



Universalitas & Pervasivitas

il costituirsi e diffondersi della S.J. e suoi echi (1540 - 1773)
di A. Pisani

Schede di approfondimento di argomenti generali

SOPPRESSIONE DELL'ORDINE



The Suppression of the Jesuits in the Portuguese Empire, France, the Two Sicilies, Parma and the Spanish Empire by 1767 was a result of a series of political moves rather than a theological controversy.[1] By the brief *Dominus ac Redemptor* (21 July 1773) **Pope Clement XIV** suppressed the Society of Jesus. However in non-Catholic nations, particularly in Prussia and Russia, where papal authority was not recognized, the order was ignored. The scholarly Jesuit Society of Bollandists moved from Antwerp to Brussels, where they continued their work in the monastery of the Coudenberg; in 1788, the Bollandist Society itself was suppressed by the Austrian government of the Low Countries.

Overview

By the mid 18th century, the Society had acquired a reputation in Europe for political maneuvering and economic exploitation. The common conception was that Jesuits were greedy plotters, prone to meddle in state affairs through their close ties with influential members of the royal court in order to further the special interests of their order, and the Papacy. Monarchs in many European states grew progressively weary of what they saw as undue interference from a foreign entity. The expulsion of Jesuits from their states had also the added benefit to their eyes of allowing the impoundment of the Society's colossal wealth and possessions.

Various states took advantage of different events in order to take action.

The series of political struggles between various monarchs, particularly France and Portugal, began with disputes over territory in 1750 and culminated in suspension of diplomatic relations and dissolution of the Society by the Pope over most of Europe, and even some executions. The Portuguese Empire, France, the Two Sicilies, Parma and the Spanish Empire were involved to one degree or another. The conflicts began with trade disputes, in 1750 in Portugal, in 1755 in France, and in the late 1750s in the Two Sicilies. In 1758 the government of Joseph I of Portugal took advantage of the waning powers of **Pope Benedict XIV** and deported Jesuits from America after relocating the Jesuits and their native workers, and then fighting a brief conflict, formally suppressing the order in 1759. In 1762 the *Parlement Français*, (a court, not a legislature), ruled against the Society in a huge bankruptcy case under pressure from a host of groups - from within the Church, but also secular intellectuals and the king's mistress. Austria and the Two Sicilies suppressed the order by decree in 1767. After 1815, with the Restoration, the Catholic Church began to play a more welcome role in European political life once more, and nation by nation the Jesuits made their way back. The modern view is that the suppression was the result of a series of political and economic conflicts rather than a theological controversy and the assertion of nation-state independence against the Catholic Church. The expulsion of the Society of Jesus from the Roman Catholic nations of Europe and their colonial empires is also seen as one of the early manifestations of the new secularist zeitgeist of the Enlightenment, which would later peak with the



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anti-clericalism of the French Revolution. The suppression was also seen as being an attempt by monarchs to gain control of revenues and trade that were previously dominated by the Society of Jesus. Catholic historians often point to a personal conflict between Clement XIII (1758–1769) and his supporters within the church and the crown cardinals backed by France.

Portugal

Louis-Michel van Loo, **The Marquis of Pombal** expelling the Jesuits from Portugal, 1766. The expulsion of the Jesuits from Portugal has been reduced by the Catholic Encyclopedia to a personal quarrel with the prime minister of Joseph I of Portugal, the reformist and autocratic Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, Marquis de Pombal. Whether Pombal's or Portugal's, the quarrel with the Jesuits began over an exchange of South American colonial territory with Spain. By a secret treaty of 1750, Portugal relinquished to Spain the contested colony of San Sacramento at the mouth of the Uruguay River in exchange for the Seven Reductions of Paraguay, the autonomous Jesuit missions that had been nominal Spanish colonial territory. The native Guarani who peopled the mission territories were ordered to quit their country and settle across the Uruguay, an example of population transfer. Owing to the harsh conditions, the Indians rose in arms against the transfer, and the so-called Guarani War ensued, a disaster for the Guarani, in which the Jesuits appeared, from the Portuguese perspective, to have had a hand. In Portugal a battle of inflammatory pamphlets denouncing or defending the Order escalated. The Jesuit fathers, suspected of attempting to build an independent empire in the New World, were forbidden to continue the local administration of their former missions, and the Portuguese Jesuits were removed from Court.

On April 1, 1758, a brief was obtained from the aged Pope Benedict XIV, appointing the Portuguese **Cardinal Saldanha** , recommended by Pombal, to investigate allegations against the Jesuits that had been raised in the name of the King of Portugal. Benedict was skeptical as to the gravity of the alleged abuses. He ordered a minute inquiry, but so as to safeguard the reputation of



the Society, all serious matters were to be referred back to himself. Benedict died the following month, however, on May 3. On May 15, Saldanha, having received the papal brief only a fortnight before, omitting the thorough visitation of Jesuit houses that had been ordered, and pronouncing on the issues which the pope had reserved to himself, declared that the Jesuits were guilty of having exercised illicit, public, and scandalous commerce, both in Portugal and in its colonies. Pombal moved quickly during the papal sede vacante: in three weeks' time the Jesuits had been stripped of all Portuguese possessions, and before Cardinal Rezzonico had been made pope, as **Clement XIII**, on July 6, 1758, the Portuguese dispossession of the Society was a fait accompli.

The last straw for the Court of Portugal was the attempted assassination of the king on September 3, 1758, of which the Jesuits were supposed to have had prior knowledge (see Távora affair). Among those arrested and executed was Gabriel Malagrida, the



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Jesuit confessor of Leonor of Távora. The Jesuits were expelled from the kingdom, and important non-Portuguese members of the Order were imprisoned. In 1759, the Order was civilly suppressed. The Portuguese ambassador was recalled from Rome and the papal nuncio sent home in disgrace. Relations between Portugal and Rome were broken off until 1770.

France

The suppression of the Jesuits in France began in the French island colony of Martinique, where the Society of Jesus had a major commercial stake. They did not and could not engage in trade, buying and selling to make a profit, any more than any other religious order could do, but their large mission plantations included large local populations that worked under the usual conditions of tropical colonial agriculture of the 18th century, not easily distinguishable from the hacienda system. As the *Catholic Encyclopedia* expressed it in 1908, "this was allowed, partly to provide for the current expenses of the mission, partly in order to protect the simple, childlike natives from the common plague of dishonest intermediaries."

Father **Antoine La Vallette**, Superior of the Martinique missions, managed these transactions with great success, and like secular proprietors of plantations he needed to borrow money to expand the large undeveloped resources of the colony. But on the outbreak of war with England, ships carrying goods of an estimated value of 2,000,000 livres were captured, and La Vallette suddenly went bankrupt for a very large sum. His creditors turned to the Order's Procurator at Paris to demand payment, but the Procurator refused responsibility for the debts of an independent mission— though he offered to negotiate for a settlement. The creditors went to the courts, and an order was made in 1760, obliging the Society to pay, and giving leave to distrain in the case of non-payment.

The Fathers, on the advice of their lawyers, appealed to the *Parlement* of Paris. This turned out to be an imprudent step. For not only did the *Parlement* support the lower court, May 8, 1761, but having once gotten the case into its hands, the Jesuits' enemies in that assembly determined to strike a blow at the Order.

Enemies of every sort combined. The Jansenists were numerous among the enemies of the orthodox party. The Sorbonne joined the Gallicans, the *Philosophes*, and the *Encyclopédistes*. **Louis XV** was weak; his wife and children were in favor of the Jesuits; his able first minister, the **Duc de Choiseul**, played into the hands of the *Parlement*, and the royal mistress, Madame de Pompadour, to whom the Jesuits had refused absolution, for she was living in sin with the King of France, was a determined opponent. The determination of the *Parlement* of Paris in time bore down all opposition. The attack on the Jesuits was opened by the Jansenist sympathizer, the **Abbé Chauvelin**, April 17, 1762, who denounced the Constitution of the Jesuits, which was publicly examined and exposed in a hostile press. The *Parlement* issued its *Extraits des assertions* assembled from passages from Jesuit theologians and canonists, in which they were alleged to teach every sort of immorality and error. On August 6, 1762, the final arrêt was issued condemning the Society to extinction, but the king's intervention brought eight months' delay and meantime a compromise was suggested by the Court. If the French Jesuits would separate from the order, under a French vicar, with French customs, as with the Gallican church, the Crown would still protect them. In spite of the dangers of refusal the Jesuits would not consent. On April 1, 1763 the colleges were closed, and by a further arrêt of March 9, 1764, the Jesuits were required to renounce their vows under pain of banishment. At the end of November 1764, the king signed an edict dissolving the Society throughout his dominions, for they were still protected by some provincial *Parlements*, as in Franche-Comté, Alsace, and Artois. But in the draft of the edict, he canceled numerous clauses that implied that the



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Society was guilty, and writing to Choiseul, he concluded "If I adopt the advice of others for the peace of my realm, you must make the changes I propose, or I will do nothing. I say no more, lest I should say too much."

Spain and Naples

The Suppression in Spain and in the Spanish colonies, and in its dependency, the Kingdom of Naples, was carried through in secrecy, and the ministers of **Charles III** kept their deliberations to themselves, as did the king who acted upon "urgent, just, and necessary reasons, which I reserve in my royal mind;". The correspondence of **Bernardo Tanucci**, the anti-clerical minister of Charles III in Naples contain all the ideas which from time to time guided Spanish policy. Charles conducted his government through **Count Aranda**, a reader of Voltaire, and other liberals. At a council meeting of January 29, 1767, the expulsion of the Society of Jesus was settled. Secret orders, which were to be opened at midnight between the first and second of April, 1767, were sent to the magistrates of every town where a Jesuit resided. The plan worked smoothly. That morning, 6000 Jesuits were marching like convicts to the coast, where they were deported, first to the Papal States, and ultimately to Corsica, which was a dependency of Genoa. Due to the isolation of the Spanish Missions of California, the decree for expulsion did not arrive in June of 1767, as in the rest of New Spain, but was delayed until the new governor, Portolà, arrived with the news on November 30. Jesuits from the fourteen operating missions at the moment reunited in Loreto, whence they left for exile on February 3, 1768. It took until 1768 for the Royal order to reach the Jesuit missions in the south of the Philippines, but by the end of the year, the Jesuits had been dispossessed throughout the Spanish dominions.



Tanucci pursued a similar policy in Bourbon Naples. On November 3 the Jesuits, without a trial or even an accusation, were simply marched across the frontier into the Papal States, and threatened with death if they returned.

The change in the Spanish colonies in the New World was particularly great, as the far-flung settlements were often dominated by missions. Almost overnight in the mission towns of Sonora and Arizona, the "black robes" (as the Jesuits were often known) disappeared and the "gray robes" (Franciscans) replaced them [2].

Parma

The independent Duchy of Parma was the smallest Bourbon court, where Louis XV's favorite daughter was Duchess. So aggressive in its anti-clericalism was the Parmesan reaction to the news of the expulsion of the Jesuits from Naples, that Clement XIII addressed to it (January 30, 1768) a public warning, threatening the Duchy with ecclesiastical censures, not a tactful move. At this all the Bourbon courts turned in fury against the Holy See, and demanded the entire dissolution of the Jesuits. As a preliminary, Parma at once drove the Jesuits out of its territories, confiscating all their possessions.



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The Jesuits return

As the Napoleonic Wars were approaching their end in 1814, the old political order of Europe was to a considerable extent restored at the Congress of Vienna after years of fighting and revolution, during which the Church had been persecuted as an agent of the old order and abused under the rule of Napoleon. With the political climate of Europe more stable and the powerful monarchs who had called for the suppression of the Society no longer in power, Pope Pius VII issued an order restoring the Society of Jesus in the Catholic countries of Europe. For its part, the Society of Jesus made the decision at the first General Congregation held after the restoration to keep the organization of the Society the way that it had been before the suppression was ordered in 1773.

References

- (1) Roehner, Bertrand M. (April 1997), "Jesuits and the State: A Comparative Study of their Expulsions (1590–1990)", *Religion* 27 (2): 165–182, doi:10.1006/reli.1996.0048, [http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi=B6WWN-45K13NX-V&_user=10&_coverDate=04%2F30%2F1997&_rdoc=8&_fmt=summary&_orig=browse&_srch=doc-info\(%23toc%237135%231997%23999729997%23303081%23FLT%23display%23Volume\)&_cdi=7135&_sort=d&_docanchor=&_ct=10&_acct=C000050221&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=10&md5=804093c2c26822619878dd0868c58ed0](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi=B6WWN-45K13NX-V&_user=10&_coverDate=04%2F30%2F1997&_rdoc=8&_fmt=summary&_orig=browse&_srch=doc-info(%23toc%237135%231997%23999729997%23303081%23FLT%23display%23Volume)&_cdi=7135&_sort=d&_docanchor=&_ct=10&_acct=C000050221&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=10&md5=804093c2c26822619878dd0868c58ed0)
- (2) See e.g.: Richard F. Pourade, *The History of San Diego*, Chap. 6: Padres Lead the Way

External links

Catholic Encyclopedia offers a view from the Catholic side, which has been adjusted in this entry
Charles III of Spain's royal decree expelling the Jesuits

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The Suppression is the most difficult part of the history of the Society. Having enjoyed very high favor among Catholic peoples, kings, prelates, and popes for two centuries and a half centuries, it suddenly becomes an object of frenzied hostility, is overwhelmed with obloquy, and overthrown with dramatic rapidity. Every work of the Jesuits — their vast missions, their noble colleges, their churches — all is taken from them or destroyed. They are banished, and their order suppressed, with harsh and denunciatory words even from the pope. What makes the contrast more striking is that their protectors for the moment are former enemies — the Russians and Frederick of Prussia. Like many intricate problems, its solution is best found by beginning with what is easy to understand. We look forward a generation, and we see that every one of the thrones, the pope's not excluded, which had been active in the Suppression is overwhelmed. France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy become, and indeed still are, a prey to the extravagance of the Revolutionary movement. The Suppression of the Society was due to the same causes which in further development brought about the French Revolution. These causes varied somewhat in different countries. In France, many influences combined, as we shall see, from Jansenism to Free-thought, to the then prevalent impatience with the old order of things (see France, VI, 172). Some have thought that the Suppression was primarily due to these currents of thought. Others attribute it chiefly to the absolutism of the Bourbons. For, though in France the king was averse to the Suppression, the destructive forces acquired their power because he was too indolent to exercise control, which at that time he alone possessed. Outside France it is plain that autocracy, acting through high-handed ministers, was the determining cause.



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Portugal

In 1750, **Joseph I** of Portugal appointed Sebastian Joseph Carvalho, afterwards Marquis of Pombal (LINK) as his first minister. Carvalho's quarrel with the Jesuits began with a quarrel over an exchange of Territory with Spain. San Sacramento was exchanged for the Seven Reductions of Paraguay which were under Spain. The Society's wonderful missions there were coveted by the Portuguese, who believed the Jesuits were mining gold. So the Indians were ordered to quit their country; and the Jesuits endeavored to lead them quietly to the distant land allotted to them. But owing to the harsh conditions imposed, the Indians rose in arms against the transfer, and the so-called war of Paraguay ensued, which, of course, was disastrous to the Indians. Then step by step the quarrel with the Jesuits was pushed to extremities. The weak king was persuaded to remove them from Court; a war of pamphlets against him was commenced; the Fathers were first forbidden to undertake the temporal administration of the missions, and then they were deported from America.

On 1 April 1758, a brief was obtained from the aged pope Benedict XIV, appointing Cardinal Saldanha to investigate the allegations against the Jesuits, which had been raised in the King of Portugal's name. But it does not follow that the pope had forejudged the case against the order. On the contrary, if we take into view all the letters and instructions sent to the Cardinal, we see that the pope was distinctly sceptical as to the gravity of the alleged abuses. He ordered a minute inquiry, but one conducted so as to safeguard the reputation of the Society. All matters of serious importance were to be referred back to himself. The pope died five weeks later on 3 May. On 15 May, Saldanha, having received the Brief only a fortnight before, omitting the thorough house-to-house visitation that had been ordered, and pronouncing on the issues which the pope had reserved to himself, declared that the Jesuits were guilty of having exercised illicit, public, and scandalous commerce both in Portugal and in its colonies. Three weeks later, at Pombal's instigation, all faculties were withdrawn from the Jesuits throughout the patriachate of Lisbon. Before Clement XIII had become pope (6 July, 1758) the work of the Society had been destroyed, and in 1759 it was civilly suppressed. The last step was taken in consequence of a plot against the chamberlain Texeiras, but suspected to have been aimed at the king, and of this the Jesuits were supposed to have approved. But the grounds of suspicion were never clearly stated, much less proved. The height of Pombal's persecution was reached with the burning (1761) of the saintly **Father Malagrida**, ostensibly for heresy; while the other Fathers, who had been crowded into prisons, were left to perish by the score. Intercourse between the Church of Portugal and Rome was broken off till 1770.

France

The Suppression in France was occasioned by the injuries inflicted by the English navy on French commerce in 1755. The Jesuit missionaries held a heavy stake in Martinique. They did not and could not trade, that is, buy cheap to sell dear, any more than any other religious. But they did sell the products of their great mission farms, in which many natives were employed, and this was allowed, partly to provide for the current expenses of the mission, partly in order to protect the simple, childlike natives from the common plague of dishonest intermediaries. Père Antoine La Vallette, superior of the Martinique missions, managed these transactions with no little success, and success encouraged him to go too far. He began to borrow money to work the large undeveloped resources of the colony, and a strong letter from the governor of the island dated 1753 is extant in



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praise of his enterprise. But on the outbreak of war, ships carrying goods of an estimated value of 2,000,000 livres were captured and he suddenly became a bankrupt, for very large sum. His creditors were egged on to demand payment from the procurator of Paris, but he, relying on what certainly was the letter of the law, refused responsibility for the debts of an independent mission, though offering to negotiate for a settlement, for which he held out assured hopes. The creditors went to the courts, and an order was made (1760) obliging the Society to pay, and giving leave to distrain in the case of non-payment.

The Fathers, on the advice of their lawyers, appealed to the *Grand Chambre* of the *Parlement* of Paris. This turned out to be an imprudent step. For not only did the *Parlement* support the lower court, 8 May, 1761, but having once gotten the case into its hands, the Society's enemies in that assembly determined to strike a great blow at the order. Enemies of every sort combined. The Jansenists were numerous among the *gens-de-robe*, and at that moment were especially keen to be revenged on the orthodox party. The *Sorbonnists*, too, the university rivals of the great teaching order, joined in the attack. So did the Gallicans, the Philosophes, and the Encyclopédistes. Louis XV was weak and the influence of his court divided; while his wife and children were earnestly in favor of the Jesuits, his able first minister, the Duc de Choiseul played into the hands of the *Parlement*, and the royal mistress, Madame de Pompadour, to whom the Jesuits had refused absolution, was a bitter opponent. The determination of the *Parlement* of Paris in time bore down all opposition. The attack on the Jesuits, as such, was opened by the Janseistic Abbé Chauvelin, 17 April, 1762, who denounced the Constitution of the Jesuits as the cause of the alleged defalcations of the order. This was followed by the *compte-rendu* on the Constitutions, 3-7 July, 1762, full of misconceptions, but not yet extravagant in hostility. Next day Chauvelin descended to a vulgar but efficacious means of exciting odium by denouncing the Jesuits' teaching and morals, especially on the matter of tyrannicide.

In the *Parlement*, the Jesuits' case was now desperate. After a long conflict with the crown in which the indolent minister-ridden sovereign failed to assert his will to any purpose, the *Parlement* issued its well-known "Extraits des assertions", a blue-book, as we might say, containing a congeries of passages from Jesuit theologians and canonists, in which they were alleged to teach every sort of immorality and error, from tyrannicide, magic, and Arianism, to treason, Socinianism, and Lutheranism. On 6 August, 1762, the final arrêt was issued condemning the Society to extinction, but the king's intervention brought eight month's delay. In favour of the Jesuits, there had been some striking testimonies, especially from the French clergy in the two convocations summoned on 30 November, 1761, and 1 May, 1762. But the series of letters and addresses published by Clement XIII afford a truly irrefragable attestation in favour of the order. Nothing, however, availed to stay the *Parlement*. The king's counter-edict delayed indeed the execution of its *arrêt*, and meantime a compromise was suggested by the Court. If the French Jesuits would stand apart from the order, under a French vicar, with French customs, the Crown would still protect them. In spite of the dangers of refusal the Jesuits would not consent; and upon consulting the pope, he (not **Ricci**) used the famous phrase *Sint ut sunt, aut non sint* (de Ravignan, "Clement XIII", I, 105, the words are attributed to Ricci also). Louis's intervention hindered the execution of the arrêt against the Jesuits until 1 April, 1763. The colleges were then closed, and by a further arrêt of 9 March, 1764, the Jesuits were required to renounce their vows under pain of banishment. Only three priests and a few scholastics accepted the conditions. At the end of November, 1764, the king unwillingly signed an edict dissolving the Society throughout his dominions, for they were still protected by some provincial *Parlements*, as Franche-Comté, Alsace, and Artois. But in the draft of the edict, he



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canceled numerous clauses, which implied that the Society was guilty; and writing to Choiseul, he concluded with the weak but significant words: "If I adopt the advice of others for the peace of my realm, you must make the changes I propose, or I will do nothing. I say no more, lest I should say too much."

Spain, Naples, and Parma

The Suppression in Spain, and its quasi-dependencies, Naples and Parma, and in the Spanish colonies was carried through by autocratic kings and ministers. Their deliberations were conducted in secrecy, and they purposely kept their deliberations to themselves. It is only in late years that a clue has been traced back to Bernardo Tanucci, the anti-clerical minister of Naples, who acquired a great influence over Charles III before the king passed from the throne of Naples to that of Spain. In this minister's correspondence are found all the ideas which from time to time guided the Spanish policy. Charles, a man of good moral character, had entrusted his government to the Count Aranda and other followers of Voltaire; and he had brought from Italy a finance minister, whose nationality made the government unpopular, while his exactions led in 1766 to rioting and the publications of various squibs, lampoons, and attacks upon the administration. An extraordinary council was appointed to investigate the matter, as it was declared that people so simple as rioters could never have produced the political pamphlets. They proceeded to take secret information, the tenor of which is no longer known; but records remain to show that in September, the council had resolved to incriminate the Society, and that by 29 January 1767, its expulsion was settled. Secret orders, which were to be opened at midnight between the first and second of April, 1767, were sent to the magistrates of every town where a Jesuit resided. The plan worked smoothly. That morning, 6000 Jesuits were marching like convicts to the coast, where they were deported, first to the Papal States, and ultimately to Corsica.

Tanucci pursued a similar policy in Naples. On 3 November the religious, again without trial, and this time without even an accusation, were marched across the frontier into the Papal States, and threatened with death if they returned. It will be noted that in these expulsions, the smaller the state, the greater the contempt of the ministers for any forms of law. The Duchy of Parma was the smallest of the so-called Bourbon courts, and so aggressive in its anti-clericalism that Clement XIII addressed to it (30 January, 1768) a *monitorium*, or warning, that its excesses were punishable with ecclesiastical censures. At this all parties to the Bourbon "Family Compact" turned in fury against the Holy See, and demanded the entire destruction of the Society. As a preliminary, Parma at once drove the Jesuits out of its territories, confiscating as usual all their possessions.

Clement XIV

From this time till his death (2 February 1769), Clement XIII was harassed with the utmost rudeness and violence. Portions of his states were seized by force, he was insulted to his face by the Bourbon representatives, and it was made clear that, unless he gave way, a great schism would ensue, such as Portugal had already commenced. The conclave which followed lasted from 15 Feb. to May 1769. The Bourbon courts, through the so-called "crown cardinals", succeeded in excluding any of the party, nicknamed Zelanti, who would have taken a firm position in defense of the order, and finally elected Lorenzo Ganganelli, who took the name Clement XIV. It has been stated by Cretineau-Joly (Clement XIV, p. 260), that Ganganelli, before his election, engaged himself to the crown cardinals by some sort of stipulation that he would suppress the Society, which would have involved an infraction of the conclave oath. This is now disproved by the statement of the Spanish



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agent Azpuru, who was specially deputed to act with the crown cardinals. He wrote on 18 May, just before the election, "None of the cardinals has gone so far as to propose to anyone that the Suppression be assured by a written or spoken promise", and just after 25 May he wrote, "Ganganelli neither made a promise nor refused it". On the other hand it seems he did write words, which were taken by the crown cardinals as an indication that the Bourbons would get their way with him (de Bernis's letters of 28 July and 20 November, 1769).

No sooner was Clement on the throne than the Spanish court, backed by the other members of the "Family Compact", renewed their overpowering pressure. On 2 August, 1769, Choiseul wrote a strong letter demanding the Suppression with two months, and the pope now made his first written promise that he would grant the measure, but he declared that he must have more time. Then began a series of transaction, which some have not unnaturally been interpreted as a devices to escape by delays from the terrible act of destruction, toward which Clement was being pushed. He passed more than two years in treating with the Courts of Turin, Tuscany, Milan, Genoa, Bavaria, etc. which would not easily consent to the Bourbon projects. The same ulterior object may perhaps be detected in some of the minor annoyances now inflicted on the Society. From several colleges, such as those of Frascati, Ferrar, Bologna, and the Irish College at Rome, the Jesuits were, after a prolonged examination, ejected with much show of hostility. And there were moments, as for instance after the fall of Choiseul, when it really seemed as though the Society might have escaped; but eventually the obstinacy of Charles III always prevailed.



In the middle of 1772 Charles sent a new ambassador to Rome, Don **Joseph Moñino**, afterwards Count Florida Blanca, a strong, hard man, "full of artifice, sagacity, and dissimulation, and no one more set on the suppression of the Jesuits". Heretofore, the negotiations had been in the hands of clever, diplomatic Cardinal de Bernis, French ambassador to the pope. Moñino now took the lead, de Bernis now coming in afterward as a friend to urge the acceptance of his advice. At last, on 6 September, Moñino gave in a paper suggesting a line for the pope to follow, which he did in part adopt, in drawing up the brief of Suppression. By November the end was coming in sight, and in December Clement put Moñino into communication with a secretary; and they drafted the instrument together, the minute being ready by 4 January, 1773. By 6 February, Moñino had got it back from the pope in a form to be conveyed to the Bourbon courts, and by 8 June, their modifications having been taken account of, the minute was thrown into its final form and signed. Still the pope delayed until Monino constrained

him to get copies printed; and as these were dated, no delay was possible beyond that date, which was 16 August, 1773. A second brief was issued which determined the manner in which the Suppression was to be carried out. To secure secrecy, one regulation was introduced which led, in foreign countries, to some unexpected results. The Brief was not to be published, *Urbi et Orbi*, but only to each college or place by the local bishop. At Rome, the father-general was confined first, at the English College, then in Castel S. Angelo, with his assistants. The papers of the Society were handed over to a special commission, together with its title deeds and store of money, 40,000 *scudi*



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(about \$50,000), which belonged almost entirely to definite charities. An investigation of the papers was begun, but never brought to any issue.

In the Brief of Suppression, the most striking feature is the long list of allegations against the Society, with no mention of what is favourable; the tone of the brief is very adverse. On the other hand the charges are recited categorically; they are not definitely stated to have been proved. The object is to represent the order as having occasioned perpetual strife, contradiction, and trouble. For the sake of peace the Society must be suppressed. A full explanation of these and other anomalous features cannot yet be given with certainty. The chief reason for them no doubt was that the Suppression was an administrative measure, not a judicial sentence based on judicial inquiry. We see that the course chosen avoided many difficulties, especially the open contradiction of preceding popes, who had so often praised or confirmed the Society. Again, such statements were less liable to be controverted; there were different ways of interpreting the Brief which commended themselves to Zelanti and Bourbonici respectively. The last word on the subject is doubtless that of Alphonsus di Liguori: "Poor pope! What could he do in the circumstances in which he was placed, with all the Sovereigns conspiring to demand this Suppression? As for ourselves, we much keep silence, respect the secret judgment of God, and hold ourselves in peace".

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About this page

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“Marquis de Pombal and the Jesuits” - Posted by Kathy Warnes - Jul 10, 2010

The Jesuits were thoroughly woven into the fabric of Portuguese religion and culture and Marquis Pombal had never been happy with their influence. The way the Jesuits reacted to the 1755 Lisbon earthquake deepened his distrust and resentment of the Jesuits.



Universalitas & Pervasivitas

il costituirsi e diffondersi della S.J. e suoi echi (1540 - 1773)
di A. Pisani

Schede di approfondimento di argomenti generali

The 1755 Lisbon Earthquake is the Catalyst for Reform

The earthquake shook Lisbon in midmorning of All Saints Day, November 1, 1755 while many people were in church and it destroyed 35 of the 40 churches in Lisbon. Even though Enlightenment ideas had reached Portugal, Portuguese culture had been established on the foundation of the Catholic Church. The Jesuits told survivors that God had sent the earthquake as a punishment for their sins and that they must spend many years atoning for these sins. Many people believed them.

Marquis Pombal Dislikes and Distrusts the Jesuits

Marquis Pombal believed in Enlightenment ideas of reason and had a rational, scientific nature and he attributed the earthquake to natural causes. In the weeks after the earthquake, he did his best to counter the Jesuit preaching. He wanted the people of Lisbon to focus their time and money on rebuilding and reforming Portugal instead of spending their time and efforts repenting of their sins. The Marquis had other reasons to dislike the Jesuits. The Jesuits were opposed to the Portuguese policy of attempting to assimilate the Indians of Brazil into European culture and they also opposed economic and territorial treaties that Portugal had made with Spain and England.

Gabriel Malagrida Publishes a Pamphlet

A Jesuit priest named Gabriel Malagrida brought matters to a crisis when he published his sermons in a pamphlet he called *Juzio da verdadeira causa do terremoto- An Opinion on the true cause of the earthquake*. His pamphlet preached that the people of Lisbon had caused the earthquake by the number and severity of their sins. The Marquis Pombal eventually convinced King Joseph I to banish Malagrida.

King Joseph I is Almost Assassinated

In September 1758, King Joseph I was returning to Belem from the Palace of the Marques and Marquesa de Tabora with his valet. Three masked horsemen stopped their carriage in the dead of the night, fired a musket, and wounded the King in the arm and shoulder. Marquis Pombal's spies quickly identified two of the horsemen and arrested and tortured them. Their confessions implicated the Marques and Marquesa de Tabora and Marquis Pombal had the Tabora family followed and their messages intercepted. By December, Marquis Pombal had arrested Malagrida who had returned from exile and he was found guilty of being involved in the assassination plot.

Marquis Pombal Convinces King Joseph I to Expel the Jesuits

Gabriel Malagrida was found guilty of High Treason and imprisoned in the dungeon under the Tower of Belem with other Jesuits who were also implicated in the plot. In 1759, Marquis Pombal convinced King Joseph I to banish had the Jesuits from Portugal to the Papal States. The Marquis felt that the Jesuits were constantly undermining his authority.

Gabriel Malagrida is Executed

In 1761, he had Malagrida, aged 72, brought before the Inquisition with his brother acting as Inquisitor General. They found Malagrida guilty of obscenity and blasphemy and condemned him to death. On September 21, 1761, Malagrida was garroted in Rossio Square, and then his corpse was burned on a bonfire and his ashes thrown in the Tagus River.



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Marquis Pombal Reforms Portuguese Society

The expulsion of the Jesuits created a vacuum in the Portuguese educational system because Jesuits had been the primary teachers. This is exactly what Marquis Pombal wanted, because now he had the power to rebuild the primary, secondary, and college educational systems. Reforming the education system also enabled Pombal to secularize Portugal and dilute the power of the church. His actions were initially unpopular in Europe, but eventually other European leaders who wanted change used Portugal's example to purge their governments of religious influence. Historian Kenneth Maxwell says, "The Portuguese were the first to begin a movement which would bring about the expulsion of the Jesuits from all of Catholic Europe..." (Maxwell, Kenneth, Pombal - Paradox of the Enlightenment, Cambridge University Press, 1995) Marquis Pombal used the 1755 Lisbon earthquake as a lever for promoting reforms, and even though his reforms were tinged with self-interest, they set a precedent for other European countries to follow.

Cfr.: <http://www.suite101.com/blog/theodosia/marquis-de-pombal-and-the-jesuits>