

Process Paper

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The Catholic church, and Christianity as a whole has a profound effect on the world in all respects, it is a multi-billion dollar industry, massive group organization, and set of moral and political beliefs all in one. Because of this and its ancient age it is easy for it to come up in discussions of history, this is how we picked our project, and we further came to realize how the growth and actions of the church, especially in the high middle ages, fit the topic perfectly. Communication has everything to do with how beliefs spread, from the very first time someone hears about a religion, to becoming a member, to convincing others in their community. People communicate their thoughts, feelings, and beliefs constantly, with their religion, with Catholicism as a perfect example, at the forefront of it all. Someone's religion also affects how they communicate, for example, ancient Church policies meant that Jewish people were allowed to lend money, and Catholics weren't, across hundreds of years this has led to the stereotype of Jewish people being miserly.

We conducted our research mostly online, this was due to convenience, wealth of information, and covid risks associated with in person interviews or in person library research. Despite this we found a large amount of information, including multiple books and articles from scholarly journals. We only used a couple website articles, and of those we made sure to check their reputability, and preferred .org websites, that were not crowd sourced, over profit driven .com(s). We created our project using the NHD website builder, writing in external programs (word) in order to create backups and perform accurate word counts, we divided our work evenly. We each provided a similar number of words in the project as a whole, Lukas also custom coded a navigation system to better fit our layout.

Our historical argument is that the Catholic Church utilized its unique position as a stateless authoritarian organization with complete ideological supremacy in Europe in the Middle Ages to retain that ideological supremacy. It simultaneously spread throughout the Americas via colonization, while crushing any opposition or dissidence through institutions such as the Inquisition. It utilized a method of communication and propagation thitherto unseen, one which would set a precedent for future ideologies and authoritarian systems throughout the world.

The spread and solidification of the Catholic church into, and as, a powerhouse of global economy and thought is clearly significant. From the middle ages through today the church has been an unbelievably huge organization, ranking higher in members than the population of many entire countries, and having a larger economy. The Catholic church is, without a doubt, one of the largest religions to ever exist, and so the methods it used to initially rise to status as one of the largest, most global religions of its time are inarguably of significance, not to mention the techniques it used to silence critics and stay in power for centuries.