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A martyred Society: the suffering of Suppression and the Jesuit factory of Saints (18th-20th centuries)

The “martyrdom” of Suppression and the Restoration of the Ignatian Order

«7 agosto 1814: dunque si riparte. Non era come partire la prima volta nel 1540 dal nulla con nove elementi giovani e con un Ignazio leader geniale e mistico, e un piano planetario in un oltremare ancora vergine. [...] L'ordine gesuitico era come una casa da rifare dai ruderi con solo pochi mattoni freschi».¹

«7 August 1814: thus they start over. It was not like starting from scratch the first time in 1540 with nine young people and Ignatius, genial and mystic leader, and a global program in still virgin overseas. [...] The Jesuit Order was like a house that had to be re-built from the ruins with just a few fresh bricks».

In 1814, pope Pius VII restored the Society of Jesus after the Suppression of the Order that had been declared by pope Clement XIV, through the Breve *Dominus ac Redemptor*, in 1773.² Forty-one years had passed in which the ex-Jesuits suffered from difficult emotional and living conditions, and among them many barely survived. In Italy, where the Jesuits, expelled from Spain and Spanish colonies, were exiled, a Grandee of Spain who belonged to the Ignatian Order spent his life keeping alive the Jesuit spirituality, helping his dispersed brothers in distress, and working for the Restoration of the Order: José Pignatelli (1737-1811), who was venerated as a living saint by the ex-Jesuits of the Italian Peninsula and whose role in the re-establishment of the Society of Jesus in Italy attracted immediately the attention of the General Postulation for the Causes of Saints of the Restored Society.³ A cause for canonisation was open and ended successfully with the beatification of the so-called “Restorer” (of the Society of Jesus in Italy) in 1933 and his canonisation in 1954. Pignatelli well represents the suffering of the Jesuit Suppression and the efforts to re-build the Society of Jesus. His cause for canonisation, among many others, conveys the response of the Restored Order to the suffering and attacks that the Society and the ex-Jesuits experienced between the late 18th and early 19th centuries. It expresses also the idea that the Restoration of the Ignatian Order depended on the actions of a holy man.⁴

This article explores the suffering of Suppression and the promotion of Jesuit sanctity in the delicate passage between the Suppression and Restoration of the Society of Jesus as a reflection of

¹ Guido Sommovilla - *La Compagnia di Gesù*. Milano: Rizzoli, 1985, 168.

² On the Suppression see, for instance, Pierre Antoine Fabre - *La Suppression de la Compagnie de Jésus (1773): Interprétations eschatologiques et hypothèses historiographiques. E-Spania. Revue interdisciplinaire d'études hispaniques médiévales et modernes*. 12 (2011); Maurice Whitehead - *From expulsion to Restoration: the Jesuits in crisis, 1759-1814. Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*. 133.412 (2014/15) 447-461.

³ Celestino Testore - *Il restauratore della Compagnia di Gesù in Italia. S. Giuseppe Pignatelli S.I. (1737-1811)*. Roma: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1954; Camillo Beccari - *Carlo Miccinelli - Il Beato Giuseppe Pignatelli della Compagnia di Gesù (1737-1811)*. Roma: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1933.

⁴ On the Restoration and the New Society of Jesus see, for example, *Jesuit Survival and Restoration: A Global History, 1773-1900*. Dir. Robert A. Maryks - Jonathan Wright, Leiden: Brill, 2014.

the process of revival of the Order and a consequence of the pain of the Suppression.⁵ The strategies of sainthood that were fostered by the Restored Society reveal fundamental information about the self-image that the Order wanted to show to the world after the “martyrdom” of Suppression.⁶ These strategies appear clearly in the activity of the General Postulation for the Causes of Saints of the New Society of Jesus, and represent a valuable lens through which observe the passage of the Catholic Church from the Ancien Régime to the “modern world”.⁷

Martyrdom and Suppression, and the idea of the Suppression as a martyrdom, seem to be privileged ways of access to sainthood after the Restoration of the Society of Jesus. In this sense, the example of José Pignatelli’s cause for canonisation is extremely valuable and launches a precise message: the Ignatian Order was restored in Italy by virtue of a saint.

Suppression and re-birth of the Society of Jesus take place in close connection with the transition of the Catholic Church from the Ancien Régime to “modernity”, from Enlightenment and Revolution to Restoration and Reactionary movement.⁸

The Suppression of the Society develops in the climate of Enlightened piety that characterised a large part of the 18th century European Catholicism, only a few years before the outbreak of the French Revolution and the end of the Ancien Régime. There are a number of assorted reasons for the Suppression of the Ignatian Order; several actors of the 18th century European society and culture found in the Society of Jesus a common enemy, although these forces were often rivals to each other.⁹

The Jesuits were deeply-rooted in European society and royal courts, where most of the sovereigns’ confessors belonged to the Ignatian Order. The Society of Jesus, with its spirituality, education system, intellectual production and allegiance to the Pope, was generally considered an obstacle to the rising idea of secularisation of the state, Enlightenment and Jurisdictionalist policy that was promoted by influential rulers, such as Joseph II Habsburg.

⁵ On the relationship between Suppression and Restoration see, for example, Pierre-Antoine Fabre, Patrick Goujon - *Suppression et rétablissement de la Compagnie de Jésus (1773-1814)*. Paris-Namur: Lessius, 2014.

⁶ For a first approach to the topics of sainthood and causes for canonisation see, for example, Miguel Gotor - *I beati del papa. Santità, Inquisizione e obbedienza in età moderna*. Firenze: Olschki, 2002; Pierluigi Giovannucci - *Canonizzazioni e infallibilità pontificia in età moderna*. Brescia: Morcelliana, 2008 and *Recenti ricerche sulle canonizzazioni in età moderna (secoli XVI-XVIII)*. *Rivista di Storia della Chiesa in Italia*. LIX, 2 (2005) 542-559; Henryk Misztal, Anna Maria Martinelli and Roman Chowaniec. *Le cause di canonizzazione: storia e procedura*. Città del Vaticano: Libreria editrice vaticana, 2005; Gajano S. Boesch - *Santità, culti, agiografia. Temi e prospettive*. Roma: Viella, 1997; Fabijan Veraja - *Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi. Commento alla legislazione e guida pratica*, Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1992; Alessandra Anselmi - *Theaters for the canonization of saints*. In *St. Peter’s in the Vatican*. Dir. William Tronzo, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, 244-269.

⁷ The expressions “modern world” and “modernity” (which are used in this article with their historical-sociological meaning) refer to the period that was characterised by the Second Industrial Revolution, the scientific progress and the raising of new political/philosophical orientations, such as socialism and positivism. The 19th century, however, is also theatre of the Catholic Reaction and the Church’s condemnations of most part of the political, religious, cultural and intellectual movements that distinguished modernity itself. As we will see, Pius IX’s *Syllabus* represents an excellent example of the attitude of the Roman Church toward several 19th century movements and cultural trends.

⁸ A terminological note: “Ancien Régime” refers to the socio-political system that was abolished by the French Revolution; “Reactionary movement” to the Catholic forces that fostered the return to the Ancien Régime system, with particular emphasis on the political and social role of the Roman Church.

⁹ Sabina Pavone - *I gesuiti dalle origini alla soppressione. 1540-1773*. Roma-Bari: Laterza, 2004, 117. *Les Antijésuites. Discours, figures et lieux de l’antijésuitisme à l’époque moderne*. Dir. Pierre Antoine Fabre and Catherine Maire. Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010.

The Jesuit presence and role in courts elicited accusations of political plots. The Society was also charged with moral laxism and financial speculation, as it happened in 1760's France with the case of Antoine Lavalette SJ, which cost the Jesuits their expulsion from the country.¹⁰ At the end of the 18th century, the French anti-Jesuitism was also considered by the ex-Jesuit Augustin Barruel as part of the strategies of the «sophistes de l'impïété», meaning the intellectuals who fostered the French Revolution. According to Barruel, these philosophers worked for the Suppression of the Society of Jesus (which was responsible for school education in a large part of France and opposed strongly the Encyclopédie) in order to weaken the Catholic Church and allow the ideals of the Revolution to prevail.¹¹

The Jesuit presence in the autonomous Reductions of the Indios Guaranì, in Paraguay, undermined further the Portuguese political authority in the American colonies, and the Society was eventually expelled. The expulsion from Spain and France followed.¹²

In addition to political, economic and cultural motives, theological reasons were at the basis of the anti-Jesuit movement. In particular, in 17th-18th centuries Jansenist theologians nourished a pessimistic anthropology and a theology of salvation according to which man was irremediably corrupted by original sin.¹³ This theology was in marked contrast to the valorisation of free will that was usually supported by the Jesuits. A collision with the Jesuit theologians, who were more lenient with men from the points of view of moral theology and theology of Grace, was inevitable.¹⁴ Also the diffusion of Rigorism and the idea that the Church needed to be reformed, through the promotion of Enlightened Piety and regulated devotions, weakened the positions of the Jesuits.

«I giansenisti diranno che occorre eliminare la setta che aveva corrotto la dottrina di Cristo; i regalisti esulteranno per la caduta del maggiore ostacolo al potere dello Stato; mentre gli illuministi insisteranno nel proclamare la incompatibilità tra il valore assoluto della ragione – che in realtà rappresentava la linea guida delle direttive poste da Ignazio – e una Costituzione religiosa che ha esasperati i principi della rinunzia e dell'obbedienza».¹⁵

¹⁰ Lavalette was a Jesuit missionary and, from 1754, superior-general of Martinique. His financial speculations led to bankrupt.

¹¹ Paolo Bianchini - Un mondo al plurale: i gesuiti e la società francese tra la fine del Settecento e i primi decenni dell'Ottocento. In *Morte e resurrezione di un Ordine religioso*. Dir. Paolo Bianchini. Milano: Vita e Pensiero, 2006, 53, 53 n.1. On the anti-Jesuitism see “Les antijésuites.” *Discours, figures et lieux de l'antijésuitisme à l'époque moderne*. Dir. Pierre-Antoine Fabre - Catherine Maire, Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010.

¹² On the Jesuit expulsion from Spain see for example Manuel Luengo et al. - *Diario de 1769. La llegada de los jesuitas españoles a Bolonia*. Alicante: Universidad of Alicante, 2010; Niccolò Guasti, *L'esilio italiano dei gesuiti spagnoli. Identità, controllo sociale e pratiche culturali (1767-1798)*. Roma: Ed. di Storia e Letteratura, 2006.

¹³ Regarding the soteriological controversies in which the Society was involved in early modern age, we can remember the dispute over Grace and free will that took place in 1580's Leuven, between the Jesuit theologian Leonard Lessius (1554-1623) and the theologians of the University of Leuven, who anticipated Jansenism; and the *controversia de auxiliis* between Jesuits and Preachers (and the *Congregatio de auxiliis divinae Gratiae*, 1598-1607). On the early modern disputes over Grace see, for example, Paolo Broggio - *La teologia e la politica. Controversie dottrinali, Curia romana e Monarchia spagnola tra Cinque e Seicento*. Firenze: Olschki, 2009; Gaetano Lettieri - *Il metodo della grazia. Pascal e l'ermeneutica giansenista di Agostino*. Roma: Edizioni dehoniane, 1999; Jean-Louis Quantin - *Ces autres qui nous font ce que nous sommes: les jansénistes face à leurs adversaires*. *Revue de l'histoire des religions*. 212, 4 (1995) 397-417; Eleonora Rai - *Between Augustine and Pelagius: Leonard Lessius in the Leuven Controversies, from 1587 to the 20th century*. *Journal of Baroque Studies*. 4, 1 (2016) 79-106.

¹⁴ On the contrast between Jansenists and Jesuits see, for instance, Dale Van Kley - *The Jansenists and the Expulsion of the Jesuits from France, 1757-1765*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1975.

¹⁵ Nello Caserta - *Dal giurisdizionalismo al liberalismo. Un secolo di travaglio della coscienza religiosa in Italia, 1748-1848*. Napoli: Morano, 1969.

«The Jansenists will say that it was necessary to eliminate the sect that had corrupted the doctrine of Christ; the royalists will rejoice for the fall of the main obstacle to the secular power; while the Enlightenment thinkers will insist on proclaiming the incompatibility between the absolute value of reason – which in reality was the guideline of Ignatius’ directives – and religious Constitutions that exacerbate the principles of sacrifice and obedience».

The union of these heterogeneous forces, in addition to the political actions that were undertaken by some European powers, signalled the temporary end of the Ignatian Order. The ex-Jesuits were deprived of their juridical status and religious congregation, and entered into a difficult time in the history of the Order.

The re-birth of the Society in 1814 was proclaimed, by contrast, concomitantly with the European Restoration, the reinstatement of the absolute rulers in Europe and the development of the Reactionary movement, which was typical of 19th century Italian Catholicism.

The year 1814 sees, in fact, both the re-birth of the Jesuits and the opening of the Congress of Vienna, which restored the Ancien Régime in Europe. The Restoration of the Society appears to be a strategic choice for re-establishing the pre-revolutionary balance of power in the European stage, in a century that was, however, already striving for “modernity”.

The re-establishment of the Jesuits represents on the one hand an attempt to overtake the Enlightenment ideals and the values of the Revolution, which had strongly contributed to the Suppression of the Order; it is, on the other hand, a form of religious revival, which developed within Catholicism after the “trauma” of Revolution and Suppression and in contrast to the on-going secularisation.

The policy of sainthood that was promoted by the New Society of Jesus shows us how the causes for canonisation not only expressed the Jesuit religious sentiment after the suffering of Suppression, but represented also a Church’s response to the 18th century traumatic events. As we will explore further, these strategies of canonisation focusing on particular typologies of sanctity (the victim of the Suppression, the “martyr of the revolutions”, and the martyred missionary) support the idea of the Suppression as a martyrdom and suggest how the Society was reborn by means of the “heroic virtues” and deeds of the ex-Jesuits, who suffered because of the Suppression or the Revolution and its ideals. In this sense, the Restoration of the Society coincides with the opening of a new phase in the history of the Catholic Church, after the troubled events in the years of the pontificate of pope Pius VI (1775-1799), in a period of secularisation and estrangement from the Catholic values.¹⁶

The records of the causes for canonisation of these Jesuit saints or saints-to-be bear witness of their suffering and narrate the moral or physical pain of their experiences. The Suppression produced the idea of a new kind of Jesuit martyrdom: exile and abolition of the Order meant physical and mental separation from religious community, extreme living conditions, and the impossibility to live fully the Jesuit spirituality.

As we will see, the Superiors General Lorenzo Ricci (1703-1775) and Jan Roothaan (1785-1853) fostered persecution, suffering and martyrdom as crucial elements in the identity of the

¹⁶ This was the case, for example, of the events of the French Revolution and the Civil constitution of the clergy; the Napoleonic expedition in Italy and the Roman Republic; and Pius VI’s captivity and death in prison.

Society of Jesus in late 18th-19th century and, in the first years after the Restoration of the Order, the General Postulation for the Causes of Saints strategically focused on a specific way of access to sainthood: martyrdom.¹⁷ It could be a physical martyrdom, as happened in many cases of Jesuit missionaries who belonged to the Old Society and died in the lands of mission, often being killed by the same peoples that they were evangelising; or a “spiritual martyrdom”, as it happened for the men of the Suppression. The “missionary” became also an extremely important model of sanctity in the Restored Society: Jan Roothaan, Superior General in the period 1829-1853, who was considered a new Ignatius for the Order and whose cause for beatification is still open, immediately promoted a new wave of missions, in the spirit of the Old Society.¹⁸ In this sense, the promotion of the missionary model of sanctity fostered the image of the Restored Society as a missionary order, that is to say a seamless continuation of the Old Society, despite the 40 year Suppression.

The causes for canonisation have not only to be considered as an expression of popular devotion toward the dead, but also need to be explored in the broader religious, cultural and political context in which they were promoted. In the next pages we will see how, in the case of the Restored Society of Jesus, the suffering of Suppression stimulated the promotion of the role of martyrs in the history of the Ignatian Order.

The Jesuit causes for canonisation, as well as both the Suppression and Restoration of the Order, constitute an excellent angle of observation for a deeper understanding of the religious and cultural European panorama in the delicate passage between the *Settecento Riformatore* - to quote Franco Venturi - and the 19th century Catholic Reaction.¹⁹

The “narratives” of suffering in the Jesuit strategies of sainthood: martyrdom

Causes for canonisation play a deep cultural and political role in the history of Catholic countries. Devotion towards the dead is a necessary element for starting a process: there is no sainthood without veneration. However, devotion is not enough.²⁰ Over the centuries the Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus (as other religious orders) made choices in matter of sainthood, and fostered strategies and models of sanctity that expressed specific ideas and religious feelings.

¹⁷ The discourse about Jesuit identity is complex and the Ignatian order cannot be considered as a monolithic block. However, we can find guidelines that help us understand the major features of Jesuit identity over the centuries: Ignatian spirituality, missions, education, martyrdom, suffering and persecution are important elements of the identity of the Society of Jesus. Between Suppression and Restoration (18th-19th centuries) martyrdom and suffering (often in missionary contexts) were central elements, as it has been highlighted by international scholars, such as Perla Chinchilla Pawling. In her fascinating article *La identidad de la Compañía de Jesús ante su Restauración. Mélanges de l'École française de Rome-Italie et Méditerranée modernes et contemporaines*. 126.1 (2014), Perla Chinchilla Pawling, through the analysis of sermons and histories in Spanish language, sheds light on how persecution is a major aspect in Jesuit identity.

¹⁸ On the matter see, for example, Guido Mongini - *Missioni estere e tradizioni identitarie nella Compagnia di Gesù. Le Letterae indipetae italiane del primo Ottocento (1817-1835)*. *Ricerche di Storia Sociale e Religiosa* 84 (2013) 59-94; Emanuele Colombo, Marina Massimi - *In viaggio. Gesuiti italiani candidati alle missioni tra antica e nuova Compagnia*. Milano: Il Sole 24 Ore, 2014. Roothaan extended the Jesuit missionary outreach to the territories of latest discovery. The Jesuits were, for instance, the second Catholic Order to establish missions in Australia, in 1848 (the Benedictines arrived two years earlier and founded the mission of New Norcia, in Western Australia).

¹⁹ Franco Venturi - *Settecento Riformatore*. Torino: Einaudi, 1969.

²⁰ In time, the legal apparatus of the causes for canonisation has been modified. In particular, in 17th century pope Urban VIII re-organised and centralised the causes for canonisations. On sanctity and sainthood in Early Modern Age see Giovannucci - *Canonizzazioni*.

The efforts of the General Postulation of the Society of Jesus in supporting men of the Suppression or martyrs of the revolutions (from 1789 to 20th century) has a precise meaning; it suggests, in fact, that the passage of the Catholic Church from Ancien Régime to “modernity” was characterised by suffering, bloodshed and the persecutions of “saints”. Suppression and Restoration of the Ignatian Order have from this perspective a broader significance: they are signs of the changing times.

The attention paid by the Restored Society and also the 19th–20th century Catholic Church to these causes for canonisation is extremely meaningful. The Society and the Church highlighted indeed the role of the martyrs of the Suppression, who worked for the Restoration of the Society, and the martyrs of the revolutions as victims of the epochal transition to the modern world.

In the first years after the re-birth of the Order, the Jesuits struggled with the idea of the Suppression. How were they supposed to consider that painful phase of the history of the Society? The Suppression had been ratified by a Pope, to whom the Jesuits were bound by a vow of obedience. However, the Jesuits felt victims of an unjust treatment.

The oppression they were subject to justified the Jesuits’ idea of the holiness of their Order. The Jesuits were unfairly persecuted as were Jesus and the saints: they were, thus, holy men. «Blessed are you when men [...] persecute you», we read in a well-known passage of Matthew’s Gospel. The traditional cliché of the Society of Jesus as a victim of persecution has its roots in the early history of the Order: since the late 16th century the Jesuits had been attacked in Europe from various sides (theological, moral, and political).

The Suppression represented, in this sense, the final step of an oppression that had become a crucial element in the Jesuit identity. In the years before the Suppression, the last Superior General of the Old Society, Lorenzo Ricci, addressed to the troubled Jesuits several letters focusing on the concept of “tribolazioni” (tribulations), and offering consolation.²¹ The idea of self-abnegation and glad acceptance of suffering and persecution was, ultimately, the basis of Ignatius’s Spiritual Exercises in so far as it was a form of *sequela Christi* (imitation of Christ). Exile and Suppression represented a further chance to follow Jesus (the “captain” of the Society, to adopt a military term frequently used by the Jesuits) in his sufferings.

The Superior General Jan Roothaan, who is considered a second Ignatius for the importance of his leadership, considered the Suppression of the Society as a sacrifice. The Order had offered itself as a sacrificial lamb to allow the Roman Church to survive in a period of accusations from within and without. This sacrifice permitted the Church to dispel the hatred of the enemies (that is to say the opponents of the Society of Jesus).²²

The tribulations of the Suppression, described in Ricci’s letters, became a real martyrdom in Roothaan’s conception. On 27th December 1839, Roothaan addressed an important letter to all the Jesuits on the occasion of the forthcoming three-hundredth anniversary from the approval of the

²¹ On Ricci’s and Roothaan’s letters (with important reflections on the Jesuit identity) see Guido Mongini - 1769-1839: Tribolazioni e martirio, morte e risurrezione della Compagnia di Gesù. Lorenzo Ricci, Jan Roothaan e l’identità gesuitica come «Corpo Cristiano». *Ricerche di Storia Sociale e Religiosa*. 85-86 (2014) 158-208. Most of Lorenzo Ricci’s and Jan Roothaan’s letters focusing on tribulations were published in a volume significantly named *Las cartas de la tribulación*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Diego de Torres, 1988.

²² *Ibid.*, 202. See also Pierre-Antoine Fabre - Abraham lui, avait épargné Isaac. La Suppression et le rétablissement de la Compagnie de Jésus (1773-1814). *Rivista di Storia del Cristianesimo* 11.2 (2014) 265-284.

Society of Jesus by Paul III (1540). In mid-19th century, moreover, the Ignatian Order faced a new time of oppression in Portugal and Spain, and many Jesuits fell victims of the Spanish civil war.

In this letter, Roothaan referred for the first time explicitly to the Suppression as a «specie di martirio», a sort of martyrdom; he highlighted also that, during the Suppression, the Jesuits had shared Jesus's cross and sufferings as never before.²³ Through Suppression and Restoration, the Jesuit *sequela Christi* reached its apex. As Christ died and resurrected, the Society was killed and reborn. The Suppression could be considered, in other words, the highest achievement in terms of Jesuit spirituality, and the Jesuits were allowed to think about it as a martyrdom.

After the Restoration of the Order, the General Postulation launches several causes for canonisation focusing on the protagonists of the Suppression and martyrs. These causes, along with the archival records that reveal the experiences of the venerated men and the hagiographies that were written about them, tell us about the suffering that influenced the sensibility of the Restored Society, and bring also to light the emotional side of the strategies of sainthood.

Over the centuries, the Society of Jesus produced an important number of saints, proving itself one of the most remarkable among religious orders. These Jesuits, often venerated as holy men while they were still living, were later canonised, sometimes after impressively long and difficult causes for canonisation. These men significantly contributed to the history of the Order and the history of the Catholic Church.

The Society of Jesus pioneered the use of causes for canonisation for strategic reasons. The promotion of specific models of sanctity (the theologian, the martyr, the missionary etc.) reflects indeed the Order's spirituality and policy of sainthood, and thus the self-image that the Order wanted to promote. The strategies of sanctity of the Restored Society reflect also the religious and cultural sensitivity of the time. Canonisations represent an answer of the Church, and of a specific religious order, to the historical context and the cultural climate in or after which the causes were produced. In this case, it was a time of suffering, martyrdom, and rejection of Catholic values.

A close look at the list of causes for beatification and canonisation that were promoted in the last two centuries is extremely useful to understand the motivations of the Jesuits and the Catholic Church.

Time of Suppression

We have already named José Pignatelli and will explore further his role in the Italian Peninsula. During the Suppression, in France, another “restorer” committed himself to preserve the Jesuit spirituality, and re-build the Ignatian Order: Pierre de Clorivière (1735-1820) played a fundamental role in the re-birth of the Society of Jesus. He was banished from France with the other Jesuits in 1762, due to the suppression of the Society in the country, after Lavalette's economic scandals. The day before the promulgation of the *Dominus ac Redemptor*, Clorivière pronounced his solemn profession. On his return to France, after apostolic missions in Belgium and England, Clorivière's efforts were directed to keep the ex-Jesuits together and the Ignatian spirituality alive, as did Pignatelli in Italy. In particular, he established the *Institut séculier des prêtres du Cœur de*

²³ Guido Mongini transcribes the text of the letter in *Tribolazioni e martirio*, 204.

Jésus and *Filles du Cœur de Marie*, two congregations dedicated to the Sacred Hearts of both Jesus and Mary.²⁴

Before the Restoration of the Society Clorivière was appointed Provincial of France. The ex-Jesuit spent five years in prison after his arrest by the French government. His incarceration is an example of the troubles of the ex-Jesuits during the Suppression. His suffering drew the attention of the General Postulation, as did his efforts to restore the Society of Jesus in France.

The fundamental role of Pignatelli and Clorivière in Jesuit history is testified by the efforts of the Order itself in their causes for canonisation. Clorivière's process for beatification was finally opened in 1991, testimony to the fact that the bureaucratic machinery of sainthood often takes a long time, and also that devotion to and interest in the French restorer grew over the centuries.

On 17th October 1926, pope Pius XI beatified almost 200 men (most of them ecclesiastics and religious men) who were killed at the beginning of September 1792, during the Terror, after the events of the French Revolution.²⁵ Among these "Martyrs of September" we find several ex-Jesuits: Jean-Jacques Bonnaud (1740-1792), Guillaume-Antoine Delfaud (1733-1792), Alexandre-Charles Lanfant (1726-1792), and twenty fellows.²⁶

The cause for beatification of the Jesuit martyrs of the French Revolution, together with the other secular and religious men beatified by Pius XI (who had been a protagonist of the Jesuit canonisation season), expresses perfectly the idea of the suffering of the Society of Jesus and the Catholic Church during the transition from the Ancien Régime to the 19th century. These martyrs were killed *in odium fidei*, meaning technically for hate of the Catholic faith and, more precisely in this case, for the victims' refusal to sign the Civil Constitution of the Clergy.

Martyrs of the Old and New Society of Jesus

A vivid interest in martyrdom encouraged the New Society of Jesus to blow the dust off old causes for canonisation of martyrs who belonged to the old Society, which were introduced before the Suppression. Between 19th and 20th centuries, many causes for beatification and canonisation of Jesuit martyrs were opened. Some of them ended successfully, while others were dropped for reasons that remain often unclear. Some are still open. Among the others, two Roman Pontiffs were particularly committed to the ongoing factory of Catholic saints: Pius XI (Achille Ratti, 1857-1939) and John Paul II (Karol Wojtyła, 1920-2005), who launched a season rich with beatifications and canonisations in which martyrs played a crucial role.

This paragraph, which is not meant to be a comprehensive review, offers several examples to clarify the interests of the Restored Society of Jesus in the matter of sanctity. The idea of a "martyred" Society fits well in the broader scenario of a "martyred" Church, whose followers died over the centuries and around the world to testify their faith in Christ.

²⁴ *Pierre-J. de Clorivière, Adelaide de Cicé. Correspondance 1787-1804.* Dir. Marie-Louise Barthelemy. Paris: Beauchesne, 1993.

²⁵ On the documentation of the cause for beatification see Philippe Boutry - Hagiographie, histoire et Révolution française. Pie XI et la béatification des martyrs de septembre 1792 (17 octobre 1926). *Publications de l'École française de Rome.* 223, 1 (1996) 305-355.

²⁶ Preliminary information about the Jesuits who are named in this article can be found in *Diccionario histórico de la Compañía de Jesús biográfico-temático.* Dir. Charles E. O'Neill, Joachin M. Domínguez, Roma-Madrid: Institutum Historicum S.I./Universidad Pontificia Comillas, 2001, I-IV.

In 1930, to provide some examples, Pius XI canonised the French Jesuit martyrs who were tortured and killed by the Iroquois in Canada between 1642 and 1649, and were later named Patron Saints of Canada by Pius XII:²⁷ R. Goupil, I. Jogues, G. de La Lande, A. Daniel, G. de Brébeuf, G. Lalemant, C. Garnier, and N. Chabanel.

At the beginning of the 20th century a cause for the martyrs of Ethiopia, who were killed during the persecution of Catholics and after the decree of expulsion of the Jesuits from the country, was introduced and it is still open.²⁸

One year before this, in 1901, the cause for beatification of Antonio Crimali, protomartyr of the Old Society, began. Crimali died in India in 1548, being killed by a group of locals who attacked a missionary house; he died while helping the Christians of the mission escape.²⁹

Crimali is the first Jesuit martyr. His name and story were employed by the Old Society in the 16th century as an example of Christian virtue. Both Juan Alfonso de Polanco and Niccolò Orlandini, respectively secretary of the Society under Ignatius's leadership and first historian of the Order, explored the circumstances of his death; Pedro de Ribadeneyra recalled him in his biography of Ignatius, and Daniello Bartoli narrated his story in his work on the Jesuit evangelisation of Asia.

In late 19th century, the Restored Society looked back at Crimali's martyrdom with interest. It was a new era for Jesuit missionary activity, which was revitalised after the election of Jan Roothaan, in 1829. The missionary spirit was alive and strong, as is proved by the huge number of 19th century *litterae indipetae*, which were written by the Jesuits in order to ask the Superiors General to be sent to mission.³⁰

The willingness to shed one's blood for the triumph of the Catholic faith and evangelisation is a recurring idea in these letters. A strong desire for martyrdom bonded many aspiring missionaries, as a research conducted on hundreds of Italian *indipetae*, written during the years of General Roothaan, has proved.³¹ For this reason, most of the senders considered the European missions as fallback destinations. Becoming a martyr would have been easier in far and dangerous lands of missions.

²⁷ On Canadian martyrs see Celestino Testore - *I santi martiri canado-americiani*. Isola del Liri: A. Macioce & Pisani, 1930; Joseph P. Donnelly - *Jean de Brébeuf (1593-1549)*. Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1975; Emma Anderson - Blood, Fire, and "Baptism". Three Perspectives on the Death of Jean de Brébeuf, Seventeenth-Century Jesuit "Martyr". In *Native Americans, Christianity, and the reshaping of the American religious landscape*. Dir. Joel W. Martin - Mark A. Nicholas. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010, 125-158.

²⁸ On Jesuits in Ethiopia see Leonardo Cohen's work, for example *The Missionary Strategies of the Jesuits in Ethiopia (1555-1632)*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2009. See also Carobbio da Nembro - Martirio ed Espulsione in Etiopia. In *Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide Memoria Rerum: 350 Anni a Servizio delle Missioni, 1622-1972, 1622-1700*, vol. 1. Dir. Josef Metzler, Freiburg: Herder, 1971, 624-649; J. Vaz de Carvalho - Mártires de Etiópia. In *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*. Dir. Joaquín María Domínguez and Charles E. O'Neill, Madrid/Roma: Universidad Pontificia Comillas/Institutum Historicum S. I., 2001, 3: 2532-2533; Andreu Martínez d'Alòs-Moner - *Envoys of a Human God. The Jesuit Mission to Christian Ethiopia 1557-1632*. Leiden: Brill, 2015, 311-337.

²⁹ On Catholicism in India see Paolo Aranha - *Il cristianesimo latino in India nel XVI secolo*. Milano: Franco Angeli, 2006.

³⁰ See Eleonora Rai - «Come le Anime del Purgatorio». Le emozioni dell'attesa nelle *indipetae* italiane durante il generalato di Jan Roothaan. *Ricerche di Storia Sociale e Religiosa*. XLV, 88 (2016) 67-88. In the same volume, see also Mauro Brunello - Nuova Compagnia di Gesù e vocazione missionaria: le *indipetae* dell'Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu (ARSI) e l'archivio fotografico Acquaderni, 21-44; Emanuele Colombo - Marco Rochini - Prima la missione. *Indipetae italiane (1814-1853)*, 45-66.

³¹ Rai - «Come le Anime del Purgatorio», 70-77.

While the Society re-established missions in Asia, the cause for beatification of Antonio Criminali was introduced. The promotion of Criminali's lived example and martyrdom can be considered a knowing move, able to stimulate the desire for mission and evangelisation in the new generations of Jesuits. It highlighted, moreover, the first and most important aim of the Society of Jesus, which was born as a missionary Order and was re-born with the same intentions. Desire for martyrdom, narratives of martyrdom, the *passiones* (meaning the reports on these deaths), the causes for canonisation, and the idea of martyrdom itself were a fundamental *trait d'union* between the Old and the New Society.

The early modern Asian Jesuit missions produced a remarkable number of martyrs, later beatified or canonised. Almost 150 years after Criminali, Joao de Brito was beheaded in India (1693), where his missionary "accommodation" method had proved fruitful. He was canonised in 1947, by Pius XII.

In 1862, pope Pius IX canonised Paulus Miki, a Jesuit priest born in Japan, and his companions. Along with other two fellows, Paulus was crucified in Nagasaki in 1597: they were victims of the wave of Christian persecution that the Japanese promoted after a period of acceptance and tolerance.

On 1st October 2000, John Paul II created more than 100 new saints, all of whom were martyrs. Among them, four were the French Jesuits who were massacred during the Boxer Rebellion in China. Twelve years earlier, Wojtyla also proclaimed as saints the three Jesuit martyrs of Rio de la Plata, who were killed during the evangelisation of Central-Southern America, in the first half of 17th century.

On 16th May 1988, in the homily for their canonisation, John Paul II very significantly described these Jesuit martyrs as models of evangelisation, reflecting the importance of martyrdom in territories of mission:

«La forza salvifica e liberatrice del Vangelo si è fatta vita in questi tre generosi sacerdoti gesuiti che la Chiesa in questo giorno presenta come modelli di evangelizzazione».

«The redemptive and liberating force of the Gospel became life in these three generous Jesuit priests whom the Church presents today as models of evangelisation».³²

Jesuit martyrs fell also in early modern Europe. Between 16th and 17th centuries, England and Wales were theatres of martyrdom. In 1970, Paul VI canonised several British and Scottish Jesuits, who were imprisoned, tortured and eventually killed as a result of the persecution of the Church of England against the Catholics, after the Anglican schism.

At the beginning of the 17th century, in years that were characterised by wars of religion, three priests, two of them Jesuits, were arrested in Kosice, where they had operated as missionaries. They were tortured and killed for refusing to recant their Catholic faith. In 1995, John Paul II,

³² John Paul II, Homily for the canonization of Rocco Gonzáles, Alfonso Rodríguez, and Juan de Castillo, 16th May 1988.

important protagonist of the 20th century canonisations, eventually proclaimed them as three new saints.³³

In 1938 Pius XI canonised also Andrzej Bobola, a figure whose cause had a clear political dimension nonetheless connected to the suffering of persecuted Catholics. Bobola, a missionary and preacher, was tortured to death by a group of Cossacks in 1657, after having been betrayed by Orthodox in the territory of today's Poland. The most intriguing aspect of Bobola's story is the fate of his corpse, as on 20th July 1922, the Bolsheviks seized and exposed to the public Bobola's mummified body.

Pius XI established relevant diplomatic relations with the Russian government to obtain the restitution of the body, which was finally returned to the Pope, taken to Rome and buried in the *Chiesa del Gesù*. In 1957, Pius XII dedicated to Bobola the encyclical *Invicti Athletae Christi*, reflecting the importance of Bobola's martyrdom and desecration to the 20th century Church, in a period in which the Catholic Church was in sharp contrast to Soviet Communism.³⁴

We read in the encyclical that the so-called *athlete* of Jesus Christ

«rose to the heights of the noblest triumphs which the Church commemorates. Andrew was asked if he were a priest of the Latin rite, and he replied, 'I am a Catholic priest; I was born in the Catholic faith; in that faith I wish to die. My faith is true; it leads to salvation. Do you rather repent; give place to sorrow for sin, else you will be unable, in your errors, to win salvation. By embracing my faith, you will acknowledge the true God, and will save your souls'». ³⁵

Bobola's martyrdom, as all the other Christian martyrdoms, is openly declared a victory and a triumph. The suffering of the persecuted Catholics is the realisation of Jesus's words: "Blessed are you when men reproach you, and persecute you, and speaking falsely say all manner of evil against you, for my sake. Rejoice and exult, because your reward is great in heaven; for so did they persecute the prophets who were before you".³⁶

«He feared death and sufferings not at all - continued Pius XII in his letter - On fire with love for God and his neighbour, he entered the fray with all his resources, in order to draw back as many as he could from a forswearing of the Catholic faith, and from the snares and errors of those who were separated from the Church, and in order to provide a valiant and rousing encouragement for the preservation of Christian teaching in all its integrity. [...] On May 16, 1657, on the feast of our Lord's Ascension into heaven, he was seized near Janovia by the enemies of the Catholics. We do not think this filled him with fear, but rather with a heavenly joy. For We know that he had always prayed for martyrdom». ³⁷

³³ For a first approach to John Paul II's canonizations see Andreas Resch - *I santi di Giovanni Paolo II 1982-2004*. Innsbruck: Resch Verlag Innsbruck, 2009. For the martyrs of Kosice, here 155-158.

³⁴ On Polish religious context at the time of Bobola's martyrdom see Robert Alvis - *Deluge and Illusions (1648-1764)*. In *White Eagle, Black Madonna. One Thousand Years of the Polish Catholic Tradition*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2016. See also Bernard Marchadier - *L'exhumation des reliques dans les premières années du pouvoir soviétique. Cahiers du Monde russe et soviétique*. 22. 1 (1981) 67-88.

³⁵ Pius XII, *Invicti Athletae Christi*, 1957.

³⁶ Mt 5, 11-12.

³⁷ Pius XII, *Invicti*.

In the 19th century, the rejuvenated missionary enthusiasm gave birth to new Jesuit martyrs. The cause for the martyrs of the French Commune (Pierre Olivaint and companions), killed in 1871, was opened.³⁸ The process for Jacques Berthieu, a Jesuit missionary killed in Madagascar in 1896 for not recanting the Catholic faith, ended successfully with his canonisation in 2012.³⁹ An interesting anomaly is that of the Jesuit martyrs of Lebanon, killed in 1860 for their Christian faith in circumstances similar to those of the killing of the Franciscans in Damascus. An informative process was open, but it did not make any progress. On the contrary, the Franciscans were beatified by Pius XI in 1926.⁴⁰

This brief introduction to the Jesuit factory of saints after the Restoration of the Order shows a vivid interest for the idea of suffering and martyrdom.⁴¹ The appreciation of martyrdom was expressed, as it is evident, not only by the Ignatian Order, which promoted the self-image of a martyred Society, but by the Catholic Church itself as the supreme testimony of faith in Christ.

Writing Jesuit history: José Pignatelli between suffering and hope (1737-1811)

«E pure... Speriamolo tutto in Dio [...] che no, no no[n] ha dimenticato i Figli del Grande Ignazio».⁴²

«Still... Let's hope in God [...] that no, no, he did not forget the sons of the Great Ignatius».

These are the words that José Pignatelli wrote in a letter to his fellow Carlo Borgo in 1792, after two decades of Suppression. Borgo was a combative ex-Jesuit, who moved to Parma in 1780's under the protection of Duke Ferdinando, who looked at the re-birth of the Society of Jesus with interest. Ferdinando transformed Parma, which had been a major jurisdictionalist node in 1760's, into a Catholic and philo-Jesuit centre. Thanks also to the presence of Carlo Borgo, committed anti-Jansenist and critic of the Roman Curia, Pignatelli intensified his contacts with Ferdinando, working together for the Restoration of the Order.⁴³

José Pignatelli's correspondence with several ex-Jesuits and political and religious personalities of the late 18th-early 19th century Italy reveal his deep involvement in the process of Restoration of the Society in the Italian Peninsula, and the troubled feelings of the ex-Jesuits during the Suppression, the most emotional and painful moment in the history of the Society. The ex-Jesuits faced it in different ways: by silently fighting for the restoration through private letters and

³⁸ Father Olivaint, S.J. One of the Martyrs of the Paris Commune, 1871. *The Irish Monthly* 7 (1879) 260-270.

³⁹ On the revolts in Madagascar see Gwyn Campbell - The Menalamba Revolt and Brigandry in Imperial Madagascar, 1820-1897. *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*. 24, 2 (1991) 259-291.

⁴⁰ Andrea Riccardi - Il martirio: un modello per il cristiano nel mondo islamico tra Ottocento e Novecento? Il caso dei martiri di Damasco nel 1860. In *Santi, culti, simboli nell'età della secolarizzazione (1815-1915)*. Dir. Emma Fattorini. Torino: Rosenberg & Sellier, 1997, 259-283.

⁴¹ In the same period causes for canonisation of important Jesuit personalities of the Old Society were re-introduced, for instance those of Roberto Bellarmino and Pieter Kanisius, who were both declared saints and doctors of the Church in 1920's-1930's. On Kanisius see, for example, Patrizio Foresta - *Ad Dei gloriam et Germaniae utilitatem: San Pietro Canisio e gli inizi della Compagnia di Gesù nei territori dell'impero tedesco (1543-1555)*. Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2006. On Bellarmino see the important studies of Franco Motta, for instance Franco Motta - *Bellarmino: una teologia politica della Controriforma*. Brescia: Morcelliana, 2005.

⁴² José Pignatelli to Carlo Borgo, 14 June 1792. APG (Archivio della Postulazione Generale) 829 E, 1-3. Copy of the *Epistolae originales, autographae, fere omnes cum sigillo P. Josephi Pignatelli*.

⁴³ On Carlo Borgo see Marek Inglot - *La compagnia di Gesù nell'Impero Russo (1772-1820) e la sua parte nella restaurazione generale della Compagnia*. Roma: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1997, 167, 3.

writings, and keeping the Jesuit spirit alive; producing Latin writings as a form of personal ‘narrative therapy’ (in this regard, Yasmin Haskell’s exploration of the ‘emotions’ of the Suppression through the lens of late 18th century Jesuit writings is fascinating);⁴⁴ or sometimes by renouncing to the Jesuit spirituality and entering other religious orders, or embracing the secular world. Substantial information has still to be discovered about the destiny of many ex-Jesuits under the Suppression.

Pignatelli was born in 1737 in a noble family in Saragossa and entered the Society of Jesus in 1753. In 1767, after the Suppression of the Society in Spain, he was exiled and moved to Italy with the Spanish Jesuits.⁴⁵ In Bologna, for about twenty-five years he committed to assist and maintain contacts with his dispersed Jesuit brothers in distress. He strongly desired to join the Jesuits in Russia, where the Society survived. Unable to go there, Pignatelli became the most important leading figure for the Jesuits of the Italian Peninsula, and finally managed to obtain the favour of the Duke of Parma, who was keen to re-establish the Society in his territory. Parma became eventually a vice-Province of the Society existing in Russia. A Jesuit noviciate was opened in Colorno, and Pignatelli became the novice master. He was later appointed Jesuit Provincial in Italy, after having contributed strongly to the re-birth of the Society in Napoli and later in Sicilia (until the expulsion of the Jesuits due to the arrival of Joseph Bonaparte, in 1806). In his last years he worked for the reconstitution of the Order in Rome. He died three years before the Restoration of the Society, after having spent his life in the hope of a Jesuit re-birth.

Pignatelli was warmly supportive, particularly from the economical perspective (he could indeed draw upon his family’s finances) in an extremely difficult time, when several exiled/ex-Jesuits barely survived. His correspondence shows his daily dedication to practical issues, such as the payment of rents and the research for new teachers in early 19th century, after the opening of the noviciate.⁴⁶

Pignatelli has been venerated as a holy man during his life. An archival research has brought to light fifty postulatory letters, which were written by devotees and Jesuits to support in Pignatelli’s canonisation. These letters, as the documentation about miracles, express the deep veneration that he gained during his activity of “restoration” in Italy. In this sense, the commitment of the Jesuits in pursuing his cause for canonisation is extremely significant as it expresses the idea that the Society was re-established through the actions of a saint.

Pignatelli’s correspondence and dedication to the Jesuit cause resulted in a “spiritual” community consisting of the ex-Jesuits dispersed in Italy, and contributed to the establishment of the foundations for keeping the Jesuit community alive and emotionally involved. Pignatelli’s commitment to maintaining continuity with the Old Society, in a period of attempts to modify the original institution, led eventually to the preservation of the ancient model.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ See, for example, Yasmin Haskell - Suppressed Emotions: The Heroic *Tristia* of Portuguese (ex-)Jesuit, Emanuel de Azevedo. *Journal of Jesuit Studies*. 3, 1 (2016) 42-60.

⁴⁵ On the exile of Iberic Jesuits see, for example, Ugo Baldini and Gian Paolo Brizzi - La presenza in Italia dei gesuiti iberici espulsi. Bologna: CLUEB, 2010.

⁴⁶ See, for example, José Pignatelli to Bartolomeo Hernandez, 9 August 1803. APG 829 E, 8-9; José Pignatelli to Luigi Mozzi, *ibid.*, 8 February 1807, 46.

⁴⁷ See, for instance, the case of Niccolò Paccanari and his Society of the Faith. Eva Fontana Castelli - *La “Compagnia di Gesù sotto altro nome”*: Niccolò Paccanari e la Compagnia della fede di Gesù (1797-1814). Roma: Institutum Historicum SI, 2007.

Luigi Mozzi (1746-1813), one of the protagonists in Pignatelli's correspondence, writes about him:⁴⁸

«[...] Il caro P. Pignatelli, che è l'anima di tutto, ed è tutto a tutti [...]».⁴⁹

«[...] The dear Father Pignatelli, who is the soul of everything, and he is everything for everyone».

A deep gratitude toward Pignatelli emerges from Mozzi's letters, as well as his leadership in managing the affairs of the re-rising Society in the central part of Italy. As is clear from Pignatelli's correspondence, at the beginning of the 19th century, after the first steps for the reconstitution of the Order in Italy, the major concern was that of the "recruitment" of young blood, to build a future for the Society.

«Tale è, Caro Amico, la nostra attuale povertà! Siamo in pochi, e ormai tutti vecchi».⁵⁰

«Such is, dear friend, our current poverty! We are a few, and all already old»,

Pignatelli wrote in 1809.

On the same issue, we read in Luigi Mozzi's correspondence:

«Ci troviamo nondimeno uniti e vestiti in numero di oltre 20, e se ne aspetta ogni giorno dei nuovi. È necessario che vengano reclute giovani, perché noi siamo tutti vecchi. Ad ogni modo i miei fratelli sono tutti pieni di cuore e desiderosi di operare».⁵¹

«We stand together nonetheless and more than 20 wear the habit [i.e. the Jesuit habit], and we wait every day for newcomers. It is necessary that young recruits arrive, as we are all old. Anyway my brothers are all wholehearted and keen to work».

After Pignatelli's death, a number of letters focusing on him were exchanged among the Jesuits. It has been pointed out very significantly that Pignatelli died on a Friday, that is to say the same day of the week in which both Ignatius and Francis Xavier died.⁵² While this link to two of the most important Jesuit saints is quite weak, it is fascinating that such connection was proposed. It is, in fact, a clear attempt to highlight the resemblance of Pignatelli's role in the history of the Ignatian Order and his death with two pillars of the Society of Jesus: the founder, and one of the most remarkable missionaries of the Old Society.

⁴⁸ On Luigi Mozzi see Emanuele Colombo - Jesuit at Heart. Luigi Mozzi de' Capitani (1746-1813) Between Suppression and Restoration. In *Jesuit Survival and Restoration: 200th Anniversary Perspective*, Dir. Robert A. Maryks - Jonathan Wright Brill, Leiden 2014, 214-230

⁴⁹ Luigi Mozzi to Bartolomeo Hernandez, 13 January 1805. APG 829 E, 10-12.

⁵⁰ José Pignatelli to Bartolomeo Hernandez, 9 August 1803. APG 829 E, 8-9.

⁵¹ Luigi Mozzi to Bartolomeo Hernandez, 13 January 1805. APG 829 E, 10-12.

⁵² APG 827 C, 8.

A strong devotion toward Pignatelli grew immediately after his death. We understand that in March 1812, just a few months after Pignatelli's death, his relics started to circulate among the Jesuits and, most probably, in a wider public.⁵³

Additionally, in the 1840's also Ferdinando II of the Two Sicilies (1810-1859) promoted Pignatelli's cause for beatification and canonisation. His minister for the ecclesiastical affairs, marquis Giovanni d'Andrea, sent a postulatory letter to cardinal Lambruschini (Gregory XVI's Secretary of State) in order to request the opening of the cause for beatification.⁵⁴ D'Andrea describes Pignatelli as «eroe cristiano», a Christian hero. As we understand from several postulatory letters from Napoli, Pignatelli and his Jesuits left a mark in the city, in which the Society was re-established in 1805.

We read in cardinal archbishop of Napoli Filippo Giudice Caracciolo's 1841 postulatory letter that Pignatelli and his Jesuit brothers were remembered in Napoli for their pastoral activities, as well as for their commitment in education.

«Quindi ritrovandomi ora Arcivescovo di questa città, la quale ammirò la santa condotta, e fu edificata dalle virtù, di questo Servo di Dio, prego la Santità Vostra, e le sottometto le mie più vive premure perché si degni disporre a maggior gloria di Dio l'istruzione della causa di Beatificazione del Servo di Dio P. Pignatelli della Compagnia di Gesù».⁵⁵

«Thus as Archbishop of this city, which admired this Servant of God's holy conduct and was edified by his virtues, I beseech Your Holiness, and ask with my warmest solicitude that He agrees to launch the cause for beatification of the Servant of God José Pignatelli of the Society of Jesus for the greater glory of God».

Caracciolo writes in Italian, asking for the beginning of the cause for beatification, and he states that the entire city of Napoli admired Pignatelli's holy behaviour and «was edified by his virtues».

A few hagiographies were also composed by Jesuit authors to recall Pignatelli's "heroic virtues" and life experience. Although these works are not particularly useful to reconstruct scientifically Pignatelli's biography, as they are altered by the sentiments of the authors, they do provide instead an excellent perspective of study: that is to say, the point of view of the Jesuit devotion and strategies of sainthood. These hagiographies express very well the feelings of the Society of Jesus about Pignatelli, and the hagiographies dedicated to other Jesuit saints or saints-to-be allow us to understand the reasons of the veneration toward the dead, and the origins and dynamics of their causes for beatification and canonisation.

Following Pignatelli's beatification (25th February 1933), John MacErlean SJ described the beatified Jesuit in these terms:

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁵⁴ Giovanni d'Andrea to Luigi Lambruschini, 24 March 1841. APG 830, *Lettere postulatorie*, 26 a-26b. A curiosity: D'Andrea sent his postulatory letter only one week before he died.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 4a-4c.

«[...] an old religious priest whose seventy-four years had been passed amidst the turmoils of the world, but who despite revolutions and persecutions contrived to combine apostolic work with contemplative retirement».⁵⁶

The reference to suffering and persecution of the Church and the Society of Jesus at the time of Pignatelli's life is also highlighted by Pius XI, in a discourse that followed the approval of the miracle that was attributed to Pignatelli for his beatification. Celestino Testore SJ opened his hagiography, published a few days before Pignatelli's canonisation (June 1954), with the words of the Pope. The idea of the Suppression as a troubled time for the Society of Jesus and the Church and the fundamental role of Pignatelli in those years emerge strongly from Pius XI's speech:

«[...] Ecco anzitutto, la congiura dei governi e delle sette che imperavano e che avrebbero voluto impedire ogni attività religiosa; congiura contro Iddio e contro la Chiesa e quindi per conseguenza (gloriosa conseguenza!) congiura contro la Compagnia di Gesù [...] in Ispagna, ove la raffica coglie la grande figura del Servo di Dio, che ben può somigliarsi ad una roccia, ritto immobile di fronte a più di una burrasca».⁵⁷

«[...] Here, first of all, the conspiracy of governments and sects that ruled and wanted to prevent any religious activity; conspiracy against God and the Church and thus as a consequence (glorious consequence!) plot against the Society of Jesus [...] in Spain, where this gust hit the great figure of the Servant of God, who resembled a rock, upright and still in the face of a storm».

In this passage, the pope described Pignatelli as a rock that stands in the middle of a storm, meaning the conspiracy of governments and sects against God and the Church, and «as a consequence [...] a plot against the Society of Jesus», a reference to the exile of the Jesuits from France, Portugal and Spain.

In his discourse, Pius XI mentioned

«un altro dolore ben più grave ancora poiché riguarda specialmente la Compagnia di Gesù, la famiglia spirituale che il Servo di Dio aveva scelto, o, meglio a cui era stato chiamato da Dio [...] la soppressione [...]. Pagina dolorosa di storia [...] dolorosa anche solo a rileggerla a tanta distanza di tempo; che cosa dovette essere nella realtà per il Pignatelli e per i suoi numerosi confratelli!».⁵⁸

«another pain far worse as it concerns especially the Society of Jesus, the spiritual family that the Servant of God had chosen, or, better, to which he had been called by God [...] the suppression [...]. A painful page of history [...] painful even to reread it after a long time; who knows how it was in the reality for Pignatelli and his many brothers!».

⁵⁶ John MacErlean - The Venerable Father Joseph M. Pignatelli, S.J. (1737-1811). The Suppression and Restoration of the Society of Jesus. *The Irish Monthly* 61. 719 (1933), 261-268, here 261.

⁵⁷ Celestino Testore - *Il Restauratore*. Roma: Tipografia Pontificia Università Gregoriana, Roma, 2. Testore quoted the *Osservatore Romano* (20th-21st February 1933).

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

The Suppression, as we read in the text above, caused serious suffering to the members of the Society of Jesus, which Pignatelli had chosen as his religious family. The Suppression is described as a painful page in the history of the Ignatian Order.⁵⁹

The French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars worsened the situation and increased Pignatelli's and the ex-Jesuits's suffering.⁶⁰ In his hagiography, in the wake of Roothaan's considerations, Testore focused particularly on the experience of the Spanish exile as a martyrdom and highlighted Pignatelli's fortitude and guidance. He reported also that the Spanish exiled Jesuits were publicly called "martyrs" by the bishop of Modena, Giuseppe Maria Fogliani (1700-1785). Although this information is hard to prove, it is indicative of the message that the hagiographer aimed to launch: the Jesuit exile, as well as the Suppression, was actually a Jesuit martyrdom.

As it happened during the Suppression, the leading role of "saint" José Pignatelli was of primary importance also in the suffering of the exile, during which he committed himself to share the fate of his brothers, renouncing the privileges that his status provided. He strove also to keep the Jesuit spirituality and studies alive in the long journey from Spain to the Papal States.

New Perspectives on the Suppression of the Society of Jesus

Exploring the Suppression of the Ignatian Order through the strategies of sainthood that were fostered by the restored Society of Jesus leads to discovering a world of suffering. The promotion of the model of sanctity of the "martyr", along with the "missionary", and the opening of a large number of causes for canonisation of Jesuit martyrs allow us to understand the self-image that the restored Society aimed to "advertise" in order to raise awareness of the role the Jesuits played in the long history of Catholicism and in more recent years.

This policy of sainthood was built on the authentic feelings of suffering that emerged during and after exile and Suppression. The 18th century troubled experiences drove the Jesuit General Postulation and the Church to revitalise the image and role of martyrs in the Catholic Church. The same strategies were indeed promoted by the Church between 19th and 20th centuries, and the interest in martyrdom continued into the 21st century. It is enough to observe the long list of martyrs who were beatified or canonised in the last two hundred years to understand that Rome has encouraged the image of a "martyred" Church.

The concept of martyrdom evolved over time: although the martyrdom of the flesh is still the most relevant category, martyrdom of the heart, torture, voluntary offering of one's life, death sentences *in odium fidei*, sacrificial victims and atoning souls, are all models of martyrdom.

The idea of martyrdom knew an evolution also in the Jesuit panorama. In the first decades of the Society, the missionary workforce was poor and needed to be preserved. On the other hand, martyrdom had to be encouraged. The definition of martyrdom itself was under discussion, as we learn from the fact that some Jesuits cast doubts on Antonio Criminali's death. As we saw, the cause for canonisation began in the early 20th century. However, soon after Criminali's killing the reports on his death were discussed in Rome in order to understand if it had been a real martyrdom. The major concern was the fact that, apparently, Criminali willingly sought his own death by

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

running to the attackers three times, until they killed and beheaded him. Martyrdom did not occur, in other words, according to God's will, but according to his own.⁶¹ Criminali was finally named proto-martyr of the Society, and his death recognised as a proper martyrdom that had happened in *odium fidei*.

The idea of the Suppression as a form of martyrdom, which emerges from Roothaan's letter and the investigation conducted on the activity of the General Postulation of the Restored Society of Jesus, provides a novel perspective on both the transition from the Old to the New Society of Jesus and the concept of Jesuit martyrdom itself.

The suffering of the Suppression stimulated the search for old and new Jesuit martyrs. At the same time, the Catholic Church promoted the self-image of a martyred institution and welcomed the Society of Jesus's motions for beatifications and canonisations of many of its martyrs. Whether they were physically martyred or they experienced the suffering of exile and Suppression, the Jesuits who lived in the difficult passage between 18th and 19th centuries were challenged with trauma, pain, rejection, and persecution.

Approaching the dynamics of Suppression and Restoration from the perspective of the causes for canonisation means understanding reasons and expectations that have moved the New Society for about two centuries: the saints of the Society represent its ideals and reflect the guiding lines that drove the restored Order and the Jesuits who belonged to it.

Over the centuries, saints have been the product of the time in which their causes were promoted and of the strategies of specific "institutions": the Roman Church, religious orders and, especially during the 16th–17th century Catholic revival, precise Catholic countries (in particular Spain and Italy, whose counter-reformation action was remarkable for the post-Tridentine Church).

As Ronnie Po Chia-Hsia pointed out, during the counter-reformation the "martyr" model of sanctity was set aside, although an important number of Catholics suffered martyrdom in 16th–17th centuries.⁶² Nevertheless, the post-Tridentine Church was not interested in providing the self-image of a "martyred" Church. On the contrary, at that time the politics of sainthood depicted the picture of a triumphant, glorious Church. It is no coincidence that Rome, which, in the 17th century, would have taken upon itself the legal procedures of the causes for canonisation with a centralising reform, focused on models of sanctity that expressed the triumphal actions of the counter-reformation Church: founders of religious orders (such as Ignatius of Loyola), reformers and mystics (such as Teresa d'Avila), Tridentine-counter-reformist bishops (such as Carlo Borromeo), and missionaries (such as Francis Xavier). All worked for the counter-reformation, the 16th century Catholic reform, and the global evangelisation. They depict, in other words, the image of a victor Church.

By the 19th century, the situation had radically changed. The Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus experienced the transition from the Ancien Régime to the modern world through the impact of the French Revolution, the age of Enlightenment and jurisdictionalist ideals, and the secularisation process. The Revolution produced many victims; the Suppression of the Society of Jesus, approved by the Roman Pontiff, though temporary, eliminated a precious ally to Rome.

⁶¹ On this topic see Ines G. Zupanov - *Missionary Tropics. The Catholic Frontier in India (16th-17th Centuries)*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2005, 157-171.

⁶² Ronnie Po-Chie Hsia - *The World of Catholic Renewal. 1540-1770*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, here in particular 127-143.

The 19th-century Church felt under attack from different fronts. Pius IX's 1864 *Syllabus* expresses perfectly the idea of the necessity of defending Catholicism from the modern world. The *Syllabus*, an appendix to the encyclical *Quanta Cura*, was a systematic manifesto against the “false prophets” of modernity. The pope identified them with the new political, philosophical and pseudo-scientific trends, such as socialism and mesmerism.⁶³ These “false prophets” could be interpreted as an apocalyptic sign, which preceded the arrival of the Antichrist. At the same time, the Jesuit candidates to the missions concentrated their efforts in fighting against the Devil overseas, in lands where the inhabitants did not know the Gospel. There, the Jesuit missionaries committed themselves to save souls and possibly to be martyred for Christ.⁶⁴

The European panorama was evolving and the *Syllabus* stigmatised those changes. The Jesuits responded to this context with a renewed missionary project and a renovated desire for martyrdom. In Italy, soon after the Restoration of the Order, many Jesuits asked to go to mission in order to «spargere il sangue»: to be spilling their blood. The memory of the Suppression was still fresh and the idea that martyrdom (especially in territory of missions) was part of the life of every Jesuit was quite diffused, as we can understand from the *litterae indipetae*.

Sacrifice and suffering appear to be an important part of the experience of the Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus over their history. Their politics of sainthood promote the value of martyrdom for 19th–20th century Church (along with other models of sanctity),⁶⁵ and the causes for canonisation of martyrs narrate experiences of pain that contributed strongly to depict the image of a suffering Church and a suffering Society of Jesus.

«[...] Non abbiamo veruna felicità al mondo, ma le pene non passano oltre le porte della morte».⁶⁶

«We have no happiness in this world, but sufferings do not overshoot the doors of death»,

Pignatelli wrote in 1767, during the Spanish exile. The memory of his suffering and of the pain of all Jesuits during the Suppression survived though, and contributed to the renewal of the value of martyrdom in the restored Society of Jesus.

Suffering and martyrdom became crucial ingredients in the identity of the Restored Society of Jesus, and represent remarkable elements of connections with the Old Society. After the Restoration of the Order, the Jesuits could reread their own history as a high form of *sequela Christi*, which was promoted by Ignatius in the Spiritual Exercises, was practiced during the

⁶³ On apocalypticism in 18th-19th-century Italy, also in connection to the Suppression of the Society of Jesus, see Marina Caffiero, *La Nuova Era. Miti e profezie dell'Italia in rivoluzione*. Genova: Marietti, 1991. See also Eleonora Rai, *L'apocalittica come spiegazione ai mali del XIX secolo. Il caso di Giacomo Maria Montini (1874). Ricerche storiche sulla Chiesa Ambrosiana*. 27 (2009) 167-190. On mesmerism see David Armando's studies, in particular the item *Magnetismo animale* in *Dizionario storico dell'Inquisizione*. Dir. Adriano Prosperi with the collaboration of Vincenzo Lavenia and John Tedeschi. Pisa: Edizioni della Normale, 2010, II, 960-961.

⁶⁴ Rai - «Come le anime del Purgatorio», 81.

⁶⁵ The long list of saints who were canonised in 19th-20th centuries includes founders of religious orders, such as Giovanni Bosco; “good mothers” and medical doctors, such as Gianna Beretta Molla; stigmatics, such as Pio of Pietrelcina; victim souls, such as Anna Katharina Emmerick; important early modern theologians, such as the Jesuit Doctor of the Church Roberto Bellarmino; and several others. Among these saints, there are hundreds of martyrs. See also Andrea Riccardi - *Il secolo del martirio*. Milano: Mondadori, 2000.

⁶⁶ José Pignatelli to his brother Joachim Pignatelli Fuentes, 8 July 1767, in Testore - *Il Restauratore*, 86.

persecutions, reached its peak with the death of the Order in 1773, and led to its resurrection in 1814.

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