THE POLICY OF THE HOLY SEE IN THE POST-TRIDENTINE AGE: THE REACTION OF THE ROMAN CHURCH TO THE "CONCURRENT" CHURCHES (THE SECOND HALF OF THE 16TH CENTURY-THE 17TH CENTURY)

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Abstract: The following research aims to outline the most important initiatives of the Holy See in what regards the European and extra-European policy, making mention of the emergence of a new type of spiritual, not territorial sovereignty, parallel and different from the statehood. Secondly, the study intends to analyse the way in which the maintenance of its own ministry, ministerium Petri, has been possible as well as the instruments used by the Holy See in order to protect the "Catholic cause" in a world where the authority has been submitted to a local disintegration to the detriment of the territorial consolidation of the modern states. Finally, the present analysis proposes to emphasize the renewal of the exigencies related to the reformation of the discipline and the ecclesiastical structures within the Roman Curia, the Holy See focusing again on the internal problems, undertaking initiatives of reformatio Ecclesiae and oscillating efforts of redistributing the roles to various institutional components.

Keywords: papal diplomacy, Trento, ministerium Petri, spiritual sovereignty, reformatio Ecclesiae

The framework of the following research has been represented by the idea that along with the "Great Schism" of the Occident (14th-15th centuries)[1], the unity of the Latin Christendom, of the medieval Christian Republic (*Respublica Christiana*)[2] was broken and the last attempt, conducted through the councils of the first half of the 15th century (Pisa, Konstanz, Ferrara-Florence) to bestow the unity of the Christendom on the base of the representative assemble meant to substitute the two poles of the medieval universalism, the Pope and the Emperor, failed.[3] After the Occidental Schism and the failure of the ecumenical council Ferrara-Florence (1439), everything changed beginning with the second half of the 15th century. However, the fundamental demand of exerting the papal ministry within a world in which the principalities and the monarchies, we mean the modern states, were beginning to

[1] http://www.hls-dhs-dss.ch/textes/i/I17156.php, on 13.05.2015, at 1:40 p.m.; http://www.pbmstoria.it/dizionari/storia_mod/s/s057.htm, on 13.05.2015, at 1:46 p.m.; http://www.filosofiaedintorni.eu/avignonescisma.htm, on 13.05.2015, at 1:50 p.m.

[2] Liviu Pilat, „*Redemptor noster*. Moldova și *Respublica Christiana* la 1476-1477", in *Analele Putnei*, vol. II, no. 1-2, 2006, p. 137; http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/repubblica_(Enciclopedia-Italiana)/, on 13.05.2015, at 1:54 p.m.

[3] http://www.pbmstoria.it/dizionari/storia_ant/p/p016.htm, on 13.05.2015, at 5:05 p.m.

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consolidate, remained a reality.[4] After the Schism, after the conciliatory experiences and those of the Christian Republic, the papacy identified the existence of a new, more and more aggressive danger: the disintegration of the ecclesiastical institutions within the new powers emerged in various parts of Europe and the apparition of the national and territorial Churches submitted to the sovereigns/the temporal authority.[5] As a direct consequence, it is to mention the fact that a new relation between the centre and the periphery developed owing mainly to Rome's attempt of preserving a universal function.

During the first phase, that is the second half of the 15th century and the first half of the 16th century, the pontifical policy resumed to the effort of building its own state, of bringing the dispersed "terre della Chiesa" under the arch of a Renaissance Principality, a state that could become the base for a new universal and independent authority, confronted to the newly-emerged powers.[6] Taking as starting point the main features of the papal policy during the period mentioned above, the Italian historian Paolo Prodi argues that the pontiff provided the prototype for the modern absolutist monarchies through its example of unifying the temporal authority and the spiritual one, but also through transforming the policy from an act of power into a well-defined authority meant to form and discipline the individual during their lifetime.[7] From the end of the Middle Ages, the Popes knew how to lead their policy according to the evolution of the international relations and so, they made use of two fundamental principles regarding their relation with the European powers: 1. Realising alliances with those that could protect the "Catholic cause"; 2. Defending the independence of the Holy See.[8] Thus, the major preoccupation of the Catholic Reform and of the Counter-reformation was not only the fight against the abuses and the internal "corruption", but also the attempt to ensure the Church a new universal authority that would not be politically focused on the competition with the states.[9] The starting point for this direction was represented by the well-known *Libellus ad Leonem X*, belonging to the Camaldolese monks Paolo Giustiniani and Vincenzo Quirini (1512): *totum humanum genus, omnes scilicet gentes, nationes, quae sub coelo sunt tuae subditas esse potestati*[10], but not in accordance with the temporal authorities (*veram autem ecclesiam Dei, non terrenae habitationis civitates, aut manufacta aedificia, sed hominum Congregationem esse te latere non debet*). The triple crown did not signify any more the power imagined by the Pope in the Middle Ages since it corresponded to a new reality as a way of expressing a spiritual power that broadened the recently discovered territories: Italy, Europe, the entire world. Talking of the diplomacy of the Holy See in Europe, the Council of Trento constituted a crucial moment in elaborating a new type of spiritual and not territorial sovereignty, parallel and different from the statehood.[11] The emergence of the new type of sovereignty implied two directions: 1. A stronger reduction

[4] Paolo Prodi, *Il paradigma tridentino. Un'epoca della storia della Chiesa*, Editrice Morcelliana, Brescia, 2010, pp. 58-59.
[5] *Ibidem.*
[6] *Ibidem.*
[7] *Ibidem*, p. 60.
[8] Paolo Brezzi, *Storia del cattolicesimo*, vol. III, Edizioni Pem S.p.a, Roma, 1965, pp. 86-87.
[9] Prodi, *Il paradigma tridentino*, p. 62.
[10] *Ibidem.*
[11] *Ibidem*, p. 63.

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of the Church and the hierarchy, of the clerical *corpus* in favour of outlining clearly, of affirming the figure of the simple Christian, evolutions that would lead to the process of confessionalization; 2. The definition of a framework consisting of ethic norms, parallel and distinct from those of the nascent state right.[12] The subsidies provided by the papacy in the Habsburg "affair", the interventions against the Elizabethan England or the actions against the native Protestants from Germany during the first half of the 17th century did not avert from permanent political conflicts. The military encounter with the Islam was not a total victory in spite of the short triumph of the Catholic cooperation at Lepanto (1571) and despite the fact that Spain moved its interest from the Mediterranean See to Holland and the Atlantic.[13] The defence of Malta (1565), although heroic, did not compensate for the loss of Cyprus (at least according to the Venetian opinion). The second direction of the pontifical policy during the post-Tridentine decades, we mean the unification, was partially more successful than the confrontations with the Islam and with the Protestantism; the extreme efforts to get together the non-Protestant Christians and to bring them under the Roman obedience, involving contacts with the Russian and the Ethiopian Churches failed.[14] At a certain point, a relative success was scored in what regards the Maronites through the establishment of the Maronite College at Rome (1584), during the pontificate of Gregory XIII. The foundation of the Unite Church within the Eastern Christians from Poland was the greatest achievement for regaining Poland and for bringing it back under the Roman jurisdiction, a papal triumph and at a certain level a Jesuit one.

The second phase in the papal policy (the 17th century) was marked by the challenge launched against the Rome's universalism through the emergence of new models of territorial Churches, being defined by the common feature of identifying themselves with the political authority of the nascent modern states.[15] Beginning with the 17th century one can notice the fact that a period of 200 years in the history of the Roman Church opened, period in which the Catholicism appeared to be stronger in its organizing structure, purified by its ecclesiastical and laic members and demonstrating that it was perfectly conscious of the predominantly religious final aims.[16] At the same time, the Roman Church seemed to be officially recognised and protected in various European states while huge territories from other continents opened to its apostolate; it appeared that nothing could avert from reaching the peak of the spirituality and from facilitating the Christians to have a pious way of life.[17] In fact, the 16th-17th century Christianity was less heroic and enthusiastic. The Habsburg and the papal fluctuations, demonstrated by the question of the French succession at the end of the 16th century were an obstacle in creating a Catholic stable alliance between the Pope and the governors, an alliance intended to fight against the Protestant block. The defeat of the Habsburgs in the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) had a negative influence on the Hungarian defensive capacity against the Turks. Despite the fact that he did not manage to reach the ambitious aim of

[12] *Ibidem.*
[13] Anthony D. Wright, *The Counter-reformation. Catholic Europe and Non-Christian World*, Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot, 2005, p. 25.
[14] *Ibidem*, p. 26.
[15] *Ibidem.*
[16] Brezzi, *Storia del cattolicesimo*, p. 85.
[17] *Ibidem.*

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calling pope Urban VIII in an anti-Protestant league, the travel of the cardinal Peter Pàzmàny to Rome ended with the release to the Catholic league of 130.000 Imperial talers in the summer of the year 1632, while up to the end of the year 1634, war subsidies equivalent to 477.000 scuds were allocated.[18] This relative success represented the main reason for the Habsburg decision of taking into consideration the possibility of sending the Hungarian primate to Rome, initially as permanent ambassador and afterwards as protective cardinal of Hungary and of the Austrian hereditary territories. In spite of this policy, after 1632, being regarded as a notable figure of the resistance against the pontificate of Urban VIII, his possible return to Rome was denied since pope Barberini gave a major importance to the defence of the new type of spiritual sovereignty.[19] For the rest of his life, the cardinal Pàzmàny lead a policy contrary to the official course of the Roman Curia: returning from Rome, he encouraged Ferdinand II (1619-1637) to intervene against pope Urban VIII, whereas in the year 1635 he sustained the negotiation of a separate peace with the Protestant elector against the Viennese nuncio Malatesta Baglioni (1634-1639).

Another major goal of the Holy See at the beginning of the 17th century consisted in its intervention related to the process of converting the non-Christian populations through the extra-European missions. The lack of resources for this responsibility favoured the complications brought by the French support for the Papal missions, organized by the Congregation *de Propaganda Fide*. One must not neglect the fact that the decline of the Portuguese empire in the East lead to the Anglo-Danish danger in the territories mentioned above that would later score an important triumph against the Catholicism.[20] The confrontation between the papal missions of the *Propaganda* and the missions of the Spanish crown, the Spanish patronage or the Portuguese *padroado*, were part of the rivalries existent between the European powers in what regards their expansion in the New World, creating in fact a French semi-patronage that would substitute the Portuguese one.[21] While such political considerations played an essential role for the future of the Catholic missions, concomitantly with the Danish furtherance of Japanese suspicions over the Jesuit presence in their islands, the Roman Church transmitted to the missions of the New World the internal dissensions experimented in Europe after the Council of Trent.[22]

How was then possible the maintenance of its own *magisterium* in a world where the authority was submitted to a local fracture/dislocation with the intention of consolidating territorially the newly emerged modern states? The pontifical diplomacy made serious efforts of ability and prudence by counteracting openly the exaggerated demands, by expressing its reaction towards the injustices or simply by proving its compassion and tolerance, but fighting to achieve the same goal of defending the Catholic cause in Europe and in the extra-European

[18] Pèter Tusor, "Un «residente d'Ungheria» a Roma nel Seicento (C. H. Motmann uditore di Rota, agente del cardinale Pàzmàny", in *Rivista di Italianistica*, nr. 13, 2003, Istituto Italiano di Cultura, Budapesta, p. 9.
[19] *Ibidem.*
[20] Brezzi, *Storia del cattolicesimo*, p. 85.
[21] Giovanni Pizzorusso, "Propaganda Fide e le Missioni Cattoliche sulla Frontiera Politica, Etnica e Religiosa delle Antille nel XVII Secolo", in *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome. Italie et Méditerranée*, Vol. 109, Nr. 109, 1997, p. 582.
[22] Wright, *The Counter-reformation*, p. 26.

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territories.[23] So as to be able to benefit from a total independence/liberty of action, the Pope needed a temporal jurisdiction, meaning that he needed a state and a universal immunity within the sphere of the European policy.[24] The pontiffs chose the pastoral activity and the apostolic ministry according to the directives of the Tridentine Council. They imagined the means necessary for leading successfully the labour of Christianizing the world; after the repressive organisms such as the Sacred Office (1542), the Roman Church founded the German College (1555), intended to ensure the education of a new clergy for the regions devastated by the heresies; in addition to this, Rome instituted the Congregation *de Propaganda Fide* (1622) with the intention of diffusing the faith.[25] This moment represented however the opening way of the new territorial Churches regarding the newly emerged modern states. In the Catholic territories and also in the Protestant ones, the change was scored: it was about giving answers, finding diverse more revolutionary or more reformist solutions with the aim of dealing with a unique major problem-the modernity-in a process that saw in the private sphere the affirmation of a new relation between the conscience and the sacred. Losing his traditional insertion in the universe, the modern individual/human being focused his struggle on the question of the individual salvation, that was also the theological problem of the divine grace and that became central during the centuries of the modern world in the Catholic, but also in the Protestant territories. On the other hand, within the public sphere of the collective behaviours, two major tendencies became evident: in the Protestant territories, the political authority received the task of ensuring the ecclesiastical discipline (*ius circa sacra*) whereas in other places separate Churches appeared that preserved the Catholic doctrinal substance and that recognised the sovereign as the head of the Commonwealth.

In this point of the argument, we are interested in seeing the reaction of the Roman Church to the concurrence of the new Churches and to the "invasion" of the newly emerged modern states within the triple evolution confessionalization-modernization-social discipline ("Sozialdisziplinierung").[26] In what regards the processes stimulated by the clear distinction Church-state, we do not intend to bring into discussion the solely political aspect, of the alliance between various powers (the example of the confessional states), but we can admit that the modern State assumed the functions regarding the social discipline that were once the Churches' prerogatives. The State involved in the questions relative to the births, the control of the population, the education, the family institution, aspects that were not part of the policy since the modern times. The register of those baptized or "the counting of the souls" ("conta delle anime") were not only administrative operations, but also it determined a new way of participation to the Church life, stimulating the transition from the medieval Christian to the modern "Fedele". However, the Church did not limit itself to organizing the Christians in "Fedeli"; in addition to this, it created a *corpus* of doctrines, the moral theology as

[23] Eberhard Gothein, *L'eta della Controriforma*, La Nuova Italia Editrice, Venezia, 1928, pp. 107-108; Brezzi, *Storia del cattolicesimo*, p. 89.

[24] Brezzi, *Storia del cattolicesimo*, pp. 91-97.

[25] Louis Chatellier, *La religione dei poveri. Le missioni rurali in Europa dal XVI al XIX e la costruzione del cattolicesimo moderno*, Garzanti Editore, Milano, 1994, p. 35.

[26] Angelo Turchini, "Riforma cattolica-Controriforma e la Chiesa in Italia", in *Dizionario Storico Tematico "La Chiesa in Italia"*, vol. I. "Dalle Origini all'Unità Nazionale", http://www.storiadellachiesa.it/glossary/riforma-cattolica-controriforma-e-la-chiesa-in-italia/, on 22.05.2015, at 9:25 p.m.

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autonomous mark of the theological way of thinking and an assemble of ethical norms that were on the verge of ruling the quotidian individual life. We are talking about initiatives of elaborating a "practical theology" that could have been substituted to the right that normed the life of the individuals. If we are referring to the common space of the confessional Churches, the Roman Church clearly distinguished itself from the other Churches because Rome manifested a constant struggle for preserving the authority and the autonomy of its *magisterium* on the following levels: doctrinal (by affirming the moral theology as an autonomous discipline), normative and the control and the interaction with the quotidian life of the Christians. From a theological point of view, the Tridentine and the post-Tridentine discourse emphasized the *salus animarum* principle, correctly considered the central point of the Catholic Reformation. According to the Italian historian's Paolo Prodi opinion, *salus animarum* constituted in the Tridentine and post-Tridentine period a goad for the formation of the spiritual jurisdiction of the Catholic Church reported to the development of the national states, a process that distinguished it from the other confessional Churches.

In the second half of the 17th century, taken aside from the European scene, almost unable to face the French aggression and the Ottoman attacks, the so-called "crisis of the European conscience", within the Roman Curia reappeared the exigence of reforming the discipline and the ecclesiastical structures.[27] During the second half of the 17th century, Rome saw itself concentrated on the internal problems, leading initiatives of reforming the curial structures and oscillating measures of redistributing the roles between various institutional components of the Church: the slow relaunch of the bishop and of the centrality of his pastoral function, inaugurated by Innocence XI Odescalchi. The partially successful initiatives regarding the moralization of the Roman Curia that marked the so-called Odescalchi's "svolta innocenziana" conflicted with the nepotism and the renovation of the Sacred Office during Alexander's VIII Ottoboni pontificate, meant to "riportare in primo piano la centralità della Chiesa di Roma, intesa in senso integralistico come un organismo teologico-giuridico immutabile, saldamente impiantato su un corpo di dottrine e di diritti da difendere senza il benchè minimo cedimento"[28]. On the one hand, the reinterpretation of the ecclesiastical myths inspired by the Council of Trent, the appeal to the Reformation and the efforts for giving a central dimension to the bishops became obvious; on the other hand, we can notice the Roman centralization, the major role of the Inquisition and the rigid doctrinal positions. Thus, in the age of the Counter-reformation, the Roman Church proposed contradictory guidelines, imagined by an ecclesiastical institution that, within the particular relation with the states, of the lost international position, of the cultural transformations in Italy and in Europe, emphasized the universalist projection, the expansive force and the militant character so specific to the Counter-reformation.[29] The papacy of the age of the Counter-reformation took in the decades immediately following the closure of the sessions of the Tridentine Council a function of centralization within the Catholic world. Particularly in Italy, the papacy continued to have in the centuries of the modern era a strong influence upon the political

[27] Antonio Menini Ippolito, *Il governo dei papi nell'eta moderna. Carriere, gerarchie, organizzazione curiale*, Viella, Roma, 2007, p. 21.
[28] Elena Bonora, *La Controriforma*, Editori Laterza, Roma-Bari, 2001, p. 112.
[29] http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/controriforma/, on 22.05.2015, at 8:46 p.m.

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formations situated in the Italic Peninsula, representing a sort of "grey zone" ("zona grigia") where the spiritual authority met the political one. Once the modern State appeared, an important change in the function exercised by the pontiff within the Church was scored. Defining the papal figure, Giovan Battista de Luca, in *Relatio romanae curiae forensic*, was pointing the following: *de papa, circa eius potestatem, ac personas, quas gerit.*

The popes of the modern era had a predominantly formation of administrators and not necessary of spiritual pastors: beginning with the second half of the 16th century and up to the 17th century, the pontiffs had similar careers, distinguishing themselves through their participation to the activities of the Congregation of the Sacred Office and privileging the activity of the Roman Curia compared to the pastoral one.[30] If we were to analyse the activity of the popes coming from the second half of the 16th century, we would emphasize the fact that only Gregory XIV and Innocence IX had significant experiences regarding the bishopric, an aspect that was not more applicable to the seventeenth-century pontiffs: Alessandro de Medici-Leon XI (1605); Camillo Borghese-Paul V (1605-1621); Alessandro Ludovisi-Gregory XV (1621-1623); Maffeo Barberini-Urban VIII (1623-1644); Giovanni Battista Pamphili-Innocence X (1644-1655); Fabio Chigi-Alexander VII (1655-1667); Giulio Rospigliosi-Clement IX (1667-1669); Emilio Altieri-Clement X (1670-1676); Benedetto Odescalchi-Innocence XI (1676-1689); Pietro Ottoboni-Alexander VIII (1689-1691); Antonio Pignatelli-Innocence XII (1692-1700). We are talking about a papacy that ruled over the Italian Church, that consolidated its authority through its temporal state and that lead to a constellation of officials with political, administrative, ecclesiastical, disciplinarian and religious responsibilities: these were the principal guidelines of the evolution of the Roman Curia that scored a specialization, with pontiffs that became the expression of the Curial bureaucratization, more administrators and political figures than spiritual pastors. The Roman Court was then characterized by the fight for the power, a court that was governed by an elective monarchy, exposed to the conditions of the political and familial factions, to the tensions between the Great European Powers, to the precarious alliances. Systems of clientele and patronage dissolved themselves and were then integrated in a sort of a "spoils-system"[31] that accompanied the transition from a pontiff to another, while new curial orientations in the external policy could be detected every time a new pope was elected and a new entourage was constituted when the major character was the cardinal-nephew.[32]

At the same time, one could notice the apparition of a new institutional framework based on the new image of the cardinal: curial experience, juridical instruction, political abilities seemed to become the most important criteria of selecting the cardinals who, from their position of rulers of the Renaissance Church began to look alike officials of the papal bureaucracy or members of a courtly aristocracy that depended on the pontiff.[33] *Homini novi*, sometimes of inferior condition that had a past defined by the fidelity for the Pope. Promoting as a cardinal the members of the Roman curial bureaucracy allowed the pontiffs to surround themselves by trustful people, but also to re-have the office, their dignity (to which they were

[30] Ippolito, *Il governo dei papi*, pp. 39-41.
[31] http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/560744/spoils-system, on 22.05.2015, at 5:29 p.m.
[32] Bonora, *La Controriforma*, pp. 39-41.
[33] *Ibidem*, p. 42.

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obliged to renounce at the moment of their election as cardinals) with the aim of introducing it in the venal system.

Another aspect of the process of centralization and reorganization of the pontifical monarchy was represented by the Italianization of the Sacred College and of the curial officials, phenomenon that reflected the conflict between the Hoy See and the leading circles of the Italian Peninsula; for those factions the careers developed in the shadow of the Church and the courtly life specific to the nobiliary model represented a satisfactory solution regarding the decisions imposed by the processes of aristocratization of the urban patriciate, of demographic rise, of the search for roman clienteles in order to ensure privileges for the entire clan.[34] To exemplify, the papal bull *Sancta Synodus Tridentina* signified the peak of the Italianization of the Roman Curia, the proportion of the non-Italians in the following conclaves reaching a historical minimum.[35] Simultaneously the clericalization of the governing apparatus of the pontifical state gained in importance, its representatives being elected from the clergy. There were also other institutions that could be considered the expression of the Roman centralism; during the pontificate of Gregory XIII Boncompagni, the nunciatures[36] (diplomatic representations at the Italian and European courts) rose numerically. In Italy permanent apostolic nunciatures functioned at Venice, Napoli, Torino and Firenze; except from those active in Spain, there were also permanent nunciatures at Lucerne, Köln, Graz and Bruxelles.[37] The nuncio was not only a connecting element between Rome and the territorial leaders, between Rome and the local bishops, but he was also an institutional figure invested with a large authority, in a direct relation with the cardinal-nephew and the cardinals' congregations. As a matter of fact, his attributions could vary from the diplomatic sphere to pastoral problems, from conflicts between local ecclesiastical authorities to fighting against the heresy.

Beginning from the second half of the 16th century, we can talk about an ecclesiastical control on the laity, defined by institutional subjects and decisional centres whose guidelines intersected, confronted themselves within a vast process of acculturation of the faithful.[38] In this sphere of action, the Society of Jesus had a major role through the variety of its methods, through the diversification of the solutions as well as through the attention paid to different cultural and social levels. Apart from the extra-European missionary territories, one must take into account the European spaces where the Lutheran Reformation gained a huge popularity: France, Germany, Poland, Austria, Bohemia, Hungary and Moravia.

Being aware of the primary function of head of the Church became deeper, the multiples Protestant denominations demonstrating *ex contrario* the advantages of the Catholic unity: "la sede romana come la pietra sulla quale è fondato l'ovile del gregge di Cristo"[39]. To begin with, Rome found a solution by assuming the particularities of a "perfect society" or a sovereign organism, imitating the newly emerged modern states. At the same time, Rome

[34] Elena Papagna, *Sogni e bisogni di una famiglia aristocratica. I Caracciolo di Martina in età moderna*, Franco Angeli Storia, Milano, 2002, p. 132.
[35] Tusor, *Un residente d'Ungheria*, p. 17.
[36] Paolo Brezzi, *La Diplomazia Pontificia*, Istituto per gli studi di politica internazionale, Milano, pp. 10-13.
[37] Bonora, *La Controriforma*, p. 43.
[38] *Ibidem*, p. 83.
[39] Ippolito, *Il governo dei papi*, p. 98; Brezzi, *Storia del cattolicesimo*, p. 93.

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struggled for creating a normative dimension that would not coincide with the state dimension, resorting to the control upon the laic consciences;[40] this normative dimension depended on the affirmation of a new "indirect" authority, based on an ecclesiastical suprastately and supranational body[41], on a new discipline within the clergy and the laity competing directly with the legislation and the state authority.[42] The new Tridentine penitence became in this context the connecting element between the faith profession and the discipline within the process of constitution of the visibility of the militant Church as universal *coetus*, separate from the multitude of political appurtenance that defined the modern world.[43] The new type of sovereignty manifested directly in moving the interest centre from the exclusively dogmatic sphere to the moral one, with the formation of an organic legislation and of a jurisdiction upon the consciences, of the casuistic as behaviour science.[44] As a direct consequence, in the 17th and 18th centuries the major problems for the papal interventions remained that of the grace, of the justification, of the moral fundaments.

To conclude, the political line of the papal Curia did not score major changes in the post-Tridentine age. At the end of the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th century, Rome was on the point of projecting a representation distinct from the discredited one, the humiliated and the defeated image from the second decade of the 16th century: the centre of a power with an international role, the source of legitimation for the authority of the Catholic leaders, the centre of elaborating the religious certitudes and the behavioural norms that had to coordinate the society. The Roman court was also "the big theatre of the world" where ecclesiastical careers and familial fortunes were built, where possibilities of access "alle prelature alle mitre alle porpore e alle supreme tiare"[45] were opened. Guido Bentivoglio[46] was pointing in his *Memories* (1640-1644) the following: "ella non è patria solamente di se medesima o della sola Italia, ma forma, per così dire, un mondo spirituale che la fa generalmente divenire patria commune di tutte le battezzate nazioni"[47]. The militant and triumphant Catholicism[48] inspired the predication, the literature, the art, being the ideology of the ecclesiastical ideology and of its members: of the strong congregations of cardinals, of the nuncios who in their quality of ambassadors represented the Holy See at the European courts, of the recently founded religious orders (the Jesuits), of the missionaries who through the spiritual conquest and the assumption of the martyrdom testified the Catholic faith all over the world. The pontifical diplomacy tried to save the immunities by signing a series of concordats that cease, but that saved or better said, fought for saving the theoric principle of an inherent

[40] http://www.iuscanonicum.it/i-laici-storia-delle-istituzioni-diritto-canonico/, on 22.05.2015, at 4:07 p.m.

[41] Giuseppe Alberigo, "Forme storiche di governo nella Chiesa universale", in Paolo Prodi (ed.), *Forme storiche di governo nella Chiesa universale. Giornata di studio in occasione dell'ultima lezione del prof. Giuseppe Alberigo*, Cooperativa Libraria Universitaria Editrice Bologna, Bologna, 2003, pp. 207-208.

[42] Ippolito, *Il governo dei papi*, p. 184; Prodi, *Il paradigma tridentino*, p. 64.

[43] Prodi, *Il paradigma tridentino*, p. 67.

[44] *Ibidem*, p. 68.

[45] Bonora, *La Controriforma*, p. 37.

[46] http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/guido-bentivoglio_(Dizionario-di-Storia)/, on 22.05.2015, at 1:49 p.m.; see also Alberto Merola, "Bentivoglio, Guido", in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 8 (1966), http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/guido-bentivoglio_(Dizionario-Biografico)/, on 22.05.2015, at 1:52 p.m.

[47] *Ibidem.*

[48] Guy Bedouelle, *La riforma del cattolicesimo (1480-1620)*, Jaca Book, Milano, 2003, p. 141.

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right of the Roman Church *sui generis*.[49] The Holy See and the 16th-17th centuries-hierarchy repeated practically the same error committed by the pontiffs of the late middle Ages that wanted unconditionally the defence of the supremacy in Europe even through adapting to the new situation, the emergence of the modern national states. The Counter-reformation was a fight won only partially not because of the hierarchy, but particularly as a direct consequence of the strong resistance of the social classes (nobility, bourgeoisie and peasantry) related to a Church seen as an institution that struggled for its own welfare.[50]

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[49] Giacomo Martina, *Storia della Chiesa. Da Lutero ai nostri Giorni*, vol. I: L'Età della Riforma, Morcelliana, Brescia, 1993, p. 43.
[50] *Ibidem*, p. 60.

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