CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Jesuit Theology, Politics, and Identity: The Generalate of Acquaviva and the Years of Formation

Franco Motta

The Jesuit Archetype: A Long History

What is a Jesuit? A priest; a member of a religious order, or rather of a regular congregation; a priest called to mission. Often, a teacher. Today, the list of definitions would more or less stop here.

There is nothing specifically "Jesuit" about this description, as it could apply to the members of many other Catholic religious orders. It is one of the many consequences of secularization: in the collective perception, the differences that make up the complexity of the church are lost; the identities of the religious orders fade, and, with them, the meaning of schools that at one time were recognizable in speech, modes of being, and their presence in the world.

Before the mid-twentieth century, things were different. If we step back eighty years, we encounter signs and meanings that are connected to a far more distant past. In January 1932, the Spanish republic disbanded the Society of Jesus within its territories and forfeited its benefits on the grounds that the Jesuits were loyal to a foreign sovereign, the pope. At that time, a Jesuit's identity was much clearer: an enemy of the state, an agent in service of a great power, an agitator, equipped with great influence over women, aristocrats, and elites; and, above all, a sworn enemy to civil and scientific progress.[1]

This was more or less the conceptual catalog that was then in use. Naturally, the prime minister of the republic, Manuel Azaña (1880–1940, in office 1931–33, 1936), and the other ministers of the republican cabinet could count on a long chain of precedents: the expulsion of the Society of Jesus from Portugal and its colonies in 1910, from France with the secularization laws of 1901, from the

1 The decree, dated January 23, implemented article 26 of the republican constitution promulgated in December 1931, which provided for the dissolution of "those religious orders that impose by statute another special vow of obedience to an authority separate from that of the state," and in support of the measure against the Jesuits cited Paul III's (r.1534–49) bull of foundation: Manuel Ramírez Jiménez, *La legislación de la segunda república española (1931–1936)* (Madrid: Boletín oficial del Estado, Centro de estudios políticos y constitucionales, 2005), 135–38. According to Frances Lannon, this had the effect of definitively alienating public opinion of Catholic moderates from the republican government: *Privilege, Persecution, and Prophecy: The Catholic Church in Spain 1875–1975* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 181ff.

German Empire in 1872, to begin the period of *Kulturkampf*, and from Switzerland in 1848.

At the time, the archetype of the plotting Jesuit, which had dominated the eighteenth-century campaign against the Society of Jesus, had not yet lost any of its force. The continuity between the "old" and "new" Society was commonly acknowledged by public opinion. In other words, for the entire nineteenth century and through the first third of the twentieth, the Jesuit order had a clear identity that was understood by the Society's opponents through political concepts—sovereignty, obedience, and the state.

Such an identity had a long history. It can be traced back to the context in which it took shape, which corresponds to the zenith of the confessional age in Europe, the fifty years before the Thirty Years' War (1618–48). In fact, the identity of the Society matured in full during the generalate of Claudio Acquaviva (in office 1581–1615), and it was an identity that was political first and foremost.

To better frame this identity, it is useful to recall the definition some of the Jesuits' archenemies gave to the order in an entry in the *Encyclopédie*, written by Louis de Jaucourt (1704–79) with the contribution of Denis Diderot (1713–84) himself. The entry describes itself as a neutral, "succinct and faithful extract" of the proceedings of Parlements and of the available literature; the story of the Jesuits in France was, at the time, already history: the volume in which the entry appeared (the eighth edition) was published in 1765, three years after the order's suppression in the country.

The entry's title was itself revealing of the way the order was perceived in the mid-seventeenth-century culture of the *philosophes*. By using the singular "Jésuite," in contrast to the other entries dedicated to religious orders, which were usually in the plural ("Dominicains," "Franciscains," "Barnabites"), it seemed to suggest that a Jesuit was not defined solely by his religious affiliation.

After a brief exposition of the Society's foundation and a description of its organization—a generalate held for life, the classes of its members, the residences, the provinces—the authors raise a series of questions: "What is a Jesuit? Is he a secular priest? Is he a religious priest? A layperson? A religious? Is he a man who lives in community? Is he a monk? There is something to all of this, without being this."[2]

The Society's "hermaphroditism," its existence in both this world and the next, in its foundational mixing of the temporal and spiritual, is a recurring motif in anti-Jesuit literature. We can already encounter it in the protests circulating

2 "Qu'est-ce qu'un *jésuite*? Est-ce un prêtre séculier? Est-ce un prêtre régulier? Est-ce un laic? Est-ce un religieux? Est-ce un homme de communauté? Est-ce un moine? C'est quelque chose de tout cela, mais ce n'est point cela": "Jésuite," in *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, 8:512–16, 513. I consulted the digital version from the University of Chicago, ARTFL Encyclopédie Project, ed. Robert Morrissey, http://encyclopedie.uchicago.edu (accessed March 31, 2017).

among the clergy of Rome against the construction of the Roman College: the Jesuits pretended to distinguish themselves from other religious orders, not wearing a specific habit or reciting prayers in choir.[3] To have clear testimony of this attitude it is sufficient to turn to one of the cornerstones of Gallican and *parlementaire* pamphleteerism against the priests, the famous *Catéchisme des jésuites* (Jesuit catechism) of Étienne Pasquier (1529–1615), anonymously printed in 1602 in the midst of the discussions between Rome and the Parisian court over the revocation of the decree expelling the Jesuits in the wake of Jean Chastel's (1575–94) attempt on Henry IV's (r.1594–1610) life.

A resolute defender of the traditions of the church of France, and therefore a bitter opponent of the Jesuits—Ludwig von Pastor's (1854–1928) *History of the Popes*, which is broadly favorable to the Society, dismisses him as "Calvinist"—Pasquier represents a model of that anti-Jesuit Catholic who helped define the salient traits of Jesuit identity through the lens of polemics and which was transmitted first to Jansenism and then the Enlightenment.[4]

In an imaginary dialogue between a Jesuit and a lawyer of Gallican sympathies, Pasquier insists at length on the Society's foreignness to the traditions of French Catholicism. To do so, he relies on an old document that dates to the origins of the order in France—namely the negative opinion given by the Sorbonne in 1554 regarding the opening of a college in Paris. As the *Censure de la secte des jesuites* (Censure of the Jesuit sect) recounts:

> This new Society, which claims for itself the unusual appellation of the name of Jesus, which admits any person whatsoever in its members arbitrarily and without any selection […], which does not show any distinction with respect to the secular priests wearing a habit, in tonsure, in reciting the canonical hours […] in fasting and in the other ceremonies that mark the diversity and observance of the states of religious orders […] provides the opportunity to freely apostatize from other orders, withdrawing obedience and submission to ordinaries, unjustly depriving temporal and ecclesiastical lords of their rights, [and] provoking disorder in both regimes and unrest among the people.[5]

3 John O'Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 295ff. The theme was investigated by the same author in "The Distinctiveness of the Society of Jesus," *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 3, no. 1 (2016): 1–16.

4 On the *Catéchisme*, see Luce Giard, "Le *Catéchisme* des jésuites d'Etienne Pasquier, une attaque en règle," in *Les antijésuites: Discours, figures et lieux de l'antijésuitisme à l'époque moderne*, ed. Pierre-Antoine Fabre and Catherine Maire (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2010), 73–90.

5 "Haec nova Societas, insolitam nominis Iesu appellationem sibi vendicans, tam licenter, et sine delectu quaslibet personas, quantumlibet facinorosas, illegitimas et infames admittens, nullam a sacerdotibus saecularibus habens differentiam in habitu exteriore, in tonsura, in horis canonicis privatim dicendis, aut publice in templo decantandis, in claustris

This view of the Society, one formed a few years after its foundation, is a constellation of elements that would be crystallized in an image destined to endure at least until the age of the restoration. As they were neither diocesan priests nor monks or friars, and were free from the obligation of choir and from the codes of convent life, freed from the control of bishops and, at the same time, withdrawn from the secular sphere, the Jesuits proved to be indecipherable in their appearance and behavior, and therefore removed from the normal categories of religious life.

Moreover, these anomalies were the objects of the repeated complaints that arose among the same Spanish and Portuguese Jesuits, and constituted the salient points of the attempts at reforming the order by popes such as Pius V (r.1566–72) and Sixtus V (r.1585–90). From the opposite point of view, this liminal character was thus clearly present for the same members of the Society—beyond the centrifugal forces from the Iberian Peninsula—as a true and proper charism. In a sermon given in the professed house in Naples in 1596, Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621) distinguished the Society as "religio mixta," a "hybrid order" that overcame the traditional distinction between contemplative and active orders (that is, between monks and friars) by virtue of an apostolate of charity based on a dedication to contemplation:

> There are active orders that [...] are more perfect than contemplative ones: and these are those that dedicate themselves to action that requires prior contemplation. Such action includes preaching, the administration of the sacraments, and in sum, the conversion of souls and their purgation, illumination, and perfection. [...] Such orders are more perfect: their state is next to that of bishops [*il loro stato è prossimo a quello dei vescovi*].[6]

This lack of a recognizable, collective identity also became the key to the new identity that was attributed to the Society by contemporaries and formed part of

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et silentio, in delectu ciborum et dierum, in ieiuniis et aliis variis caeremoniis (quibus status religionum distinguuntur et conservantur) [...] occasionem dat libere apostatandi ab aliis religionibus, debitam ordinariis obedientiam, et subiectionem subtrahit, dominos tam temporales, quam ecclesiasticos, suis iuribus iniuste privat, perturbationem in utraque politia, multas in populo quaerelas [...] inducit"; *Censure de la secte des jesuites par la faculté de théologie de Paris en l'an 1554*, in *Le catechisme des jesuites, ou le mystère d'iniquité, revelé par ses supposts, par l'examen de leur doctrine, mesme selon la croyance de l'Eglise romaine* (Villefranche: Chez Guillaume Grenier, 1677 [1602]), 26–28, 27.

6 "Sunt quaedam religiones activae, quae [...] sunt perfectiores contemplativis: illae videlicet quae versantur in actione quae praerequirit contemplationem: qualis actio est praedicatio et sacramentorum ministratio, et in summa conversio animarum et earundem purgatio, illuminatio et perfectio. [...] Et hae religiones sunt perfectissimae; nam sunt proximae statui episcopo rum"; "Exhortatio tertia de perfectione Instituti Societatis Iesu," in *Opera oratorio postuma*, ed. Sebastiaan Tromp (Rome: In aedibus Pontificiae Universitatis Gregorianae, 1942–68), 9:382–86, here 382.

the black legend that accompanied the order until the twentieth century. Abbé Pradt (Dominique Frédéric Dufour de Pradt [1759–1837]), archbishop of Mechelen (and formerly trusted by Napoleon in ecclesiastical affairs), reflected thus in his 1825 *Jésuitisme* (Jesuitism):

> Every man ought to have his own state, he should be able to justify himself in the eyes of society, of which he is a part, and be in the condition to say "I am such and such a person. I practice this or that profession." [*Io sono il tale. Io esercito la tale professione.*] [...] Society lives in certainty [*La Compagnia vive di certezze*], each person needs it for himself and for others; and associations are placed under the same law for the need of legitimization. No religious corporation or association, even the Jesuits, has ever been excluded from this rule.[7]

For centuries, "Jesuitism" signified a threatening otherness with respect to the social organism, a transgression of the delicate networks of codes, obligations, and jurisdictions that govern collective life, both in ecclesiastical and civil contexts. Because of this, the Society was perceived as a factor of instability with respect to the various political and religious structures within which it operated.

Nevertheless, there remains a connection left to understand. Where does one place the possible relationship between the "external" perception of the Society of Jesus as a source of lawlessness and of civil and religious subversion, on the one hand, and, on the other, its fame, just as secular and ingrained, of a disciplinary body to the point of paroxysm, of an order devoted to the education of the ruling classes in the precepts of the hierarchy and to the disciplining of intellects, to the point of being considered, at the time of the restoration, one of the pillars of the *ancien régime*? To seek the reasons for the two faces of the "Jesuit Janus," it is useful to return to the encyclopedists and their synthetic portrait of the Society.

The "Scandalous" Power of the Generals

The clearest characteristic of the order's singularity, and what its critics emphasized, appeared to be the institution of the generalate. "The generalate, which at its outset was a subordinate entity, became an unlimited and permanent despotism under Laínez and Acquaviva. […] Their regime is monarchical. All the

7 "Chaque homme doit avoir son état, il doit pouvoir se légitimer aux yeux de la société dont il fait partie, et être dans le cas de dire: *Je suis tel. J'exerce telle profession*. […] La société vit de certitudes, chacun en a besoin pour soi, et de la part des autres; les associations sont placées sous la même loi de légitimation indispensable. Aucun corporation ou association religieuse, jusqu'aux jésuites, ne s'est affranchie de cette règle"; *Du jésuitisme ancien et moderne* (Paris: A. Leroux et Constant-Chantpie, 1826 [1825]), chapter 13, "Que sont les jésuites? Moines ou séculiers?," 113–21.

authority resides in the will of a single person."[8] Six decades later, Abbé Pradt was even more scathing about the institution:

> Empire through religion: here is revealed the entire plot of this astonishing order. […] As an absolute monarchy, it has surpassed all the absolute monarchies in despotism by the unlimited power given to the general and, after him, to the superiors, for the obedience imposed on their inferiors, such to annihilate each individual will, for a more Asiatic doctrine of power than Asia itself.[9]

The fullness of the general's powers was clearly the first and most important trait of the Society in the eyes of its critics during the early modern period. Elected for life in what appeared to be a council of religious elite, with the prerogative to convene general congregations, able to be deposed only in cases of heresy or serious sin, the general appeared to be a replica of the pope, freed, however, from ecclesial and diplomatic obligations and from the force of national churches' traditions (the former affecting the latter).

Not by chance did the *Encyclopédie* cite Diego Laínez (1512–65, in office 1558–65) and Acquaviva: if it was during the Spaniard's generalate that the first effective institution of the assistant took place, it was with Acquaviva's generalate—very long and dotted with the multiplication of priests, provinces, and residences—that the Society assumed its definitive theological and disciplinary character: among other things, that of the *Ratio studiorum*, of Molinism, and of the uncompromising defense of papal authority in things spiritual.

Absolute, pervasive, and established on the control of subordinates' consciences, the sovereignty of the Society's generals was something unusual, and therefore scandalous, to men of the *ancien régime*. Equipped with prerogatives of governance that allowed them "to admit and exclude," "to build and destroy," "to consult or order in solitude," "to enrich or impoverish," "to tie or dissolve," "to render innocent or blameworthy," the general "in a word, possessed the entire fullness of power that one could imagine in a head above his subordinates; he is its light, soul, will, guide and conscience."[10]

If we think of the decentralization and the dispersion of powers in the old regular orders such as the Dominicans, Franciscans, and monastic families, or of the

8 "Jésuite," 512, 513.

9 "C'est l'empire par la religion: ici va se révéler toute la contexture de cette merveilleuse institution. […] Comme monarchie absolue, elle a dépassé en despotisme toutes le monarchies absolues, par le pouvoir sans bornes accordé au général, et, après lui, aux supérieurs; par l'obéissance anéantissante de toute volonté propre imposée aux inférieurs; par une doctrine de pouvoir plus asiatique que l'Asie elle-même"; *Du jésuitisme*, 15; definition of Jesuitism, 125–26.

10 "Nous ne finirons point si nous entrions dans le détail de toutes les prérogatives du général. […] Il possede toute la plénitude de puissance qu'on peut imaginer dans un chef sur ses sujets; il en est la lumière, l'âme, la volonté, le guide, et la conscience"; "Jésuite," 513.

importance that political loyalties held in them, or even of the constant tensions that accompanied the relationships between Rome and French or Spanish bishops, these assertions seem less hyperbolic than they do at first sight (I am of course referring to the letter of the founding texts of the orders in question: the practice, as has been widely demonstrated, was rather different). The same idea of the general as the "soul, guide and conscience" of his subordinates recalls the mystique of governance that represented one of the great Ignatian legacies and inspired the actions of men like Francisco de Borja (1510–72, in office 1565–72) and Acquaviva: consider, for example, the *Industriae ad curandos animae morbos* (Curing illnesses of the soul, 1600), the ordinance by which Acquaviva tied acts of superiors' governance to the examination of conscience over the state of their residences.[11]

This is probably where the roots of the "two-faced" perception of the Society can be found: as subjects to the absolute sovereignty of the general, the Jesuits became an element of disorder in that they were removed from the systems of negotiation that governed the society and church of the period.

If power is the semantic field in which it is possible to express the uniqueness of the Jesuits, it follows that their identity is above all a political identity, composed of ideas and practices:

> Subjected to the most extreme despotism in their houses, the Jesuits are the most abject supporters in the state. To subjects, they preach unreserved obedience to their sovereigns; to the king, independence from laws and blind obedience to the pope; and to the pope they confer infallibility and universal dominion.[12]

It is not surprising that the entry then goes on to list the attacks against European sovereigns attributed to the influence of Jesuits, or, citing the acts of the British Parliament, attributed to them (among other things) the will to "destroy royal authority […] with the teaching of regicide." The apology for absolutism and the doctrine of tyrannicide are, again, two sides of the same coin, in that they contrast the traditional institutes of monarchical power, in which sovereignty's center of gravity rests in a delicate dialectic between the prince and social classes, exercised in the first place within representative assemblies such as the Estates General or the Imperial Diet.

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11 After all, it was under Acquaviva's generalate that obedience became the object of "cultural narration" within the Society: see the introduction to Silvia Mostaccio, *Early Modern Jesuits between Obedience and Conscience during the Generalate of Claudio Acquaviva (1581–1615)* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 1–11.

12 "Soumis au despotisme le plus excessif dans leurs maisons, les jésuites en sont les fauteurs les plus abjects dans l'État. Ils prêchent aux sujets une obéissance sans réserve pour leurs souverains; aux rois, l'indépendance des loix et l'obéissance aveugle au pape; ils accordent au pape l'infaillibilité et la domination universelle, afin que maîtres d'un seul, ils soient maîtres de tous"; ibid.

Overcoming the mediation of social bodies, on the contrary, was part of the Society's political strategy (the Poland–Lithuanian Commonwealth is a classic example), since, by doing so, the relationship with sovereigns played out in the private sphere of conscience and not the public one of the assemblies of the *ancien régime*; in the same way, the theory of the "Jesuit Monarchomachs"—with the significant exception of Juan de Mariana (1536–1624), as we will see—was based on the religious legitimization of authority, and therefore, on the essential role of the pope in the judgment over the prince's conscience, rather than on the constitutional nature of assemblies or of the aristocratic class.

Thus the unlimited power of the general, the bond of obedience that tied each member to his hierarchical superiors, and an absolute theory of the state accompanied by the doctrine of tyrannicide were the elements ascribed to the Society that took shape in the context of the confessional and jurisdictional polemics of the second half of the sixteenth century. To this should be added a rigidly primalistic ecclesiology based on the spiritual sovereignty of the pope and the theory of the *scientia media*, which constituted the nucleus of Molinist theology. Probabilism and laxism would only be added during the course of the seventeenth century, with the development of moral theology in the order's schools.

This group of elements—obviously a mixed group in which supporters of theological order, of disciplinary order, and still others that derived from the relationship with civil powers found a place—emerged almost entirely in the decades between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In other words, if we make an exception for the ecclesiological vision based on the primacy of the Petrine *magisterium* and the radical refusal of every concession of autonomy to the episcopal body—a vision that had already been expressed by Laínez and Alfonso Salmerón (1515–85) at the Council of Trent in 1546—the identity of the Society was formed during the decades that more or less corresponded to Acquaviva's generalate. It is worth examining the reasons for this.

The Evolution of Jesuit Identity under Acquaviva's Rule

It should be said, first of all, that this is the period in which the Jesuits lost their original Spanish ethnic and cultural identity and definitively acquired a "Roman" identity, structured around the idea of the universal monarchy of the papacy and the struggle for its affirmation. In fact, for several decades after the Society's foundation, in Germany as in France and elsewhere, the Jesuits had been linked to the Spanish monarchy, for which they were considered as emissaries.

This overlap was particularly widespread in England during the fearful years surrounding the invasion of the Armada, but it was also witnessed in the Low Countries, where the Jesuits were simply known as "Spanish priests" (*padri spagnoli*), and where tales circulated, such as the one that guided the *tercios* during

the sack of Antwerp in 1576.[13] Beginning at the end of the century, with the exhaustion of Madrid's long military offensive in Flanders and the religious pacification of France, the Society instead succumbed to a significant process of redefining its identity. Consider, among others, the testimony of a polemical companion of Pasquier such as Antoine Arnauld (1612–94), counselor to Henry IV: if, in his 1594 *Plaidoyer contre les jésuites* (Advocacy against the Jesuits) the Jesuits were still agents of Philip II (1527–98), in the 1602 *Franc et véritable discourse* (Frank and true discourse) they now worked for the tyranny of the pope and his own thirst for power.[14]

As noted, this process of "de-nationalization" had an important motive in the same actions of the Apostolic See, when Gregory XIII (r.1572–85) actively intervened in 1573 in the third general congregation to stop Juan de Polanco's (1517–76) rise to the generalate with the election of Everard Mercurian (1514–80, in office 1573–80) in his place. It was the initial act of what has been called an "anti-Spanish turn" internal to the Society that was made concrete in later years with the removal of various Spanish Jesuits of rank from Italy—including Pedro de Ribadeneyra (1527–1611)—in the re-composition of the sources of spiritual and pedagogical inspiration, and, above all, in the replacement of teaching personnel in the Roman College, which passed from a prevalent Spanish presence in the "heroic" years of its foundation to a more varied composition, with a majority of Italians.[15] This was one of the papacy's most incisive interventions in the internal life of the old Society.[16]

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13 Alfred Poncelet, *Histoire de la Compagnie de Jésus dans les anciens Pays-Bas: Établissement de la Compagnie de Jésus en Belgique et ses développements jusqu'à la fin du règne d'Albert et d'Isabelle* (Brussels: Maurice Lamartine, 1927), 1:281ff.

14 Eric Nelson, "The Jesuit Legend: Superstition and Myth-Making," in *Religion and Superstition in Reformation Europe*, ed. Helen Parish and William G. Naphy (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 94–115, here 109ff.

15 José Martínez Millán, "La trasformazione della *monarchia hispana* alla fine del XVI secolo: Dal modello cattolico castigliano al paradigma universale cattolico-romano," in *I gesuiti ai tempi di Claudio Acquaviva: Strategie politiche, religiose e culturali tra Cinque e Seicento*, ed. Paolo Broggio et al. (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2007), 19–53. The election of Mercurian has been duly reconstructed by John W. Padberg, "The General Congregation. April 12–June 16, 1573," in *The Mercurian Project: Forming Jesuit Culture 1573–1580*, ed. Thomas M. McCoog (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2004), 49–75. On the makeup of the teaching body of the Roman College, see Ricardo García Villoslada, *Storia del Collegio romano dal suo inizio (1551) alla soppressione della Compagnia di Gesù (1773)* (Rome: Apud Aedes Universitatis Gregorianae, 1954), 321ff.

16 As Robert A. Maryks demonstrates, Gregory XIII's move had been urged by Cardinal Henry of Portugal with a letter delivered by the Portuguese Jesuits at the general congregation, and was motivated by the desire to exclude the possible election of a converso or pro-converso candidate. Eventually, Mercurian removed many of the order's members who were from New Christian families. See Robert A. Maryks, *The Jesuit Order as a Synagogue of Jews: Jesuits of Jewish Ancestry and Purity-of-Blood Laws in the Early Society of Jesus* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 120ff.

Second, it should also be noted that this was a period in which an effort was under way, directed from the curia, to standardize the order's activities throughout the world. The decree that required the Society's provinces to transmit a detailed account of their own activities each year to Rome was adopted by the fourth general congregation in 1581 with the goal of giving substance to the Ignatian ideal of the communion of souls. It was Rome that then took on the task of gathering the *Litterae annuae* (Annual letters) from the provinces, selecting their contents and arranging them in a text to be distributed back to the same provinces.[17]

Among other things, this was part of an effort to rewrite the complicated image of the order, conducted on the basis of choices that privileged the edifying aspects of the priests' activities, and as thousands of copies of the first volume (1583) were distributed, the correspondence was clearly aimed at a broader audience than the Society itself. The editorial history of the project, which was abandoned after the publication of the letters from 1614, has been widely studied; what interests us here is that it was Acquaviva who was its staunchest promoter, on the basis of the strategic importance of preserving this collective memory.[18] After all, this zeal for the historical memory of the Society went along with the general's actions: one thinks of the 1586 ordinance by which he invited each college to write its own history and send it to Rome, and the assignment given to Niccolò Orlandini (1554–1606) in 1598 for the first draft of what would become the *Historiae Societatis Iesu* (Society of Jesus's histories).

A third question that should be considered in order to evaluate the centrality of Acquaviva's generalate in the evolution of the Society's identity concerns the historical context in which it took place. The years between 1570 and 1620 represented the culmination of confessional conflict in Europe and the theological–political moment *par excellence* of the early modern period. From this perspective, Acquaviva's generalate is extraordinarily dense with events that involved the Jesuits firsthand: think only of the fact that it was precisely in this period that the strategy of the conquest of princes' consciences was resolved when some important Catholic sovereigns—the dukes of Bavaria and Savoy, Henry IV, the Holy Roman emperors beginning with Matthias II (r.1612–19)—entrusted their own consciences to Jesuit confessors.[19]

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17 Annick Delfosse, "La correspondance jésuite: Communication, union et mémoire; Les enjeux de la *Formula scribendi*," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 104, no. 1 (2009): 71–114, here 93ff. On the composition and circulation of the *Litterae annuae*, see Markus Friedrich, "Circulating and Compiling the *Litterae annuae*: Towards a History of the Jesuit System of Communication," *Archivum historicum Societatis Iesu* 77 (2008): 3–39.

18 Delfosse, *La correspondance jésuite*, 97.

19 Robert Bireley, "Acquaviva's 'Instruction for Confessors of Princes' (1602/1608): A Document and Its Interpretation," in *Los jesuitas: Religión, política y educación (siglos XVI–XVIII)*, ed. José Martínez Millán, Henar Pizarro Llorente, and Esther Jiménez Pablo (Madrid: Universidad pontificia Comillas, 2012), 1:45–68; Flavio Rurale, "La politica

Not only that: the contribution of the Society's theologians to the clarification of the doctrinal canons of the Counter-Reformation, in particular the dialectical axis with political authority, reached its peak in those decades around doctrinal points such as the indirect power of the pope in things spiritual, the Roman monopoly in interpreting scripture, the denying of an oath of allegiance given toward a heretical sovereign, and which includes names such as Bellarmine, Gregorio de Valencia (*c.*1550–1603), Francisco Suárez (1548–1617), and Martin Becan (1563–1624). These were years in which, in France as in Venice, anti-Jesuit and more generally anti-Roman sentiments overlapped.[20]

The Role of Theology

This last consideration introduces an additional theme. What role did theology play in the formation of the "historical" identity of the Society of Jesus? Or, put differently, does a peculiar Jesuit theology exist that can be presented as an identifying trait of the order? It is not possible to provide an unequivocal answer to this complex question.

First, it must be remembered that, for an order that made the fight against heresy the aim of its own existence (summarized in the image of the founder who triumphed over the allegory of heresy, as in the monuments in the sacristy of Sant'Ignazio and the right nave of Saint Peter's), the role of theology in Jesuits' strategies of self-representation remained strangely in the background.

The apostolate of prayer and of the Eucharist, missionary activity, and oratory charisma were the specific areas from which the Jesuits drew their symbolic patrimony and thus their own religious identity. Certainly, theology animated all of these, but it did not constitute an immediately recognizable element (as, for example, the Immaculate Conception would be for Jesuit pastoral activity in the eighteenth century). Of course, it should not be forgotten that the reasons for this orientation remained on a more profound cultural level: in contrast with the golden age of medieval Scholasticism, the climate of the confessional age imposed models of identity on the church that were exemplified less by

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cortigiana della Compagnia di Gesù," in the same volume, 103–21; Harro Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c.1540–1630* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 20ff.

20 Sylvio H. De Franceschi, "Paolo Sarpi et Fulgenzio Micanzio: L'extrémisme catholique antiromain du début du XVIIe siècle," in *Antiromanisme doctrinal et romanité ecclésiale dans le catholicisme post-tridentin (XVIe–XXe siècles*), ed. Sylvio H. De Franceschi (Lyon: Laboratoire de Recherche Historique Rhône-Alpes, 2008), 45–71. On anti-Jesuitism between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Sabina Pavone, "Giano bifronte: La Compagnia di Gesù tra *Imago primi saeculi* (1640) e antigesuitismo secentesco," in Ite inflammate omnia: *Selected Historical Papers from Conferences Held at Loyola and Rome in 2006*, ed. Thomas M. McCoog (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2010), 229–54.

intellectual charism than the virtues of abnegation and proselytism, because the ideology was that of the conservation of the *patrimonium fidei* rather than innovation in it (at least in propagandistic discourse).

However, this is not to say that the Society failed to make any attempt to establish a true and autonomous theological position in this period: I refer to the opening of the processes for the beatification of Peter Canisius (1521–97) and Bellarmine, which had been desired by the order in the aftermath of their deaths (1597 and 1621, respectively) and finished the period in a stalemate thanks to the strong opposition of enemies within the College of Cardinals.[21] The Society also engaged in a lengthy process to define a theological canon for its schools, with the debate over the *Ratio studiorum* and the *delectus opinionum* (selected opinions), that is, the possibility of alternative choices to rigorous Thomism in the absence of dogmatic constraints.

This theme has already been addressed by numerous studies.[22] The unlimited amount of correspondence between center and periphery around the *Ratio studiorum*, which covers a thirty-year span in the Society's life—from Borja's 1565 decree on studies to the definitive drafting of the rule in 1599—represents a key part of the "intellectual autobiography" of the latter, played out mostly over the effort to reconcile its adherence to Thomistic orthodoxy, according to the legacy of Ignatius, and the needs of an order in full expansion.[23]

In part 4 of the *Constitutions*, Ignatius had expressed an option in favor of the "doctrina scholastica divi Thomae" (Thomas Aquinas's doctrine) as a system of reference in theology and metaphysics: a choice that the order would never implement as absolute, however, but was rather conditioned by the possibility of redefining doctrinal directions according to what the times and needs suggested, conforming to that principle of opportunity and elasticity that represented an underlying element of the Jesuit *modus procedendi* (way of proceeding).[24] It was in regard to this space for discretion that an intense dialogue took place between the Roman center and the teaching classes in the provinces during the generalates

21 Both were canonized in 1925 and 1930 and declared doctors of the church.

22 Among other studies, see Dominique Julia, "Généalogie de la *Ratio studiorum*," in *Les jésuites à l'âge baroque (1540–1640)*, ed. Luce Giard and Louis de Vaucelles (Grenoble: Jérôme Millon, 1996), 115–30; Ulrich G. Leinsle, "*Delectus opinionum:* Traditionsbildung durch Auswahl in der frühen Jesuitentheologie," in *Im Spannungsfeld von Tradition und Innovation: Festschrift Joseph Kardinal Ratzinger*, ed. Georg Schmuttermayr et al. (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1997), 159–75; Antonella Romano, "Pratiques d'enseignement et orthodoxie intellectuelle en milieu jésuite (deuxième moitié du XVIe siècle)," in *Orthodoxie, christianisme, histoire: Orthodoxy, Christianity, History*, ed. Susanna Elm, Éric Rebillard, and Antonella Romano (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2000), 241–60.

23 I am referring to the considerations of Romano, *Pratiques d'enseignement et orthodoxie intellectuelle*.

24 *Constitutiones Societatis Iesu* (Rome: Monumenta historica Societatis Iesu, 3, *Textus Latinus*, 1938), part 4, chapter 14 "De libris, qui praelegendi sunt," 150–51.

of Borja, Mercurian, and Acquaviva, a dialogue that often appeared to be a serious battle between pragmatism and crystalline theological orthodoxy—the latter advanced by a cultural climate of growing adherence to the systematic theology of Aquinas, which culminated with his proclamation as a doctor of the universal church by Pius V in 1567.

The compilation of a series of Aquinas's conclusions on which it was not permitted to compromise, accompanied by the delimiting of a margin of movement (the *delectus opinionum*) necessary to the teachers in colleges close to confessional borders—more sensible to the need for the thematic updating implied by the controversy with Protestants—appeared to be the most practical way to do this.

The *libertas opinandi*, the freedom to choose between theses not subjected to binding dogmatic definitions, was indispensable for theologians such as Salmerón, Francisco de Toledo (1532–96), and Juan Maldonado (1533–83). The latter, in a memorial directed to Mercurian around 1573, recalled that the end of Scholastic theology was subject to the militant operations of polemics and pastoral activity: "Defending the religion, refuting heresies, forming good customs, correcting sinners, responding to questions of divine and ecclesiastical law, preaching, [and] hearing confessions."[25] It was a catalog of activities that traced, one by one, the elements of the Society of Jesus's mission. Of an entirely different opinion was Diego de Ledesma (1519–75), of the first generation of teachers at the Roman College, who strongly opposed every assumption about the divergence of opinions within the order. After his death in 1575, however, the prospect of a complete refutation of the *libertas opinandi* appeared unrealistic.[26]

It was up to Acquaviva to carry through this operation, first assembling a commission of six representatives from the provinces in 1583 that produced a useless list of 597 propositions extrapolated from the *Summa theologiae* to be considered in part "settled" (that is, obligatory), in part free; then asking the teachers of the Roman College to re-discuss the theme, with a new commission instituted within the fifth general congregation; and finally acknowledging the principle that regulated the definitive *Ratio studiorum* (1599), in which adherence to Aquinas was recommended save for the possibility of disagreement on solid bases and prior agreement on the part of the censors established in the provinces. It was a solution, moreover, that turned out to be rather weak from a disciplinary point

25 "Docendi ratio ea videtur esse optima, quae ad consequendum finem theologiae maxime sit accommodata. Finis autem theologiae scholasticae est religionem defendere, haereses refutare, bonos mores formare, pravos corrigere, de divino deque ecclesiastico iure consulentibus dare responsa, concionari, confessiones audire"; *De ratione theologiae docendae*, in MPSI, 4:186–96, 189–90.

26 See, e.g., his "Specificity in Doctrinal Content," translated in *Jesuit Pedagogy, 1540–1616: A Reader*, ed. Cristiano Casalini and Claude Pavur, S.J. (Chestnut Hill, MA: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2016), 223–31.

of view, given that even in the following years, with the broad investigation into *uniformitas et soliditas doctrinae* (uniformity and soundness of doctrine), the general consulted the provinces about numerous cases where Thomistic doctrine was abandoned without sufficient justification, drawing up the ordinance *De observanda ratione studiorum deque doctrina s. Thomae sequenda* (On observing the plan of studies and following St. Thomas's doctrine) in 1613.

These are the origins of the peculiarly Jesuit, "accommodating" line of Thomism that represented the official theological doctrine of the Society. But the lingering suspicion outside of the order that accompanied the long work over the *Ratio* should be noted, with the seizure of the provincial of Castile's memorial on the *delectus opinionum* of 1586 (the so-called *Ratio studiorum* of 1586, which was never put into effect) on the part of the Spanish Inquisition and, shortly after, its delivery to the Holy Office on the part of Acquaviva. The return of the document in 1591 was accompanied by an anonymous opinion from a member of the tribunal that provides an insight into the way the Jesuits' theology was perceived: drawing up a list of binding statements (*enunciati inderogabili*) by Aquinas together with another list of open statements (*enunciati liberi*) meant to

> mark with a tacit and severe censure that doctrine which elsewhere is considered pious and has been received and rightfully approved in all schools and universities. It should not be maimed on this account and, as one says, led to the slaughter. […] This innovation of reducing the doctrine of [Aquinas] to a little packet is dangerous, fearful, and has given rise to not insubstantial doubts in men of great esteem.[27]

This opinion, coming from the central tribunal of the faith, was not unique. As strangers to the disciplinary tradition of the church of the late Middle Ages, the Jesuits saw themselves accused of a perceivable doctrinal otherness that seldom presented itself with a profile of heterodoxy. It was an accusation that had accompanied them since their foundation, in the Spain that suspected possible revivals of *alumbradismo*, but which became more widespread in the last quarter of the century.[28] The core of the accusations, as one might guess, revolved around themes of theological anthropology, the relationship between grace and human

27 "Libellus, continens definitas propositiones, alias vero liberas et probabiles una cum animadversionibus quibusdam in doctrinam s. Thomae, videtur tacita censura et gravi sigillare eam doctrinam alioqui piam et omni iure receptam et approbatam in singulis scholiis et academiis. Quare non est mutilanda et, ut dici solet, ad macellum ducenda. […] Quare haec novitas restringendi doctrinam sancti Thomae in fasciculum periculosa est et timenda, et gravissimis viris non levem iniicit scrupulum": László Lukács, "Introductio generalis," MPSI, 5, *Ratio atque institutio studiorum Societatis Iesu (1586 1591 1599)*, 1986, 1*–36*, 24*. See also Julia, *Généalogie de la* Ratio studiorum, 127.

28 On the accusations of heterodoxy for Ignatius's spiritual method, I refer to the work of Guido Mongini published in this same volume, and to the relevant bibliography.

will that constituted the field of aggregation for that hazy group of theories and theological perceptions that was known by the name of Molinism; but aligned alongside it were themes of a different nature.

In 1587, and therefore even before the publication of Luis de Molina's (1535–1600) *Concordia* (1588), the theological faculty of Leuven censored thirty-one propositions on predestination and eternal punishment that were treated in the courses of Leonardo Lessius (Lenaert Leys, 1554–1623) in the Jesuit college of that city, and submitted them to bishops of the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai to obtain their support. The list opened, moreover, with three affirmations of an entirely different nature attributed to Lessius that inquired into the question of the inspiration of sacred books.[29] Ten years later, in 1597, at the height of the crisis over the controversy *de auxiliis*, Domingo Báñez (1528–1604)—titular holder of the first chair of Scholastic theology in Salamanca and therefore a very influential interpreter of Dominican Thomism—addressed a memorial to Clement VIII (r.1592–1605) in which he accused the Jesuits of practicing a hermeneutical liberty that amounted to an affront to orthodoxy not only in matters of grace and free will but also on the Trinity, sacraments, and liturgy.[30] A few years earlier, in 1575, Maldonado had been removed from the theology course at the college of Clermont after the Sorbonne's theologians had accused him of holding unfounded positions about the duration of punishments in purgatory and about the immaculate conception.[31]

Accusations such as these would alternate throughout the entire history of the old Society: in 1762, in the midst of the political battle for the expulsion of the order from France, an *Extrait des assertions dangereuses et pernicieuses en tout genre, que les soi-disans jésuites ont dans tout les temps et perséveramment soutenues, enseignées, et publiées dans leurs livres* (Extract of the dangerous and pernicious claims of every kind that the self-styled Jesuits have stubbornly and in every age maintained, taught, and published in their books) was published, the goal of which was to "demonstrate the existence of a Jesuit theological tradition, of a Jesuit theological identity and of its permanence," naturally opposed to the tradition of orthodoxy incorporated in the Gallican church.[32]

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29 Eduard J.M. van Eijl, "La controverse louvaniste autour de la grâce et du libre arbitre à la fin du XVIe siècle," in *L'augustinisme à l'ancienne faculté de théologie de Louvain*, ed. Mathijs Lamberigts (Leuven: Peeters, 1994), 207–82, 233ff.

30 "Libellus supplex Clementi VIII oblatus a Dominico Bagnez, pro impetranda immunitate a lege silentii utrique litigantium parti imposita," in Th. Eleutherius [L. de Meyère], *Historiae controversiarum de divinae gratiae auxiliis* (Antwerp: Typis Petri Iacob, 1705), 805–13.

31 Émile Amann, "Maldonat, Jean," in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* 9, no. 2 (1927): 1772–76, here 1773.

32 Jean-Pascal Gay, "Ordre du savoir et patrimoine théologique: deux difficiles reconstructions: Notes introductives à propos de la théologie dans la nouvelle Compagnie di Jésus," *Rivista di storia del cristianesimo* 2 (2014): 303–24.

Thus, beyond the pragmatic approach to Thomistic Scholasticism, is it possible to identify a Jesuit theological identity that can be defined according to peculiar doctrines, or is this identity the consequence of the group of ideas, directions, and perceptions of the Society's enemies and their polemical strategies?

Molinists and Regicides

Let us take the "original [theological] sin" attributed to the Jesuits, Molinism, the heterodox doctrinal source for nearly every aspect of Jesuit religious identity as it was depicted by its opponents of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, from laxism to ritualism, from irreligion to the thirst for dominion over consciences. Molinist theology can certainly be identified with the theory of *scientia media* and of the contingent futures as advanced in Molina's *Concordia*, or, more generally, with the positions on the role of the will, or on the methods of moral predetermination (*premozione morale*) that can be found in the writings of Lessius, Suárez, and Valencia. But after the conclusion of the dispute *de auxiliis* and the 1611 ban on publishing about the subject, it is objectively difficult to isolate "Molinistic" theological chains with precision in the homiletics or moral theology of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Another significant example of the way the order was perceived concerns the doctrine of regicide, which, after the assassination of Henry III (r.1574–89) by Jacques Clément (1567–89) in 1589, was at the heart of the accusations of subversion directed at the Jesuits, until it came to be identified as a key part of their theology in the campaign of pamphlets that followed the death of Henry IV in 1610.[33]

In the final phase of the French Wars of Religion (1562–98), the diffusion of the myth of the hero who acts as the "hand of God," killing a heretical tyrant or a tyrant who was allied with the heretics, was owed to the preachers of the Catholic League, not to the Jesuits. During the interrogation that followed his failed attempt against Henry IV, Jean Chastel denied having learned the "nouvelle théologie" of tyrannicide in the halls of the college in Clermont, even if he admitted that priests forbade praying for Navarre in the absence of the official absolution by the Apostolic See.[34] This, after all, was perfectly in line with the received canonical doctrine, seeing that Henry IV, at the moment of the attack, despite his solemn abjuration at Saint-Denis and the *sacre* at Chartres was still,

33 For example, the anonymous author of the *Remonstrance à messieurs de la cour parlement sur le parricide commis sur la personne du roi Henri le Grand*, 1610, draws up a list of the Society's fathers who have defended the doctrine of regicide to demonstrate the continuity in the order's theology: Monique Cottret, *Tuer le tyran? Le tyrannicide dans l'Europe moderne* (Paris: Fayard, 2009), 163. On the debate in the Parlement of Paris following the attack on Henry IV, see Eric Nelson, *The Jesuits and the Monarchy: Catholic Reform and Political Authority in France (1590–1615)* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 147ff.

34 Cottret, *Tuer le tyran?*, 133.

for Rome, a *relapso*, and the Society arranged itself in his favor only after he received pardon from Clement VIII in September 1595.

As noted, the theory of tyrannicide—foreign to Scholastic reflection, and which took shape in the writings of Italian jurists of the late Middle Ages—was contemplated in a final form by Juan de Mariana in his *De rege* (On the king), a text meant for the *infante* Philip of Spain and circulated in manuscript copy at the court of Madrid in the 1580s before being printed in 1599.

In *De rege*, Mariana designed a contractualist political architecture, drenched in the medieval ideal of the balance of powers between the sovereign and representative assemblies. In facing the question of the tyrannical regime and discerning how it differs from a royal (i.e., non-tyrannical) regime, he completely ignored the question of the dissolution of the bond of subjects' loyalty toward the sovereign that follows the penalty of excommunication, a theme that is instead used in the period's debates over the relationship between two powers and that, for example, governs Bellarmine's theory of *potestas indirecta* (indirect power).[35]

From a certain perspective, *De rege* is therefore rather loosely tied to the theological and political themes considered typical of the Society of Jesus's thought. Importantly, however, Mariana's chapter on the legitimacy of tyrannicide is a detailed reconstruction of the assassination of Henry III in 1589—an event that represented a true trauma in the collective conscience as a violation of the sacredness of the French crown—and a full apology for the actions of his assassin, Jacques Clément.[36]

It is worth noting that in May 1606 the provincial of England, Henry Garnet (1555–1606), and his confrère, Edward Oldcorne (1561–1606), were executed on the accusation they had not revealed the plans for the Gunpowder Plot that they had learned in the sacramental confession; and that exactly this question of confession of crimes against the state occupied one of the most serious propositions that Pasquier, in his *Catéchisme*, extracted from the *Aphorismi confessariorum* (Confessors' aphorisms, 1595) of Manuel de Sá (1528–96):

> When the priest, during confession, has learned of a great danger that the penitent wishes to cause the republic, and the magistrate has been sufficiently warned, in general terms, of what he should watch for; and in the same way, one can warn the person for whom the danger is intended to watch himself in that time and place, doing so in such a way to warn him without revealing the penitent's identity.[37]

35 *De rege et regis institutione libri tres* (Toledo: Apud Petrum Rodericum typo[graphum] regium, 1599), 1, c. 5, *Discrimen regis et tyranni*, 55 ff. On Mariana, see Domenico Ferraro, *Tradizione e ragione in Juan de Mariana* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1989); Harald E. Braun, *Juan de Mariana and Early Modern Spanish Political Thought* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007); Flavio Rurale, *Juan de Mariana: Un intellettuale contro* (Milan: Il Sole 24 ore, 2014).

36 *De rege et regis institutione*, c. 6, *An tyrannum opprimere fas sit*, 61ff.

37 "Quand par confession le prestre a entendu un grand peril qu'un confessant veut pourchasser à la république, il suffit d'en advertir en termes generaux le magistrat,

Under the category of crimes against the state that were attributed to Jesuits, it is clear that very different subjects could converge, ranging from Mariana's apology for the "just" political assassination to the affirmation of the unbreakable nature of the sacramental seal that we just read, to Bellarmine's system of *potestas indirecta*. In other words, more than a precise doctrinal system, it seems to deal with a galaxy of ideas and *loci communes* (commonplaces) that gravitated toward the comparison of spiritual and temporal power, and that probably only assumed a coherent ideological character in the pages of anti-Jesuit polemics without really being elements of a defined theological and political framework.

Reflection on the nature of tyrannical regimes and contractualism is not, however, strictly a distinctive element of Jesuit political thought. Cardinal Bellarmine limited himself to treat the question of political power only from the point of view of the pope's ability to excommunicate and the resulting dissolution of the obligation of obedience, and therefore in the framework of the relationships of religious legitimization that subordinated the *regnum* (reign) to the *sacerdotium* (priesthood).[38] Suárez touched on the question more directly in his 1613 *Defensio fidei catholicae* (Defense of the Catholic faith), conceived during the so-called "Anglican controversy" that opposed Paul V (r.1605–21) and James I (r.1603–25) around the Oath of Allegiance imposed by the sovereign on his Catholic subjects: clarifying, however, that only a tyrant *ex defectu tituli* (that is, without a legitimate title by succession) can be killed by a private citizen, while this was not acceptable for tyrants *ex parte exercitii* (a sovereign who lost his legitimacy by default in the exercise of his functions). To maintain the contrary, Suárez added, qualified as heresy.[39] Among the Jesuit authors who wrote on reason of state examined by Robert Bireley for the period that interests us, only Mariana emphasized the role of classes and the right of resistance against the tyrant. The others—Ribadeneyra with his *Tratado de la religión y virtudes que debe tener el principe cristiano* (Treatise on the religion and virtues that a Christian prince should have, 1595); Adam Contzen's (1573–1635) *Politicorum libri decem* (Ten books on politics, 1621); and Carlo Scribani's (1561–1629) *Politicus christianus* (Christian politician, 1624)—opted for more genuinely absolutist visions, excluding, to different degrees, the legitimacy of counterweights embodied by the intermediate bodies of the republic.[40]

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que l'on s'en donne garde; et peut-on semblablement advertir celuy auquel le peril est pourchassé de s'en engarder en tel lieu et temps, moyennant qu'en l'advertissant on ne decèle pas le penitent"; *Catechisme des jésuites*, 2, c. 1, 177.

38 Thus, for example in book 5 *De potestate pontificis temporali* of the third controversy *De Summo pontifice* and in the *De potestate Summi pontificis in temporalibus adversus Gulielmum Barclaium* (1610).

39 *Defensio fidei catholicae et apostolicae adversus Anglicanae sectae errores* (Mainz: Sumptibus Hermanni Mylii Birckmanni, excudebat Balthasar Lippius, 1619), 6, cc. 3 and 4, 410ff.

40 Robert Bireley, "Les jésuites et la conduite de l'etat baroque," in Giard and de Vaucelles, *Les jésuites à l'âge baroque (1540–1640)*, 228–42.

A Jesuit Topic: The Judicial Paradigm of the Authority of the Pope

Naturally, this did not mean that the political discourse over the spiritual authority of the Roman Church, and therefore over its sovereignty over consciences—this was the core of the dialectic between the *potestas indirecta* and the modern state—was not a key part of the cultural identity of the Society.[41] With his July 1610 decree, issued in the midst of the controversy following the murder of Henry IV and James I's Oath of Allegiance, Acquaviva prohibited "in virtue of holy obedience" discussing and defending "in public and in private" the specific theory of tyrannicide, not the broader question of the legitimacy of submission to a heretical sovereign. With his later decree in August 1614, he instructed that every writing that touched on the question of the pope's superiority over secular princes should be approved beforehand in Rome: it was evidently a measure of disciplinary centralization, certainly not a renunciation of the theory of *potestas indirecta*, which was the current teaching and canonized in the Roman apologetic apparatus.[42]

This theologoumenon of the spiritual sovereignty of the pope profoundly animated Jesuit identity: at times, it emerged with a complete theological profile, as in the writings of the order's major theorists, such as Bellarmine or Gregorio de Valencia. More generally, however, the influence of Jesuits on the theological–political grammar of the early modern period acted on another level, the level of religious communication conveyed through preaching, polemics, and spiritual direction.

To substantiate this claim, I cite the example of the theological discipline that can be considered the Jesuit discipline *par excellence* during the confessional age, especially in the decades of Acquaviva's generalate, namely controversialist theology.

It is not that this material did not exist before: some of the most authoritative Catholic theologians in the middle decades of the sixteenth century—Johannes Eck (1486–1543), Johann Cochlaeus (1479–1552), Albert Pigghe (1490–1542), Thomas Cajetan (1469–1534), Barthélemy Masson (Bartholomaeus Latomus, 1485–1570), Johannes Driedo (*c.*1480–1535)—were intensely involved in anti-Lutheran polemic. What they could not count on was a true and proper controversialist method: in part, because the confessional struggle developed around knowledge and languages that transcended the simple dialectical approach of Scholasticism—positive theology, sacred and profane history, and rhetoric—on which they were formed; and in part because controversialism acquired a method unto itself following the reception of the system of *loci theologici* (1563) of Melchor Cano (1509–1560), a cornerstone of theological methodology during the Counter-Reformation.

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41 In this sense, I fully share the consideration of Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought*, 22: "Perhaps the Society's best-stocked armoury of political concepts was its ecclesiology."

42 The texts in Guenter Lewy, *Constitutionalism and Statecraft during the Golden Age of Spain: A Study of the Political Philosophy of Juan de Mariana* (Geneva: Droz, 1960), 167–68.

It was thus only in the 1570s and 1580s that the Catholic polemicist could rely on controversialist theology as a discipline in itself, with a true method, chairs, lexicon, and above all, specialized authors, mostly active along the confessional frontier. To cite the most well known: Bellarmine, Suárez, Valencia, Jacob Gretser (1562–1625), Becan, Adam Tanner (1572–1632), Edmund Campion (1540–81), Vitus Erbermann (1597–1675). All members of the Society of Jesus.

At the heart of this vast controversialist production we can discover the central presence of an enduring theme that deeply shaped the culture and the way of being Catholics until Vatican I (1869–70) and beyond: that of the authority of the pope as supreme judge over controversies of the faith. It is in this field, control over consciences, that the sovereignty of the pope and of secular princes came to clash over two centuries.

It was the Jesuit controversialists—all of them included among their writings a specific tract *De iudice controversiarum* (On the judge of controversies)—who elaborated this "judicial" paradigm of the church's authority and rendered it as food for preaching, teaching, and political practice. This, then, was a specifically Jesuit theological and political field, methodologically structured and coherent, and, above all, able to challenge temporal authority in the realm of conscience, where it established the bond of obedience between the individual and the holder of power.[43]

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43 I investigated this theme in *Bellarmino: Una teologia politica della Controriforma* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2005), 343ff., and "The Spoken Law: The Judicial Paradigm of Power in Catholic Theology between the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *Languages of Power in Italy (1300–1600)*, ed. Daniel Bornstein and Laura Gaffuri (Turnhout: Brepols, forthcoming).

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