pilgrims had connected the devotions to St Matthias and to the Holy Coat long before 1810. Pilgrimage guidebooks of Matthias confraternities typically contained prayers or songs that honoured the coat and indicated Trier cathedral as the pilgrimage groups' last significant stop before St Matthias's abbey. The guide reprinted in 1808 for the Matthias confraternity of Anrath, for instance, instructed pilgrims to sing 'Ist das der Rock Herr Jesu Christ', the most famous of early modern songs about the coat, while entering Trier.[64] Likewise, pilgrimage coins from the seventeenth and eighteenth

[59] Birgit Bernard, *Die Wallfahrten der St.-Matthias-Bruderschaften zur Abtei St. Matthias in Trier vom 17. Jahrhundert bis zum Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges* (Heidelberg, 1995), maps on pp. 275–6.

[60] Béatrice von Hirschhausen, Hannes Grandits, Claudia Kraft, Dietmar Müller, and Thomas Serrier, *Phantomgrenzen. Räume und Akteure in der Zeit neu denken* (Göttingen, 2015).

[61] Bernard, *Die Wallfahrten der St.-Matthias-Bruderschaften*, p. 177.

[62] BA Tr, Abt. 52, Nr. 169 (St Matthias parish), esp. the following letters: Trier's mayor Recking to prefect Keppler, 11 floréal an XII (1 May 1804); Keppler to Mannay, 17 floréal an XII, Trier (7 May 1804); Recking to Mannay, 22 floréal an XII, Trier (12 May 1804). See also statistics on *fabrique* revenues in LHA Ko, Abt. 276, Nr. 530, with separate sheet for St Matthias. Pilgrim booklets: Viktor Joseph Dewora, *Andachtsbuch für die Verehrer des heiligen Mathias* (Trier, n.d.); idem, *Das Wichtigste für katholische Christen, welche zum Grabe des heiligen Mathias wallfahrten* (Trier, n.d.); idem, *Bruderschaftsbüchelchen für die Verehrer des H. Mathias* (Trier, n.d.).

[63] StA Tr, Ta 43/3 (list completed in 1814 or slightly later).

[64] *Andachts-Uebungen bei einer achttägigen Pilgerfahrt, welche zur Verehrung des Hl. Apostels Mathias und dessen zu Trier aufbehaltenen hl. Reliquien aus der Pfarrkirche der Gemeinde Anrath alle Jahr auf den ersten Freitag nach Christi Himmelfahrt ausgeführt wird* (3rd edn, Krefeld, 1808), p. 195. Two other examples: *Coblentzer Wallfahrt. Worin alle Stationes daraus nacher der Stadt Trier ordentlich bis zu S. Mathias angezeigt werden …* (Koblenz, 1765), p. 268; *Erneuerte Einrichtung der Bruderschaft des H. Apostels Matthias so in der Chur-Cöllnischen Stadt Kempen … andächtig gehalten wird, samt Ordnung der Pilgerfahrt auf Trier …* (Kempen, 1777), pp. 360–4.

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centuries sometimes showed St Matthias on the front and the Holy Coat on the back.[65] By putting Trier prominently on the pilgrims' mental map and keeping it there long after the 1655 showing of the coat, devotion to Matthias undoubtedly factored into Catholics' decision to visit Trier for the showing of September 1810.

Pilgrims also connected the showing of the Holy Coat with their devotion to Mary, whom the song 'Ist das der Rock Herr Jesu Christ' presented as the weaver of the Holy Coat.[66] On Sunday 9 September 1810, Trier was overrun by thousands of Catholics who had acquired the habit of visiting the city each year on 8 September to witness the great procession of the nativity of Mary.[67] Thus, the weekend of 8 and 9 September saw a seamless transition from a highlight of Marian piety to the adoration of her son. In addition, since 1697, the cathedral had been home to a Marian statue whose reputed miraculous powers had become a pilgrimage attraction in its own right over the course of the eighteenth century. The chapel within the cathedral that housed this statue was located on the south side of the choir, relatively close to the chapel of the Holy Coat.[68] Most likely, alongside the Matthias confraternities, Marian devotion provided the second main element of continuity in pilgrimage to Trier across the two decades of French rule.[69] Overall, this persistent, far-flung devotional borderscape and pilgrims' spatial practices presented an implicit challenge to the departmental framing of the event, as well as to Napoleonic ideals of order.

Yet pilgrims also found ways of pushing the boundaries of public order without breaching them blatantly. Low-level obstinacy constitutes the first of the three major tactics discernible in the sources. For instance, pilgrims from Luxembourg 'behaved more rashly' according to Cordel: 'when their patience for waiting was exhausted, they jostled more vehemently into the queues in front of the church'.[70] Similarly, a local parish priest admitted that 'many soldiers always needed to ensure order; for there was frequently an enormous pushing and shoving among the people'.[71] Behind the façade of well-planned, orderly mass devotion, the overwhelming influx from Luxembourg and other regions outside the Saar department created tensions as pilgrims tried to out-bustle each other as well as the police.

[65] Three examples in Ursula Hagen, *Die Wallfahrtsmedaillen des Rheinlandes in Geschichte und Volksleben* (Cologne, 1973), pp. 224–6.

[66] *Kurzer Begriff der Historie, sammt einem Lobgesang von dem H. ungenähten Rock Jesu Christi. Im Thon: Ist das der Leib Herr Jesu Christ* (n.p., n.d. [1810]), p. 5.

[67] J. J. Simon's report on the pilgrimage, BA Tr, Abt. 91, Nr. 210, fos. 123v–126r, at fo. 124r.

[68] Franz J. Ronig, 'Die Ausstattung', in Gustav Bereths and Franz J. Ronig, eds., *Der Trierer Dom* (Neuss, 1980), pp. 225–362, at pp. 303–4, and plan no. VIII in the annex.

[69] Even in 1794–1802, when French troops sequestered the cathedral, Mary's devotees could still pray in front of the statue because it had been transferred to the neighbouring church of Our Lady. This is according to Franz Tobias Müller's early nineteenth-century manuscript on 'The fate of the churches in and near Trier since the hostile arrival of the French in 1794', BA Tr, Abt. 95, Nr. 342, p. 4.

[70] Lichter, 'Die Rückkehr des Hl. Rockes', pp. 169–70.

[71] Mario Simmer, 'Ein neu entdeckter Bericht über die Wallfahrt zum Heiligen Rock im Jahre 1810 von Franz Tobias Müller', *Kurtrierisches Jahrbuch*, 53 (2013), pp. 251–74, at p. 273.

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Tens of thousands of pilgrims also disobeyed passport and mobility regulations, thus deploying a second tactic that verged on what some might call 'resistance'. The situation in the Rhin-et-Moselle department was especially delicate, in part because of the hard-line stance on pilgrimage that the prefecture of this department had developed. Sometime in the spring of 1810, for example, 'A troop of pilgrims, having reached the Rhine, obtained at a local *mairie* free passage to the right bank of this river, after having been rejected at other neighbouring *mairies* due to their lack of passports for a trip abroad.'[72] If they were unable or unwilling to pay passport fees or to ask potentially hostile authorities for passport visas related to pilgrimage, devout and determined Catholics could still find ways around the control systems that shaped the Napoleonic borderscape.[73] Since the mid-1790s, passports had also been required for domestic trips within France, which made the issue relevant for the pilgrims of 1810.[74] Moreover, leaving for Trier from places of residence in the Roër and Rhin-et-Moselle departments meant violating a recent ban by the bishopric of Aachen on pilgrimages exceeding the boundaries of that diocese.[75] Against this backdrop of state and church restrictions, many of the pilgrims of September 1810 were marching according to a mental map that stood directly at odds with the hegemonic borderscape of the time.

Not all pilgrims crossing departmental boundaries needed either passports or a good plan for avoiding passport controls, however. Some relied on their elevated social status – at least in 1810, pilgrimage was by no means a purely 'popular' form of devotion – to keep them aloof from such pesky bureaucratic and policing issues. For example, among the few people from the city of Metz who journeyed to Trier to see the Holy Coat, the majority were 'devout women and priests' according to the mayor, who sent the prefecture a list of about a dozen ladies, *demoiselles*, and *abbés*. These pilgrims were heading to Trier without passports, but such lack of documentation hardly mattered, given that 'this list contains only people who are honourable and well known in Metz'.[76] It seems that women of a certain social standing, especially when accompanied by clergy, could pass as obviously unproblematic travellers and thus simply afford to care little about the official mobility regime. For these women, the empire proved usable thanks to its post-revolutionary reinforcement of social hierarchy.

To sum up, pilgrim movement in September 1810 undercut the hegemonic borderscape without genuinely challenging public order. Prefect Vaublanc's reports to Paris best encapsulate this ambiguity. On 28 September he wrote

[72] Prefectoral circular letter, 1 June 1810, AN, F/7/8068.

[73] On early modern pilgrims' long-standing use and subversion of passport regimes, see Julia, *Le voyage aux saints*, pp. 303–13; Vincent Denis, *Une histoire de l'identité. France, 1715–1815* (Seyssel, 2008), pp. 413–16.

[74] See John C. Torpey, *The invention of the passport: surveillance, citizenship and the state* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 32–56.

[75] This ban was pronounced on 14 Feb. 1810: Bigot de Préameneu to vicars general of Aachen, 14 Aug. 1810, AN, F/*/19/146, p. 30.

[76] Metz mayor to Moselle prefect, 24 Sept. 1810, and Metz mayor to prefectoral secretary, 25 Sept. 1810, both in ADM, 1 V 26.

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that, according to hearsay, pilgrims had 'proffered ill-considered remarks about the pope and about religious affairs'. In other words, they were criticizing Napoleon's detainment of Pius VII since 1809.[77] Yet four days later, Vaublanc claimed that 'the biggest part of those from my department who have gone on this trip would not have done so' if they had not believed the rumour that the government had officially authorized the showing of the Holy Coat.[78] These rumours probably spread far and wide.[79] They, too, instrumentalized the empire by deriving their plausibility from the Napoleonic principle that authority always came from above. How, indeed, could a three-week public showing of a famous relic, under the auspices of the local bishop, be taking place *except* with the knowledge and assent of the emperor and his government? Yet, as we have seen, Napoleon had actually not been informed, and the ministries of Public Worship and Police had not managed – or bothered – to make a decision about the pilgrimage. Their inaction did not erase the norm of public order but did render it muddled and malleable. For the pilgrims who went to Trier in 1810, the opportunity to reassert their faith arose from this ambiguity.

IV

Just as one swallow does not make a summer, one pilgrimage does not amount to large-scale religious revival – but, zooming out from my case study, I suggest that the spectacularly successful showing of the Holy Coat in 1810 was not an isolated phenomenon. On the geographical level, Broers's distinction between the inner and outer empire again proves meaningful here. In the outer empire, as Broers himself has argued through the example of central Italy, traditional Catholic practices such as pilgrimage to local shrines gained powerful new meaning and appeal as vehicles of resistance to the French. In the process, previously sceptical clergymen and upper-class city-dwellers rediscovered common ground with remote rural communities, and this new alliance unleashed sufficient energy for a durable devotional resurgence.[80] For another, similar example, consider Montserrat abbey, Catalonia's foremost place of Marian pilgrimage. In the Spanish wars that erupted in 1808, the monastery quickly proved attractive to Catalan militias (*somatenes*), whose members sought both material support and the Virgin's protection. Although French troops sacked the abbey in the late summer of 1811 and again in July 1812, the statue of Our Lady of Montserrat survived and thus provided a focal point for continued popular attachment to the shrine and to Mary herself.[81]

[77] Vaublanc to Ministry of Police, 28 Sept. 1810, AN, F/7/8069.

[78] Vaublanc to Ministry of Police, 1 Oct. 1810, AN, F/7/8069.

[79] They are also mentioned in the correspondence between Koblenz and Paris: Fermath to Ministry of Police, 23 Oct. 1810, AN, F/7/8068.

[80] Broers, *Politics of religion in Napoleonic Italy*, pp. 52–85.

[81] Anselm M. Albareda and Josep Massot i Muntaner, *Historia de Montserrat* (rev. edn, Montserrat, 1974), pp. 95–102, 124–7. On the Peninsular War, see the numerous works by Charles Esdaile. His

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At the same time, pilgrimage proved alive and kicking in much of the imperial core, not least in the Rhineland and neighbouring borderlands, even though little clear-cut anti-imperial resistance existed to fuel religious devotion in these parts of the empire. Two decades ago, Jacques-Olivier Boudon discerned a 'great awakening of pilgrimage' in Napoleonic France.[82] He did so on the basis of limited evidence from Lorraine and the diocese of Soissons, but a glance at other regions substantiates his assertion. In Alsace, Bishop Saurine amplified state officials' worries that too many French Catholics kept crossing the border with Switzerland to visit the shrines of Einsiedeln and Mariastein. Yet Saurine did so not in order to combat pilgrimage per se, but rather to promote Alsace's own shrines, particularly the one in Marienthal over which the bishop was trying to gain direct control.[83] In Aachen, local clergy felt encouraged by Napoleon's fascination with the city of Charlemagne, and consequently revivified the great septennial *Heiligtumsfahrt* in 1804. This mass pilgrimage had been interrupted by Enlightenment reformism and French revolutionary occupation for roughly two decades.[84] In the sparsely populated Luxembourgian region, too, the annual pilgrimage festivals of Luxembourg City and Echternach re-emerged in full force after 1799.[85]

While these successes have little to do with resistance, they do not appear as the result of straightforward church–state collaboration either. After all, in these very same borderlands, pilgrimages 'were constantly at the centre of Napoleonic administrators' malevolent attention', as one historian put it recently.[86] The case of Trier suggests that this hostile attention existed indeed, but that it was neither consistent nor intense enough to keep clerical leaders or lay Catholics from revitalizing the practice of pilgrimage while drawing on both the empire's strengths and its weaknesses. Thus, by mobilizing French imperial diplomacy, Bishop Mannay managed to secure the Holy Coat for Trier cathedral in 1810. Next, he tapped into the departmentalized territorial regime to create the vision of a well-bounded, strictly orchestrated pilgrimage. The pilgrims themselves, in turn, exploited the limitations of the imperial spatial order just as effectively as Mannay had exploited its powers. Napoleonic state officials read the pilgrimage disapprovingly through the lens of public disorder, but the half-heartedness of their response signals that they did not seriously perceive pilgrims as resisters. In short, Catholics in the imperial

demystification of the *somatenes*: Charles J. Esdaile, *Fighting Napoleon: guerrillas, bandits and adventurers in Spain, 1808–1814* (New Haven, CT, 2004), pp. 44–7, 81–3.

[82] Boudon, *Napoléon et les cultes*, p. 106.

[83] Claude Muller, *Dieu est catholique et alsacien. La vitalité du diocèse de Strasbourg au XIX^e siècle, 1802–1914* (Haguenau, 1987), pp. 907, 918–25.

[84] Dieter P. J. Wynands, *Geschichte der Wallfahrten im Bistum Aachen* (Aachen, 1986), pp. 58, 83.

[85] Georges Hellinghausen, 'Patronne de la cité: tradition et traditions', in Sébastien Pierre, ed., *Notre-Dame de Luxembourg. Dévotion et patrimoine* (Bastogne, 2016), pp. 35–50, at p. 46; Michael Franz Joseph Müller, *Abhandlung über die jährlich am Pfingstdinstage in dem Städtchen Echternach, Herzogthum Luxemburg, gewöhnliche Prozession der sogenannten Springenden Heiligen* (Trier, 1816).

[86] Pierre Horn, *Le défi de l'enracinement napoléonien entre Rhin et Meuse, 1810–1814. L'opinion publique dans les départements de la Roër, de l'Ourthe, des Forêts et de la Moselle* (Berlin, 2017), p. 88.

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core discovered that they had much leeway to pursue religious renewal whenever the empire turned out to be neither glorious nor abhorrent, but simply usable.

Finally, these findings should inflect how we approach the larger story of nineteenth-century Catholic renewal in both France and Germany. As I noted in the introduction, the revolutionary and Napoleonic eras have often been omitted from this story by scholars who heavily emphasize the rise of a new, 'populist', and extremely effective generation of clerical leaders between 1830 and 1850.[87] At least for western Germany, such a periodization makes sense at first glance. Throughout the early decades of the nineteenth century, the Catholic Enlightenment in these regions retained its intellectual hold on the clergy, many of whom therefore approached pilgrimage and similar popular practices with scepticism or even contempt.[88] Without a doubt, the demise of the Catholic Enlightenment after 1830 constituted a turning point. Yet this observation does not settle the issue of how much was genuinely new about the 'new Catholicism' that emerged subsequently and for which the next showing of the Holy Coat in 1844 marked a breakthrough in the Rhineland.[89] Intriguingly, the organizers of that later pilgrimage drew heavily and explicitly on the model created in 1810, in ways ranging from urban policing to timetables for cantonal processions.[90] More broadly, my interpretation of the pilgrimage in 1810 suggests how the Napoleonic-era revival may have mattered in the long run. Life under Napoleon taught both clergy and laypeople a lesson that would remain valuable throughout the century: how to make mass pilgrimage work by dealing successfully with the powers and quirks of the modern state.

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[87] The idea that the 'reactionary Catholicism' of the mid- to late nineteenth century constituted a 'populist' current was most clearly expressed in a seminal book by Thomas Mergel, *Zwischen Klasse und Konfession. Katholisches Bürgertum im Rheinland 1794–1914* (Göttingen, 1994), p. 5. On religious vitality and change during the revolutionary decade: Paul Chopelin, *Ville patriote et ville martyre. Lyon, l'Église et la Révolution, 1788–1805* (Paris, 2010); Suzanne Desan, *Reclaiming the sacred: lay religion and popular politics in revolutionary France* (Ithaca, NY, 1990); Blanning, *French Revolution in Germany*, pp. 230–47. The best and most detailed synthesis of this issue is Bernard Plongeron, 'Parcours de laïcs en Révolution: ruptures et continuités', in Bernard Plongeron, ed., *Histoire du christianisme des origines à nos jours. Tome X. Les défis de la modernité, 1750–1840* (Paris, 1997), pp. 539–617.

[88] On south-western Germany: Christian Handschuh, *Die wahre Aufklärung durch Jesum Christum. Religiöse Welt- und Gegenwartskonstruktion in der Katholischen Spätaufklärung* (Stuttgart, 2014). On the Rhineland: Speth, *Katholische Aufklärung*. On Westphalia: Werner Freitag, *Volks- und Elitenfrömmigkeit in der frühen Neuzeit. Marienwallfahrten im Fürstbistum Münster* (Paderborn, 1991), pp. 317–57.

[89] Clark, 'New Catholicism', pp. 15–17. On 1844, see also the new revisionist account by Skye Doney, *The persistence of the sacred: German Catholic pilgrimage, 1832–1937* (Toronto, 2022), pp. 126–33 and passim.

[90] Bernhard Schneider, 'Die Hl.-Rock-Wallfahrten von 1810 und 1844', in Persch and Schneider, eds., *Auf dem Weg*, pp. 567–79.

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