

philippine studies

Ateneo de Manila University • Loyola Heights, Quezon City • 1108 Philippines

Father Manuel Peypoch, S.J.

Miguel A. Bernard, S.J.

Philippine Studies vol. 44, no. 3 (1996): 392–411

Copyright © Ateneo de Manila University

Philippine Studies is published by the Ateneo de Manila University. Contents may not be copied or sent via email or other means to multiple sites and posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's written permission. Users may download and print articles for individual, noncommercial use only. However, unless prior permission has been obtained, you may not download an entire issue of a journal, or download multiple copies of articles.

Please contact the publisher for any further use of this work at philstudies@admu.edu.ph.

<http://www.philippinestudies.net>
Fri June 27 13:30:20 2008

Father Manuel Peypoch, S.J.

Miguel A. Bernad S.J.



On 15 August 1896, feast of the Assumption, a group of Spanish Jesuits arrived by ship in Manila, as additional members of the Jesuit Philippine Mission. By coincidence, it was also in that month that a little skirmish in the outskirts of Manila would mark the start of a larger conflict that we now know as the Philippine Revolution.

Among the new arrivals was a twenty-six-year-old scholastic named Manuel Peypoch. He was assigned to teach at the Ateneo Municipal de Manila, where he was to stay a total of twenty years.

Early Years in Spain

Manuel Peypoch y Solá was born on 2 December 1870 in the village of Estany (Diocese of Vich) in Cataluña, Spain. His father, Pedro Peypoch, was a native of Estany, his mother, Antonia Solá, was from the neighboring town of Artés.

Manuel was the eldest of five children, the others being Pilar, Antonio, Melchor and Emilia. It was a devout family. "We were all brought up devout Christians," his brother Antonio was to state later.¹ It was not surprising that Manuel was baptized the day after his birth, nor that of the five children, one was to become a Jesuit priest and another (Pilar) a Carmelite nun.

Manuel received his primary education in Artés (his mother's hometown) from a priest (named Don Mateo) who tutored him in the rudiments, including Latin grammar.

For his secondary education he was enrolled as an "interno" in the "Colegio de San Ignacio" of the Jesuits in Manresa. There, besides a good classical education, he acquired those attitudes and habits which reinforced the piety and right conduct that he had learned at home.²

At eighteen, with his baccalaureate completed, Manuel travelled to Veruela in Aragón, where, on the eve of the feast of St. Ignatius

Loyola, 30 July 1888, he entered the Jesuit novitiate. He remained at Veruela five years (1888–1893), two years as a novice, two in the juniorate of classical studies, and one in the first year of philosophy.

For the second and third years of the philosophy program he went to the Colegio Máximo at Tortosa, which housed the faculties of philosophy and theology.

The period of teaching required of Jesuit scholastics as part of their training (in English called the “regency,” in Spanish “maestrillo”) is today a much shortened period. In PeyPOCH’s time it lasted five years. He spent the first year teaching Latin and Greek at the Jesuit college (named after St. Joseph) at Valencia, on the eastern seaboard of Spain. The remainder of his five-year regency he spent in the Philippines, where (as previously mentioned) he arrived on the feast of the Assumption, in August 1896.

Turbulent Years

The four years from 1896 to 1900 were a period of turmoil. In 1896 the Revolution began against Spain. It lasted till December 1897 when the Pact of Biak-na-Bato brought about a deceptive peace. It was shattered five months later by the guns of Dewey blasting out of existence the Spanish navy in Cavite. In June 1898 Aguinaldo (back from Hong Kong) proclaimed Philippine Independence. The fighting with Spanish troops was resumed. In August the Americans took over the Walled City of Manila. In February 1899 the Philippine American War began, lasting in some places until 1902.

Throughout most of this time, the Ateneo as a school continued operation.

The Ateneo was then in the Walled City, next to the Archbishop’s palace, thus giving the street its name, Calle Arzobispo. The Ateneo itself was a complex of three buildings situated side by side along Arzobispo Street. One was the school building, beside it was the “Mission House” or Jesuit residence, and beside that the beautiful San Ignacio church. The school building and the Mission House were separated by a street, but the two buildings were connected by a covered bridge built high over the street.

The school building was a large edifice three storeys high, built around two courtyards or “patios.” It housed not only the classrooms and laboratories but also the dormitories for the “internos” or “live-in” students. The building also contained the library, an auditorium

or "salón de actos," a students' chapel, dining room and kitchen, and a well-known Museum of Natural History to which Rizal had contributed many specimens.

It was in this setting that Peypoch and the other Jesuits lived a reasonably quiet life during the turbulent years of the Revolution. One event did cause much emotional stress to many of the Jesuits. It was the imprisonment and trial of Dr. Jose Rizal, and his execution on 30 December 1896.

Another (and for the Spaniards a more traumatic event) was the signing of the Treaty of Paris in December 1898, by which Spain ceded to the United States the sovereignty over the Islands. This ending of Spanish rule over the archipelago would eventually put an end also to the Spanish presence at the Ateneo de Manila.

Peypoch's assignment during those years was the teaching of Latin, Greek and Spanish (and various other subjects) in the graded program of the Jesuit *Ratio Studiorum*. The student began with "Infima Gramatica," moving up the next year to "Media" then to "Suprema," then to "Humanities" and then to Rhetoric. The last of the six-year program was devoted to scholastic philosophy and to the sciences of physics, chemistry, and "natural history" (today called biology). Scattered along the course were various other subjects: history, geography, mathematics, and of course Religion. Religion was not only taught formally in class, but was also lived as part of the students' life. Those who wished to live it more intensely, and also do something to help the neighbor, joined the "Congregación Mariana," or Sodality of Our Lady. Peypoch, both at the Ateneo and later at Manresa, was to be deeply involved with the Sodality and the formation of sodalists.

American Experience

By 1900 Peypoch had completed his five-year regency (four years at the Ateneo, one year in Valencia). He then went back to Spain. But instead of being admitted at once to the theology course at Tortosa, he was sent back to the college of Valencia to await developments. The Catalogue of the Aragon Province for 1901 lists him as "awaiting assignment" (*expectat destinationem*).

Later in the year, in time for the opening of schools in the autumn, Peypoch and two others of the Aragon Province belonging to the Philippine Mission were sent to the United States for theology.

The change of sovereignty over the Philippine Islands made it necessary for those working there to know English.

The three seem to have been especially chosen, for they were certainly among the more brilliant of their group. The other two besides PeyPOCH were Jose Coronas and Joaquin Vilallonga. Vilallonga had already completed three years of theology and was entering on his fourth. Coronas and PeyPOCH were just beginning.³

For theology they went to St. Louis University directed by the Jesuits at St. Louis, Missouri, where Vilallonga would later crown his theological studies with a brilliant "Grand Act": a public "defense" of the entire range of scholastic theology. President Theodore Roosevelt (who was at St. Louis for the International Exposition) was in the audience.⁴

That was in 1903. Coronas and PeyPOCH were then in their second year of theology. After the completion of the third year in the summer of 1904 they were ordained priests.

In the school-year 1904-1905 they made their fourth and final year of theology, already ordained priests. The four-year theology course ended with the usual two-hour comprehensive oral examination covering the entire range of scholastic theology.

In the autumn of 1905 PeyPOCH and Coronas left St. Louis and went to Florissant, Missouri, to make the Tertianship, the last stage in the long Jesuit formation before their final vows.

With tertianship completed, they returned in the summer of 1906 to the Philippines, PeyPOCH back to the Ateneo, Coronas being assigned to the Manila Observatory, where he was to do important work in terrestrial magnetism.

A Multiple Apostolate

The Ateneo in 1906 was still in the Walled City (where it would remain until the fire of 1932). But its official name had been changed. Founded in 1859 at the request of Manila's city officials and other prominent citizens, the Jesuit school had been subsidized by the City so that any male student with talent could be admitted, regardless of the family's financial standing. With American sovereignty established over the Islands and its principle of separation of church and state (a principle badly misunderstood and rigorously implemented) the government subsidy to the Ateneo ended at once. Henceforth the school would have to depend for support on tuition fees paid by

the students. The word "Municipal" was therefore dropped and the institution became known simply as the Ateneo de Manila.

A few months after his return to the Ateneo, Fr. Peypoch made his final vows, the solemn profession of poverty, chastity, obedience, and the fourth vow of special obedience to the Pope with regard to "missions," meaning papal assignments. The event was held in the church of San Ignacio, adjacent to the Ateneo.⁵

During the next sixteen years Peypoch's principal assignment at the Ateneo was to teach the class of "Humanities" and of Rhetoric, but this time, besides Latin, Greek and Spanish, he also taught English. His five-year stay in the United States had given him a mastery of the language. He had other duties on the side. He taught Religion ("Apolegetics"). He was a regular confessor in the church of San Ignacio and said Mass and gave homilies there; he gave religious instruction to the household help; he was director of one of the units of the boys' Sodality of the Virgin Mary; and he was one of the prefects of discipline for the day scholars.⁶ It was during this sixteen-year stay as a priest at the Ateneo that he took up one of his favorite apostolates: the teaching of catechism.

Devoted Catechists

The teaching of catechism to children of the poor was not new in the Ateneo. It had been done almost from the start of the school's existence, and was part of Jesuit tradition begun by St. Ignatius himself. Peypoch, in taking up this apostolate, was therefore not an innovator. What he brought to the task was a great zeal and a contagious enthusiasm caught by the Ateneo students who volunteered to teach catechism with him.⁷

At first the venue for their teaching was San Ignacio church itself, where the children gathered for catechetical instruction on Sundays. Included among these children were not merely the out-of-school youths but also the children who were enrolled in the newly established public schools where religious instruction was not permitted. Even children otherwise taken care of religiously came to the catechism classes. One of those who learned their catechism in the Jesuit church became a Cardinal.⁸

Later, while others took over the catechism classes in the church, Father Peypoch and his volunteers established a new catechetical center in a poor area across the Pasig, named Palomar.

Palomar was a swampy area in Manila's Tondo district where many poor people lived in their shanties. It was also a tannery, and the smell of the drying hides combined with the smell of the mud to give the place a very unpleasant atmosphere. It was there, in 1912, that Father PeyPOCH and his small group of Ateneo sodalists established their catechetical center. One of them was later to write: "With what energy, what fervor Fr. PeyPOCH preached in Tagalog to the crowds that came to attend the catechism class on Sundays!"⁹

Not everyone came to listen. Some came to scoff, for "wolves in men's clothing" (meaning the Protestant evangelists and the Aglipayans) had been at work among the poor of Tondo, injecting them with anti-Catholic and anti-clerical sentiments. So the weekly arrival of PeyPOCH and his young catechists was greeted with cat-calls and shouted insults.¹⁰

Despite the difficulties, this catechetical apostolate was not without results. Couples who had been living together without benefit of clergy were properly married. Their children were baptized. Older children were prepared for first communion, celebrated in the Tondo parish church, followed by communion breakfasts in the house of a physician (Dr. Nolasco) who had been one of PeyPOCH's students.¹¹

For several years every Sunday PeyPOCH and his volunteer catechists continued to teach catechism at Palomar. Then they moved their classes to another poor section, this time in Quiapo. But there were also other places where PeyPOCH's catechists, either singly or in small groups, taught catechism. A well-known Manila businessman, Mr. Emerito Ramos Sr., recalls that as a boy he was assigned by Fr. PeyPOCH to teach catechism to children at the church in Santa Ana.

PeyPOCH took the catechetical apostolate very seriously as an answer to an urgent need. He felt that without religious instruction the people would be little better than pagans. One of his regrets was that in his native Cataluña the children were taught catechism not in the language (Catalan) in which they talked and did their thinking but in the official Castillian which was really a foreign language to them.¹²

It was this intense desire of PeyPOCH to provide religious instruction to people that impressed those who lived with him at the Ateneo. One of them, Brother Jaime Juvells (who knew PeyPOCH both at the Ateneo and in the novitiate at Veruela) was to say of him later, "Assigned anew to the Ateneo as professor of Latin and humanities, he also devoted himself to the ministry, particularly to teaching cat-

echism. We all loved him and revered him for his zeal for the sanctification of souls.¹³

Peypoch continued his catechetical apostolate until 1921, when the newly arrived American Jesuit priests and scholastics, who had come to take over the administration of the Ateneo de Manila, also assumed responsibility for teaching catechism to the poor. Peypoch then turned to an even more difficult ministry, that of chaplain to prisoners, a matter to which we shall return later.

It is worth noting that under the American Jesuits (and later under Filipino Jesuits) the catechetical apostolate was expanded and given better organization. The instruction was systematized, and many more centers were opened, including one at the slaughterhouse. Also many more students became volunteer catechists.

It should also be noted that several of these volunteer catechists continued giving catechetical instruction on their own initiative in various areas of Manila all through the Japanese occupation. Some of them were killed by the Japanese.¹⁴

A Literary Sideline

There was another apostolate that Peypoch took up at this time. It was grandly described as "the apostolate of the press," but in Peypoch's case it was a modest effort, something to do on the side besides his other commitments. He did not write books nor did he become a writer of note. But he wrote well (in Spanish) and with facility. He was a regular contributor to *Cultura Social*, the principal periodical of the Jesuits in Manila at that time. He was also "the chief collaborator" (meaning probably moderator) of the literary magazine *Ateneo* and it is possible that he was its founder. He also edited a leaflet entitled *Hoja Azul*.¹⁵

One of Peypoch's chief topics in his writings was the exposure of freemasonry as an organization hostile to religion. And it seems that his warnings were heeded, for it is said that some who had become masons "for convenience" and without knowing what they were getting into, gave up their membership.¹⁶

Peypoch had the reputation of being a poet. That is to say, he composed verses (in Spanish) with facility. "I was not born a poet," he said, "but in school they forced us to write verses and I came to have a deep love for poetry."¹⁷ This literary gift was interesting, since

it coexisted with an interest in mathematics. "Poet and mathematician: what a combination!" exclaimed one of his former students.¹⁸ Later, in Manresa, Peypoch would entertain his young sodalists by composing impromptu verses on their name-days and other occasions.¹⁹

A New Apostolate

In 1921, Jesuit superiors in Rome decided that the Jesuit Philippine Mission should be staffed by American Jesuits from the Province of Maryland-New York, replacing the Spanish Jesuits from the Aragon Province. This turn-over was done gradually, beginning with the Ateneo de Manila.²⁰

Of the Spanish Jesuits who had been at the Ateneo, some were sent to Mindanao, the majority were reassigned to India. There were, however, a few who remained at the Ateneo, and one of them was Peypoch.²¹

One of the first things that the new administration did was to change the structure of studies. The baccalaureate course at the Ateneo had been a six-year program (five years in Rizal's time). This was not only the pattern of the *Ratio Studiorum*, but it was also the pattern of the baccalaureate course in Spain and France. The American Jesuits replaced this six-year program with the American model of a four-year high school and a four-year college.

In this new set-up, Peypoch continued to teach Latin and Spanish to the boys in fourth year high school and the "freshmen" in college. He of course no longer taught English as there were enough Americans to do that. English was now the official language of the school, but Peypoch organized a "Spanish Academy" for those who wished to write in that language and learn more of Spanish literature.

He continued to direct a unit of the Sodality, and to hear confessions in the church. He also continued to write for *Cultura Social* and to edit the leaflet *Hoja Azul*.

But the biggest change in his life was in his apostolate. Relieved of his catechetical work, he turned to another work of charity: he became the chaplain of Bilibid Prison, at that time situated in the old site in the Santa Cruz area.

We do not have many details of his involvement with the prisoners, except two: (1) he gave special attention to those condemned to death; (2) he gave himself so much to the apostolate of the prison

that it ruined his health, and was the proximate cause of his being sent back to Spain.²²

His return to Spain was a painful one. To his many friends he bade a tearful farewell. "I go, out of obedience," he said, "but my heart and soul remain here. There is little of the Spanish left in me. I have been totally Filipinized." He added, "I shall return—if God wills it."²³

His attitude was not different from that of many Spanish Jesuit priests and brothers who had long been in the Islands and who were ordered to return to their homeland. In their view, an assignment to the missions was a lifetime commitment. They had expected to live here all their lives and to die here. To be ordered to go back home was like a sentence of death, a painful uprooting, an order to be obeyed, certainly, but a painful one.

La Santa Cueva

Back in Spain in 1922, Peypoch was sent to the Jesuit community at Roquetas, apparently to recuperate. The Jesuits in that community were engaged in various apostolates. Some of them were chaplains of a nearby leprosarium. Also living at Roquetas were the Director (Padre Rodés) and the staff of the noted astronomical observatory, "Observatorio del Ebro."²⁴

Back in "perfect health" as we are told²⁵ Peypoch was sent to his last assignment, Manresa, where he was to spend the last twelve years of his life.

Manresa is dear to the heart of every Jesuit. It was there that St. Ignatius Loyola, newly converted from a worldly life, spent a year as "a poor unknown pilgrim" and underwent his period of testing and growth in the spiritual life. The Spiritual Exercises, his hand-book of spirituality, had their origin in Manresa.

Although it has become an industrial city, Manresa has places which remind the devout visitor of that Pilgrim of 1522-23: the Gothic cathedral (the "Seo") on the heights, where Ignatius heard Mass; the river Cardoner and the bridge across it and the cliffs along its banks, the scene of some of his great visions and spiritual illuminations; above all, the cave where he spent hours of solitary prayer.

That cave has become a chapel, "la Santa Cueva," and beside it the Jesuit residence which at times was a novitiate, at other times a tertianship, at still other times a house where retreatants make the Spiritual Exercises.

It was to Manresa and to the Santa Cueva that Father Peypoch was assigned as "operarius"—a "worker" in the Lord's vineyard. His ministry was twofold: he directed retreatants in the Spiritual Exercises, and he directed a sodality for boys.

"Congregantes"

The Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary, founded in Rome in the sixteenth century, had become one of the major institutions of Jesuit apostolate. In the United States and some other countries, the "sodality" had a predominantly feminine membership, but in Spain it preserved its original charism of being an association of men of various ages and in various walks of life. They dedicated themselves to God under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Its official name in Spain was "Congregación Mariana." Its members were called "congregantes." In Barcelona the sodality for professionals and businessmen was famous. There were two units: the "Congregación mayor" or senior sodality for adults, and the "menor" or junior sodality for boys under fifteen. It was this latter that at Manresa was assigned to Father Peypoch to direct.

Dispersal

For eight years Peypoch lived a fairly placid existence at the Santa Cueva. In 1932 the blow fell. The newly created Spanish Republic, controlled largely by anticlericals, decreed the dissolution of the Jesuits and the confiscation of their houses, schools and other properties. The Jesuits were not physically expelled from the country (as in the decree of expulsion of Carlos III in 1767) but they were forbidden to live together as a religious community or to engage in public religious ministries.²⁶

As a result, the novices and young scholastics were sent abroad to continue their formation in other countries of Europe. But the older Jesuits stayed behind, living by twos or threes or singly in rented apartments.

Forbidden to exercise the priestly ministry in public, the Jesuits contented themselves with doing certain private ministries, like celebrating Mass privately and directing retreatants in the Spiritual Exercises, the retreats being held in hospitals or other institutions. But Peypoch did not disband his sodality for boys.

Living in an apartment with one lay-brother companion, he converted it into a meeting place for his young sodalists. He called it a "Cultural Center," which indeed it was, for he gave lessons in English and other subjects.

During the first four years from 1932 till the early months of 1936, Father Peypoch continued with his work unmolested. On the first Sunday of each month he would celebrate Mass with his sodalists. On other days he would give them lessons. In the afternoons he would go out for a walk in the city streets or out in the country, usually accompanied by a group of boys. Most of them were his "congregantes." But in the poorer sections of the city or the countryside, if they met other boys, they would invite them to join them in the walk. Occasionally on a holiday they would go to the farm of one or other of his friends for a day's picnic.

We know these things from the testimony (made under oath) at the diocesan process held, twelve years after his death, to inquire into his life and the circumstances of his dying, in view of his possible beatification. Some of the witnesses at that inquiry were men who in their youth had been members of his sodality. One of the witnesses was a businessman whose son, who had died young, had been a sodalist under Peypoch. The businessman was genuinely grateful for the good influence that the priest had exerted upon his son. Some of the witnesses were women who at various times had known Father Peypoch or had observed his conduct.

One incident narrated by several witnesses caused a deep impression. They were taking their afternoon walk on a country road when one of the boys, with no evil intent and merely in a playful mood, threw a stone into the air. It fell on the head of Father Peypoch, drawing blood. There was of course consternation among the boys, especially in the one who had thrown the stone, who looked with horror at what he had done. But Fr. Peypoch brushed away the incident. "Don't worry. This is nothing," he said.²⁷

Those afternoon walks that he took with the boys, although primarily recreational, were not exclusively so. He would take them to some places where they would have a catechism lesson. Or they would say the Rosary together.

From this little band of young "congregantes" some vocations to the priesthood developed. The Jesuit novitiates had been closed by the government, but the diocesan seminaries remained open. Peypoch would visit them there regularly and (if they needed it) provide for their financial needs.

An inkling of the coming persecution came one day when Father PeyPOCH brought some of his boys to the country place of a friend for a picnic. When they got there, the owners of the villa said, "We are hurrying back to the city because there is bad news over the radio. Something is brewing." Father PeyPOCH "ever an optimist," said "Nothing will happen."

He went back to Manresa for the last session of the Spiritual Exercises that the dispersed Jesuits in Manresa were making together and which PeyPOCH was directing. Scattered throughout the city, living alone or in pairs in their various rented apartments, they now came together to make the Spiritual Exercises in one of the city's Catholic clinics. It was their last act together before the revolution engulfed them.

Historical Background

The violent death of Father PeyPOCH was part of the terrible massacre of 1936 in which 6,832 priests and religious were killed (some of them after prolonged torture). To understand the meaning of that terrible episode, a brief survey of the historical background might be helpful.

In April 1931, as a climax to widespread unrest and riotings, King Alfonso XIII left Spain and a Republic was proclaimed, the second in Spanish history.²⁸ A provisional government was set up in Madrid. In Barcelona a regional government (the "Generalitat") was established for all Cataluña (to which Manresa belonged).

A few weeks later, in mid-May 1931, more than a hundred churches were sacked by mobs in several cities (Madrid, Valencia, Alicante, Murcia, Seville, Cadiz, etc.). In June, elections were held for the Cortes (Parliament) in which many seats were won by "Leftists" and extremists. In December 1931 a new Constitution was proclaimed.

Almost immediately a religious persecution was started by the new Republican government aimed at destroying, if not Religion itself, at least the power of the Church. On 16 January (1932) the Crucifix was ordered removed from all schools. Three days later the Catholic daily newspaper *El Debate* was suppressed. On 2 February a law was passed permitting divorce. On 6 February all Catholic cemeteries were declared government property. On 11 March the decree was issued forbidding the teaching of religion in schools. But those were merely the initial acts of the persecution.

The highlight of those initial acts against Religion was the decree of 23 January 1932 suppressing the Society of Jesus in Spain and ordering the confiscation of Jesuit houses, schools and other institutions.

Beginning September 1932 and lasting into 1933, a new wave of violence took place in many cities in which more churches and convents were sacked. This violent movement had a climax in 1934 in an armed revolt led by socialists in Asturias, in the northwest corner of Spain. In the capital city of Oviedo they destroyed the cathedral and other religious buildings and murdered thirty-four priests—the first victims of what, two years later, would become a general massacre.

The year 1935 showed the total ineptness and instability of the Madrid government. Five ministerial crises brought about the downfall of as many governments. It finally resulted in the dissolution of the Cortes and the call for general elections.

At this point a new development took place that strengthened the extremist cause. In various countries (notably in France) the Communists were allying themselves with more respectable parties to form a "Popular Front" and thus gain power. In Spain, the call for general elections was issued on 7 January 1936. Nine days later a Manifesto was published creating the Popular Front in which the extremists allied themselves with the more respectable and moderate Republicans. The extremists included socialists, communists, anarchists, syndecelists and the Marxist Workers' Party (*Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista*—POUM). Unable to gain power by themselves, they got it by allying themselves with moderates in the Popular Front.

In the elections of February 1936 this Popular Front won the majority of seats in the new Cortes. A new, more extreme government was installed. Meanwhile the attacks by mobs on churches and religious institutions continued. The riots and disorders became more intense in June 1936.

In July the Spanish army revolted against the Republican government and issued a call to restore order and put an end to the riotings and destruction. With the adhesion of many civilians to that army revolt and the decision of the government to fight the army, it became a general Civil War. On 24 July the army established in Burgos a military government named "Junta para la Defensa Nacional."

The Republican government meanwhile was intensifying the attempts to destroy all vestige of Religion. It decreed the closing of all religious institutions, the confiscation of all religious buildings, all

charitable institutions (like hospitals and orphanages) under the direction of religious, and the seizure of all parochial records.

On 3 August 1936 government airplanes dropped bombs on one of the most sacred and most popular shrines of Spain, the basilica of Our Lady of the Pillar in Zaragoza. (The fact that none of the bombs exploded was considered by many to be miraculous.)

On 7 August the national monument to the Sacred Heart of Jesus was destroyed, and the image of Jesus was "executed" by a firing squad. This mock execution of a statue of Jesus Christ was peculiarly symbolic. King Alfonso XIII, before his dethronement, had consecrated the land and the people of Spain to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in a solemn ceremony held in front of this very statue. What the demented mob was doing was, in effect, a repudiation of that consecration. That mob and their leaders were in effect dramatizing what was going on in the entire country: the violent de-Christianization of a once gloriously Christian nation.²⁹

The Massacre

Meantime the general massacre of priests and religious had begun and was to continue for over a year. It lasted from the summer of 1936 to the winter of 1937. The numbers of those killed were as follows:

Bishops	12
Secular priests	4,172
Religious priests and brothers	2,365
Women religious	283
Total	6,832

This number does not include the lay persons (men and women) who were killed in uncounted numbers. The possession of a crucifix or medal or rosary was considered enough reason for putting a person to death.

Of the 2,365 male religious, the largest numbers belonged to nine orders or congregations as follows:

Claretians	259	Augustinians	135
Franciscans	226	Dominicans	132
Escolapians	204	Jesuits	114
Marist Brothers	176	Salesians	93
La Salle Brothers	163		

Of the women religious, the largest number belonged to the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, of whom thirty were killed.³⁰

The brutality with which many priests were tortured before their deaths is almost beyond belief. In Valencia they gouged out the eye of a priest, cut off his tongue and one ear and then beheaded him. Another was tied to a tree, drenched with gasoline and set on fire. Another priest was treated like St. Sebastian, except that instead of arrows they used bullets. With pistols they shot him first in the arms, then in the legs, then in different parts of the body and finally in the heart. One priest was stripped naked, his genitals were cut off and stuffed into his mouth. One bishop was held standing by two men while another (who had previously boasted that he would eat the testicles of a bishop) cut off the bishop's testicles and went off to various bars to show off his prize.

Of such people were those who, throughout Spain, killed 12 bishops and more than 6,000 priests, brothers and nuns and unknown number of lay persons.

Peypoch's Last Days

During the first four turbulent years from 1932 to 1936, Father Peypoch led a busy but quiet life in Manresa, living (as previously mentioned) with one lay-brother companion in an apartment which also served as the meeting place for his sodality of boys and which he called a Cultural Center, since among other things he taught them English. He did not engage in any activity that could in any way be considered political. His ministry was spiritual and cultural. His big objective was the Christian formation of boys who would grow up to be Christian men.

One morning in July 1936 policemen came to his "Cultural Center" and inspected the rooms. They took Father Peypoch to police headquarters for interrogation. Asked about his work, he told them that he was a priest, a Jesuit and a teacher of English. He was not treated badly. They even offered him coffee and milk—a fact which on his release he told to several persons and which he recorded in his diary. That diary was found on him after his death.

They released him in the afternoon. But sensing that he was no longer safe in his present apartment, he spent the night and the next few days with some friends. To those who had been anxious while he was detained by the police, he said, "I am not worthy to suffer like my Master."³¹

Receiving a tip that he was in imminent danger, he left quietly early one morning and walked toward Artés, his mother's hometown, where he had relatives. He thought he might be safer there. He avoided the highway and walked across the fields. Overtaken by nightfall, he slept on some straw in a farm shed.

Early the following morning, apparently not sure of the way, he asked a boy whom he met to lead him to a certain bridge. Arrived at the bridge he thanked the boy and dismissed him, saying that he now knew the rest of the way.

But there were people near the bridge and one of them, a woman, recognized him and hurried to the local Revolutionary Committee to report the presence of a priest. Father PeyPOCH realizing that someone had recognized him, decided not to proceed along the highway to Artés. Instead he detoured to a wayside restaurant to which, on several occasions, he had gone with his sodalists. It was called Las Tapias. He sat at a table, with his hands clasped on the table before him and was heard to murmur, "Lord, help me."

Presently some eight men came in and went to him and led him out. They ordered him to walk backwards before them with his hands up. With him thus walking backwards they went to a nearby grove of trees from where a shot was heard.

Coming out of the wood without the priest, the men went back to Las Tapias and ordered a meal. One of them said, "Today this meal is paid for by the Fig." They had taken the priest's wallet and were using his money.

In searching his pockets they must have found his diary, for soon a rumor spread that a priest had died who had written in his diary that at his recent interrogation at the police station he had been offered coffee and milk. That was how some of his friends in Manresa learned of his death, for he had mentioned to them the incident of the coffee.

Meantime the assassins had dragged the body from the wood where he had been killed to an intersection in the highway and left it lying beside the road. A businessman going by car to his factory saw the body and told his driver to stop. But when he told the driver to go and see whose body it was, the driver refused, being afraid. So the businessman got out himself and went over to the body. He lifted the burlap sack that covered the face and recognized the dead man as Father PeyPOCH. He replaced the covering and drove on to his factory. On returning he stopped again to make sure. Somebody must have moved the body in the meantime as it was in a different

position from when he first saw it. It had been lying on its back. Now it was on its side.

The businessman went home and told his driver to go and report the matter to the Red Cross. It must have been the Red Cross, or some other charitable person, who brought the body to the cemetery and buried it.

That occurred on the 29th of July 1936. Father Peypoch was then sixty-six years old. He had been forty-eight years a Jesuit and thirty-two years a priest. He had spent twenty years of his life in Manila (four as a scholastic and sixteen as a priest).

Several years after his death, when peace, order and sanity had returned to Spain, the Jesuits also went back to their old residence beside the Holy Cave of St. Ignatius that had been transformed into a chapel. And there in a crypt they reburied the remains of Father Peypoch, having exhumed them from his original grave.³²

Epilogue

What kind of a man was Peypoch? He has been described as tall, well built, good looking, very kind and affable, and with a good singing voice. Which may partly explain why many youngsters, in Manila and in Manresa, were attracted to him.

"We all loved him and revered him for his zeal for the sanctification of souls." That was the testimony of a Jesuit lay-brother who had known him for many years.

Today the Ateneo de Manila gives annually the Peypoch Award, named after Father Manuel Peypoch. It is awarded to priests and nuns, and occasionally to lay persons, for outstanding work in the catechetical or pastoral apostolate.

In the title to this modest article we have referred to Father Peypoch as a "Martyr." That is because the Holy See has applied the word to those who died in the persecution in Spain.³³

Notes

1. Antonio Peypoch Sola, then seventy-seven, was the first witness to be interrogated in the ecclesiastical Process of the Diocese of Vich (at Manresa) inquiring into "the life and fame of martyrdom" of his brother. The transcript of that investigation will be referred to as "Process."

2. Antonio Peypoch said of his brother: "He was of a lively temperament but of good natural character, inclined to piety, always obedient to his superiors.... I can affirm that he frequently went to this Sacrament (Eucharist) and that of penance." Process fol. 25v.

3. Besides priests some Spanish lay-brothers were also sent to the U.S. to learn English. One of them was Brother Juan Novellas, who later became aide to Bishop Jose Clos S.J. of Zamboanga, and after the bishop's death was assigned to the Ateneo de Manila.

4. On Vilallonga see: M. A. Bernad, "Father Joaquin Vilallonga, 1868-1963," *Philippine Studies* 12 (1964):32-50.

5. *Catalogus defunctorum in renata Societate*.—The biographical details given above, and those to be mentioned below, are from the annual catalogues of the Aragon Province. —The significance of Peypoch's admission to the Solemn Profession was not lost upon his fellow Jesuits. One of those present at the ceremony later told the canonical inquiry at Manresa that Peypoch had "studied theology in the United States, and he must have done so with such profit that he was admitted to the profession of four vows."—Process fol. 34.

6. Regarding his duties as prefect of discipline of day students, one of the Ateneo alumni remembers Father Peypoch standing every morning at the side entrance of the Ateneo where the students entered—doubtless to keep order, and also to note those who came late.

7. One of the more enthusiastic of the catechists who taught under Father Peypoch was Emerito Ramos Sr., who has all his life preserved a high veneration for Peypoch.

8. The late Cardinal Rufino Santos, Archbishop of Manila, told me that when he was a boy and a member of the Manila Cathedral boys' choir (escuela de tiples) he used to attend catechism classes in San Ignacio church, although his teacher was a Spanish Jesuit lay-brother, not Father Peypoch. - M.A.B.

9. Emeterio Barcelon, "El P. Manuel Peypoch, S.J., notas para un artículo," *Cultura Social* 27 (1993):14-15. Don Emeterio Barcelon, one of Peypoch's former students and socialists (Ateneo AB '15) was a prominent lawyer, businessman and poet, who wrote the lyrics for the official hymn of the XXXIII International Eucharistic Congress held in Manila in 1937. His son, Emeterio Barcelon Jr, has become a Jesuit priest.

10. Barcelon, "El P. Manuel Peypoch, S.J."

11. Ibid.

12. Peypoch put it strongly: it was to "de-Christianize" the youth of Cataluña: "Obligar a nuestros niños catalanes a aprender el catecismo en castellano, idioma que no entienden, es un disparate, es desecristianización." - Quoted by Barcelon, loc. cit.

13. Process fol. 34v.

14. One of them was Manuel de Leon (of diminutive size) who had been my student at the Ateneo in third year high school in 1939-40 and who graduated in 1941. He had been a member of the ACIL (Ateneo Catechetical Instruction League). During the war he taught catechism on his own in a poor district. His father, who was not too pious, asked him "Why do you waste time on that? What do you get out of it?" Manny replied, "Nothing here. Perhaps something later." Both he and his father were among those lined up and bayoneted by the Japanese during the systematic "zoning" (district by district) of Manila in January and February 1945. The people killed in this way must have numbered many thousands. Many more died from American shells during the shelling of Manila by land-based artillery. - M.A.B.

15. Process fol 34v.

16. "El P. Manuel Peypoch, S.J."

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. Among the witnesses at the Manresa ecclesiastical inquiry were two men who as boys had been members of Peypoch's sodality. One was a twenty-four-year-old medical student, another a twenty-two-year old clerk in a commercial firm. One said, "Although (Peypoch) was of a lively temperament, he kept himself always under control. He was of great humility and very affable. He knew how to win the sympathy and affection of all." The other said, he "was of a very affable character, very humble, very simple, and showed signs of very great patience. If he had to correct anyone, he did so very gently . . ." He added, "He composed verses easily and his poetic vein was inexhaustible." (Process fols. 65ff and 68ff)

20. The turn-over from the Spanish to the American Jesuits was done in stages over a period of five years. In 1921 the Americans took over the Ateneo de Manila and the Seminary-College of Vigan. The entire Philippine Jesuit Mission however remained under the jurisdiction of the Aragon Province, and Father Joaquin Vilallonga was installed as Mission Superior. In the next few years the Americans gradually took over the seminary of San Jose. In 1926 American Jesuits took over the northern Mindanao missions. Finally in 1927 the entire Philippine Mission was placed under the jurisdiction of the province of Maryland-New York. One institution remained under a Spanish director until the Japanese invasion of 1941. That was the Manila Observatory, under Father Miguel Selga, although there were Americans and Filipinos in charge of various departments.

21. The Catalogue for 1923 (prepared in 1922) lists thirty-three members of the Jesuit Community at the Ateneo: thirteen priests, eleven scholastics, nine lay-brothers. The brothers were all Spaniards, the scholastics were all Americans. Of the thirteen priests, one was a Filipino, four were Spaniards, eight were Americans. But of the four Spaniards, only two (Manuel Peypoch and Mario Sauras) were connected with the Ateneo. The other two (Juan Anguela and Victoriano Pascual) were engaged in other ministries. The lone Filipino was Father Jose Ma. Sigulon, who held a doctorate in canon law, and was editor of one periodical (*Boletin*) and associate editor of another (*Cultura Social*).

22. Testimony of Brother Juvells. Process 34-34v.

23. Barcelona, "El P. Manuel Peypoch, S.J."

24. The Ebro Observatory was a "daughter institution" of the Manila Observatory. Its founders had trained in Manila under Fathers Faura and Algué.

25. Juvells' testimony. Process 34-34v.

26. The reason for singling out the Jesuits for suppression was twofold: first, their influence over the youth (to destroy Religion, a first step in the prohibition of a religious formation of the young); second, the Jesuit "Fourth Vow" on special obedience to the Pope, misunderstood by anticlericals as "unpatriotic allegiance to a foreign Power."

27. One of the witnesses who mentioned this incident at the ecclesiastical inquiry was the father of the boy who had thrown the stone.

28. The first Republic was the short-lived one proclaimed in 1873 and ended in 1874.

29. The foregoing summary has been greatly facilitated by a detailed chronology of events on pages 397-404 of *La persecución religiosa en España durante la Segunda República, 1931-1939* by Vicente Carcel Ortí (Madrid, Ediciones Rialp, 1950).

30. The figures are in Carcel Ortí, *La persecución*, pp. 235 ff., which also contains a break-down of the number of secular priests killed in each diocese. The most numerous were in the dioceses of Madrid-Alcala (334), Valencia (327), Tortosa (316), Toledo (286), Barcelona (279). The fewest (one priest each) were in Calaborra, Soria, Salamanca, Tarazona, Zamora.

31. In 1939, three years after Father PeyPOCH's death, the full details of his last days were received in Manila from Jesuit headquarters in Barcelona, and published under the title "Últimos momentos de un mártir: R. P. Manuel PeyPOCH Solá S.J.," *Cultura Social* 28 (1940) 242-44. The article is unsigned but is probably by either Father Victoriano Pascual or Father Jose Ma. Siguion. This account coincides substantially but differs in some detail from the testimonies given at the ecclesiastical inquiry in Manresa in 1946. Our account of PeyPOCH's last days in these pages is an abbreviated summary from these two sources, omitting many details. One detail we have omitted is the fact that there was a lay-brother with Father PeyPOCH when arrested for interrogation, Brother Frasno. Another detail omitted is that PeyPOCH was killed not by soldiers but by members of the POUM (Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista).

32. Process fol. 66-66v.

33. On 16 April 1939 Pope Pius XII, one month after being elected Pope, sent a message to the people of Spain, praising the heroism of the "martyrs" of the persecution. More recently, Pope John Paul II has beatified several groups killed in the persecution of 1936, calling them all martyrs: in 1987 three Carmelite nuns killed in Guadalajara; in 1989, twenty young Passionists killed in Centro Real; in 1990 several La Salle Brothers and Passionists killed in various places. (Carcel Ortí, *La persecución*, pp. 403-4.)