Paul Shore


Paul Shore’s essay includes a historical survey, numerous biographical vignettes, especially of Jesuits and former Jesuits, but also of the popes, rulers, ministers, and other churchmen who played a role in the Society’s history and an extensive bibliography of twenty-five pages. It paints an excellent picture of the Society in the decades before 1773, particularly of its baroque piety and its educational system and philosophy. Here Shore makes excellent use of broader studies on the politics and culture of the era, such as by Franco Venturi on the end of the ancient régime (The End of the Old Regime in Europe, 1776–1789, Part I: The Great States of the West, trans. R. Burr Litchfield [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991]) or by Ulrich Lehner on the Catholic Enlightenment (A Companion to the Catholic Enlightenment in Europe, ed. Ulrich Lehner and Michael Printy [Leiden: Brill, 2010]).

The author analyzes the role different factors played in the expulsion of the Jesuits from various countries, beginning with the Portuguese empire in 1759, then France in 1764, the Spanish empire and Naples in 1767, and Parma in 1768, up to Pope Clement XIV’s brief Dominus ac redemptor suppressing the Society worldwide in 1773. He cites the usual ones, primarily regalism, or monarchial resentment of Jesuit power and wealth, and Shore rightly concludes that there was not just “a well-coordinated Bourbon plot” (8). The Jesuits also were attacked by the Enlightenment and educational reformers for neo-Scholastic rigidity and excessive piety, and, paradoxically, by Jansenists for moral laxity. There also were charges of financial malfeasance, such as the La Vallette affair in France (13) and even of regicide, as when the Jesuit Gabriel Malagrida was executed in Lisbon in 1761 for allegedly planning the assassination of King José I (4). Then there was hostility from other religious orders, such as the...
Oratorians, rivalries that dated back to the Chinese rites controversy with the Dominicans in the seventeenth century. Shore aptly sums up the “no-win situation” for the Jesuits: too lax or too rigid, too loyal to the church or not loyal enough, too critical of new forms of learning or not critical enough (9).

After briefly describing how *Dominus ac redemptor* was implemented in various countries, Shore devotes most of his attention to the fate of former Jesuits, to places where some continued to live as Jesuits for a time thereafter, such as Canada, Prussia, or China, and to a lengthy treatment of the Russian empire, where not only was the Society not suppressed, but even flourished until the latter part of the reign of Alexander I. We learn, for example, of the harsh fate of the Portuguese Jesuits (4–5, 19–20) or how exiled Spanish Jesuits made their mark in Italy (28–29). A particular strength of Shore’s work is its broad geographic scope, from the Americas to India, the Ottoman empire, and the Far East. The author builds on his previous research on the Jesuits of Central and Eastern Europe to advantage in describing the successful careers of former Jesuits like Stefan Odrowąż Łuskina in Poland (35–36) or Josef Dobrovský in Bohemia (59). Shore’s account of the Society’s survival in the Russian empire, tells the story well, with descriptions of its missions in the Caucasus and Siberia and brief biographies both of Jesuits who survived from the Polish communities annexed by Catherine II in 1772 and of those who came from elsewhere, like Gabriel Gruber from Slovenia (40). I do not agree, however, that Catherine II was “ambivalent” about Western Europe (39). She welcomed the Jesuits precisely because they embodied Western culture, as well as because they could help ensure the loyalty of her Polish subjects. Also, there is no evidence they wanted to convert Jews or tried to convert the Orthodox (41). Here Shore could have used *How the Jesuits Survived Their Suppression* (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph’s University Press, 2015), my revised and expanded translation of Inglot’s 1997 Italian account *La Compagnia del Gesù nell’Impero Russo (1772–1820)* (Rome: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1997). Polock occasionally is misspelled as Połosk (39, 61), Tadeusz Brzozowski was superior general from 1805 to 1820, not 1814–20 (40), and Giovanni Grassi never reached China, but was diverted en route there to London instead (49). And Dominique Venturi’s and Ferdinand Motté’s activities in the Aegean are well known (66).

The author has a good summary of the attempts to revive the Society, such ill-fated efforts of Niccolò Paccanari (70–72) and of some of the partial restorations, such as in England in 1803 (58), and the work of José Pignatelli in Parma and elsewhere in Italy (69) before the general restoration by Pope Pius VII in 1814. A thoughtful concluding section (77–92) assesses the impact of the suppression on the restored Society in the nineteenth century and beyond. He correctly points out the challenges the Jesuits faced with the end of old...
empires, hostility from liberal and nationalist regimes, leading to expulsions from several countries, the end of their role in universities, and their resistance to many new intellectual currents. He also notes their new successful focus on secondary schools and the break with the older Jesuit aesthetic tradition. I think, however, that post-1814 Jesuit aesthetics owe more to Romanticism than to the pre-suppression baroque. Also, missionary work after 1814 had more than “some importance” (92), with new missions in the US, Africa, and the Far East, although here Shore does mention some Jesuit missionaries, like Pierre DeSmet (81). The author discusses the key issue of continuity between the “old” and the “new” Society, drawing on the work of Dale Van Kley and others, concluding that the years of suppression marked a definitive break. Finally, he poses several questions for further study, such as the fate of the Jesuit brothers (temporal coadjutors), networks of former Jesuits, and the impact on those who joined after 1814 when almost everything had to be started anew.

Special mention should be made of Shore’s bibliography of primary and secondary sources, many contemporary to the suppression era, and including the latest studies in a multitude of languages. Besides the major Western European languages, there are Hungarian, Czech, Polish, Russian, Croatian, and Slovene. He has used sources, not just on Jesuit and church history, such as those by Jacques Crétineau-Joly, William V. Bangert, S.J., and John W. O’Malley, S.J., but also on cultural and intellectual history in general, plus studies of art, architecture, fortifications, mathematics, music, and science.

In summary, Shore’s essay includes a comprehensive and thoughtful historical account, numerous biographies, and a very comprehensive bibliography. Everyone interested in Jesuit history will find it a valuable resource.

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Per Pippin Aspaas and László Kontler
Maximilian Hell (1720–92) and the Ends of Jesuit Science in Enlightenment Europe.

The eighteenth-century Hungarian-Slovak Jesuit astronomer, Maximilian Hell, director of the Imperial Observatory of Vienna, is an interesting subject, best known for his participation in the observations of the 1761 transit of Venus...