

Teodorico Pedrini
and the Ruin of the
Christian Mission
to China

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By

Peter Allsop

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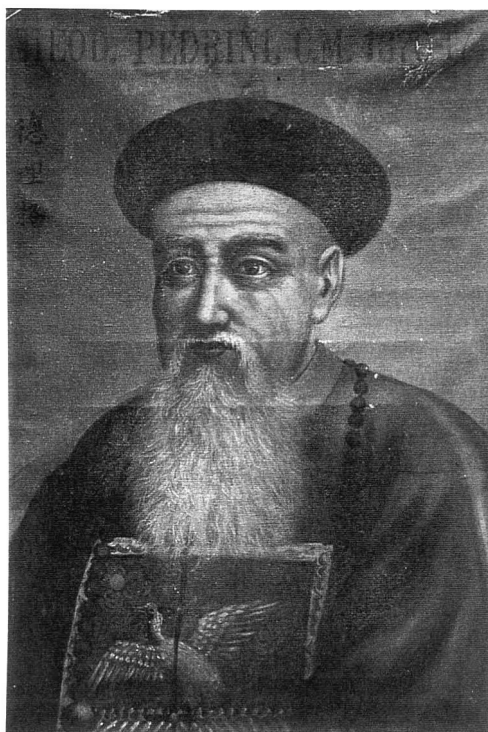
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To the memory of my dear wife
for all her love and patience
over so many years



Frontispiece. Undated portrait in oil of Teodorico Pedrini; whereabouts at present unknown.

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PREFACE

I first came across Teodrico Pedrini, CM, in 1998 when I convened the Biennial Conference on Baroque Music at the University of Exeter, UK. I had just finished a biography of Arcangelo Corelli and was somewhat taken aback when one of the delegates, Prof. Joyce Lindorf of Temple University, Philadelphia asked me if I knew that Corelli's music was performed at the imperial court of China in the early 18th century—a discovery she had made while teaching harpsichord in China. Knowing that I had spent many years researching in Roman archives, she then enlisted my help in undertaking a preliminary investigation in the archive of the Collegio Leoniano, now the Roman House of the Congregation of the Mission. I was completely unprepared for the discovery which awaited me there of over 400 pages of his letters. Initially, it was Pedrini's activities as a musician which drew my interest, but I quickly realised that this contribution, although intriguing in itself, paled into insignificance besides his chronicling of the course of the Chinese Rites Controversy (of which I knew nothing) and the bitter rivalries between the Jesuits and the other orders in Beijing, especially the Propaganda Fide missionaries. As I became acquainted with work in this field, I was staggered to discover that this hostility had never been fully laid to rest, and that present-day commentators could be scarcely less partisan than those of the past. As much of this work over recent years bears a pronounced Jesuit bias, this viewpoint has become the conventional wisdom regarding the course of the controversy. Pedrini, on the opposing side, has been stigmatised as a deranged fanatic whose irresponsible obstinacy and dishonesty fatally compromised the entire mission to China.

This all represented a watershed for me, as I turned from musicology to missiology. Over a four-year period, I discovered more than 1000 further pages of his letters mainly in Rome, Paris, and Naples and I do not doubt that there will be others. I had planned a 2-volume study dividing at 1724—the date of the implementation of the proscription of Christianity, but frankly the historical importance of Volume I would have far outweighed that of Volume II. I therefore decided to condense the second volume into a single chapter. I originally intended to write a Hollywood-style blockbuster of the stranger-than-fiction variety based on the extraordinary events of Pedrini's life, but I soon came to realise that what I had to say could not match the power and intensity of the letters themselves. My role gradually changed from narrator to commentator, explaining the

historical significance of his writings on the Rites issue which, to say the least, differ radically from today's widely accepted views. These priceless documents shed a whole new light on this crucially important phase both in Sino-European relations and within Catholic Europe itself. The overwhelming imperative, it seemed to me, was to make a substantial number of letters available in English translations so as to reach the widest possible readership. Without this perspective, I believe that any attempt at an assessment of the final stages of the Rites Controversy and the Jesuits' role in its denouement is likely to be partial and incomplete. In the past, Pedrini's standpoint has so often been dismissed out of hand, and while there will still be those who choose to disregard his contribution, it can no longer simply be ignored. After all these centuries, it would seem common justice to present Pedrini's case as seen from his own eyes and in his own words.

Limitations

This research by any standard demanded a life's work, when in fact it has occupied just 10 years. I am by profession a music historian specialising in Italian seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century instrumental music and simply cannot claim the same level of expertise that the present study requires. I am only too well aware of my limitations: I am not a sinologist, I cannot translate classical Chinese or Manchu, or Portuguese for that matter. Pedrini's letters themselves are at times illegible, damaged, vague, and barely comprehensible even to Italians, and on some few occasions I have had to resort to guesswork. Over the centuries, transcriptions of the letters have appeared in print, and in translations (often French), and I have seized this opportunity to lighten the burden of my work—especially when the translators clearly had better linguistic skills than my own. My hope and expectation, however, is that, despite these imperfections which I fully acknowledge, the final products will not stray too far from their original intentions.

Acknowledgements

Almost as surprising as the letters themselves was the discovery that the mere mention of China seemed enough to heap riches on my undertaking: here I wish to acknowledge the following support:

The Leverhulme Trust for two substantial research fellowships over a period of four years.

Vincentian Studies Institute of DePaul University, Chicago, for research funding.

Ricci Institute for Chinese-Western Cultural History, San Francisco University for their continued support.

Central Conservatory of Music, Beijing, for giving me the opportunity to spend a number of years in China.

Fabio Galeffi and Gabriele Tarsetti, two indefatigable local historians from Pedrini's hometown of Fermo, whose tireless efforts have proved invaluable to me.

Ad Dudink who was responsible for most of the pinyin versions of Pedrini's romanisation.

Mark Davies, Carolinne White of Oxford Latin, and Ben Pullan for help with the Latin.

Alan Maynard for help with the French.

Franz Fabris and Myron Curtis for their decryptions of Pedrini's coded letters.

Paul Rule, who early on in my research generously allowed me access to his materials at The Ricci Institute, San Francisco.

Orthographical conventions

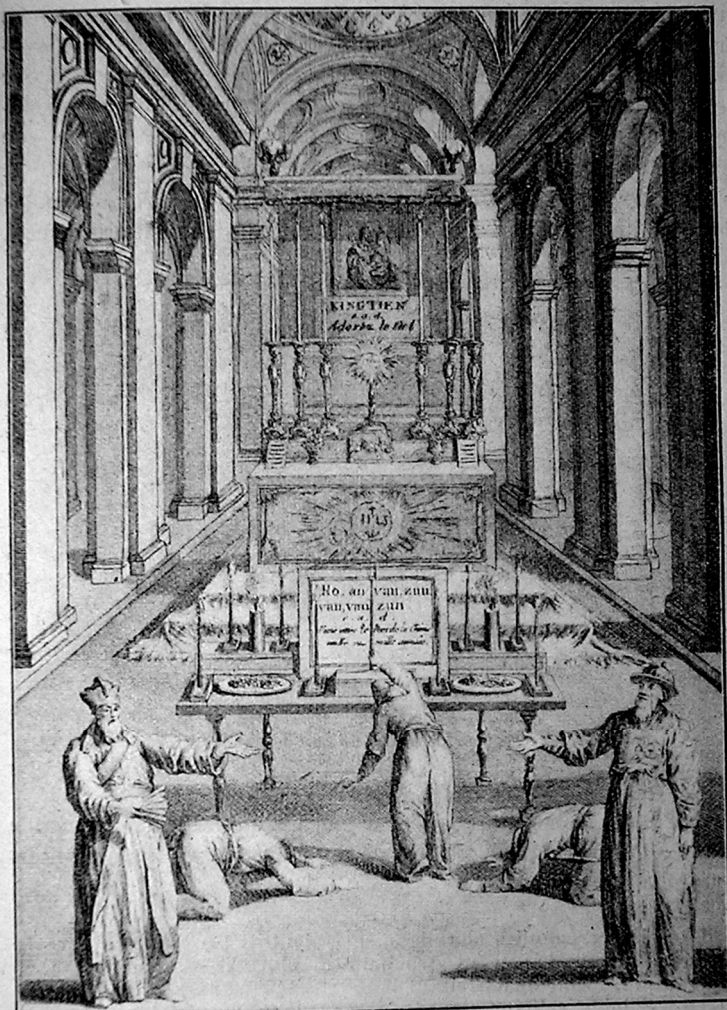
1. When long-established place-names exist such as Peking, Nanking, Canton, Tartary and Jehol, I have preferred these rather than their modern equivalents.
2. Instead of Pedrini's italianized names, I have used their original native form: e.g. João Mourão, Franz Thilisch.
3. Rather than Pedrini's sometimes incomprehensible romanisation (he prefers not to use characters), I have used pinyin, but without tone markings.
4. Occasionally, when no alternative suggested itself, Pedrini's romanisation has been retained.
5. Pedrini has a penchant for abbreviation, particularly in his use of Latin, which I have not sought to preserve.

6. I have increased the paragraphing and shortened some of the overlong sentences.

A note on sources

When I began work on this project, very few of Pedrini's letters were easily available in print; in the last month, transcriptions of the entire contents of the Collegio Leoniano archive, plus those in the Missione Hankou collection, have become available in a monumental volume edited by Fabio Galeffi and Gabriele Tarsetti. This will now be an indispensable source of reference for those familiar with the Italian language. Unlike the other main repositories of Pedrini's letters—Archivio Storico di Propaganda Fide and Missions Étrangères, Paris—the Collegio Leoniano archive is relatively little known and Pedrini's correspondence is distributed randomly through four bound volumes (Cina I, Cina II, Cina III and Missioni Straniere), plus some separate folios. This new publication will make the task of archiving this important resource much easier. In my text, I have listed each document by date, recipient (when known), and destination and given the main sources used for each translation. This does not necessarily include every known source, especially when there are many widely distributed copies.

Morchard Bishop, UK
2 July 2018.



MATHIEU RICCI

ADAM SCHALL

INTÉRIEUR D'UNE ÉGLISE DES JÉSUITES A PÉKIN
(GRAVURE DU XVIII^e SIÈCLE)

Reproduit de mémoire, mais exact dans son ensemble.

III.1 Use of tablets in church as given by Planchet.

1703

San Malò 15 Dicembre 1703 -

77

Ecco mi giú in gravissima febre, i Vascelli sono pronti, e non
 aspettano altro, che il vento favorevole, fo sono giú nel Porto di
 Malò, e vedo il grado. Diceno, sopra del qto. ha tra pochi giorni
 di marciare, Credo che sarà mercoledì, o giovedì partiranno. I
 Vascelli sono due, quello nel qto. io andavo si chiama le Charles,
 cioè Carlo, questo è il più grande, e il più bello, e più comodo, e
 indovato quasi tutto, ha 40 pezzi di Cannone, e vi saranno cento
 quaranta uomini di equipaggio senza i Passaggieri; Vi sono quattro
 fruenti, uno in qto. dove io sono, e tre nell'altro, e forse due nel
 mio, e due nell'altro. Il mio sup. può mi ha dato un qto. ^{di} ^{di}
 della mia Compagnia, il qto. si compo di Medicina, e di
 Chirurgia, cura bene sangue, e sta ora nella mia Spezieria di Casa
 in S. Lelio. fo vidi contenti, pote non vado di mio capriccio, ma
 modato del Signor di S. S. col Consenso de miei Superiori
 di Comp. loro S. S. hanno anche contenti che si degnino in me la
 Volontà del S. S. in qualunque maniera si sia, e servano la salute,
 sempre S. M. e allora curandi tutti curanti, e a vs. e S. M. di S. S.
 Deo in qto. bene vado
 Deo in S. M.

T. Pedrini indegn. Becc. d. C. M.

17

Nota, che si poteva concludersi: Toppo ritornato in carcere ac-
 cinnarono a venir le male nuove della Mission di Cina, ed
 fu ricevuto una lettera di Mr. Patrino, nella quale dice così dopo
 altre cose: Le la prego la stia in buona servira & valga questa
 di sua carità alla parte di Cina, benchè si giunga in ar-
 cante con alacrità & l'aperta rivolta ~~contro la~~ ~~St. Sede~~
 contro la St. Sede, che non si cosa sia più terribile, o che
 ella sia rimasta costì ad aspettar le notizie, ovvero che s'ini po-
 sta un Viaggio & venire. Ho novità di parte & il meglio che sia
 possibile: Se però non è ancora partita al ritorno del Barca,
 che qui si aspetta le scriverò ciò che è stato fatto fare & il
 S. Barco ora dove è o dove ma sem'è un altro, che si
 aspetta di Ora in Ora.

Le nuove di Cina in Compendio sono tali: Mr. Patrino fece
 un Decreto nel 1704 pubblicava la Decisione della St. Sede emanata
 nel dì 12. genn. 1704 - che condannava le Crimorie di
 Cina, che si ~~defendevano per buon: fatto.~~
~~di più risulterà l'esperto li~~ ~~questi fatti gli~~ ~~Missionarij~~ ~~secolari,~~ ~~e~~ ~~Negolarj,~~ ~~e~~ ~~parochi~~
~~colabori.~~ ~~Comerciarj,~~ che si segnalavano nella obediencia a' S. S.
 St. Sede, e al suo Legato, di più risulterà l'arrivo altri di in-
 ginie di fatti, e di parole, altri di Coste come il S. Regiz-
 cri della città Ong, del of. mi scrive il S. Patrino così: Il
 S. Spiani ancora sta partendo (in parte la Causa fin' &



III.4 Portrait of the elderly Kangxi Emperor



III.5 Engraving by Matteo Ripa of Jehol

168

Memorie storiche

quantunque le occasioni si siano sovente presentate.

N. XXXIII.

M E M O R I A

*Del Signor Pedrini presentata all' Imperatore
nel mese di Novembre 1715.*

T Eodorico Pedrini, uno de' più fedeli sudditi del vostro Imperio, con questa memoria, che V. M. gli ha comandato di formare, le rende conto degli affari de' Missionarj Europei. Eseguisco colla più rispettosa sommissione i suoi ordini; e per mettere sotto degli occhi di V. M. quest' affare in poche parole, io credo di doverlo ripigliare dalla sua origine.

Appena ebbero questi Missionarj messo piede nella Cina per predicarvi la Religione Cristiana, che si suscitavano fra loro de' dubbj intorno al culto, che rendevasi a Confucio, ed agli Antenati. Non credettero essi, che questo si potesse unire col Cristianesimo; e però, come si è costumato di fare, quando insorge qualche questione, ricorsero al Papa per consultarlo, e per riceverne la decisione. Non volle il Papa decidere da se solo, onde stabilì una Congregazione di persone virtuose egualmente che dotte, per esaminare se i culti Cinesi, de' quali era questione, potessero andar d' accordo co' principj della Cristiana Religione. I Gesuiti, che sono alla Cina, come ancora gli altri Missionarj d' Europa hanno mandate al Papa le loro informazioni. Ma nella esposizione de' fatti non s' accordavano, spiegandoli chi in una manie-

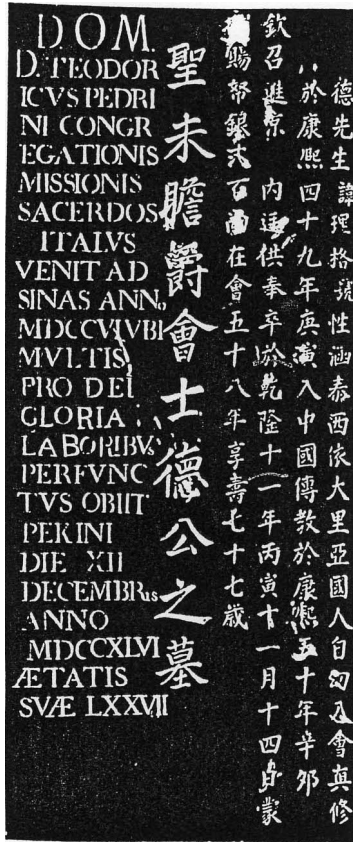
Ego infra scriptus, vocatus cum omnibus Europæis, qui habitant Pekini, in conspūm Imperat^{is} die 12^a, & 13^a Nov. currentis anni 1716, Testor, Imperatorem ad me conversum præcipiendo dixisse: **Te li Ke**, Theodorice Pedrini Documenta circa Vestræ Religionis negotia, quæ dedi P^{ro} Josepho Provana, Romam deferenda, sunt verè mea Verba, tu autem diverso modo scripsisti. Quòd alter sic, alter aliter scribat, fieri nequit. Meum Verbum non est, nisi unum, quòd nunquam mutavi, & mutari non potest, nempe: Nisi procedatis circa Ritus Nostri Imperij, ut P. Mathæus Riccius, & ceteri à 200. annis hucusque processerunt, Vestra Religio non potest permitti, & prædicari in Sinis, nec vos tolerari potestis in meo Imperio. Multoties tibi vii rememoravi, quomodo D^{omi} Cardinalis de Tournon, & D^{omi} Episcopus Cononensis Rem Vestræ Religionis destruxerint. Tu quare hujusmodi Verba non misisti in Europam? cur his contraria ad Pontificem scripsisti? In hoc erroneè scripsisti, & habes magnum peccatum. Si secundum Leges Imperij ulterius procederem, quid Vobis fieret? Perdidisti Rem Vestræ Religionis, occidisti omnes Europæos, non solum hædie viventes, sed etiam pridem Defunctos. Hæc non sūt à Deo: Deus semper inducit ad Bonum, Diabolus (ut semper audivi) non est liber ad bonum; inducit semper ad malū: ejusmodi sūt à Diabolo. Hæc decreta Pontificia certissimè sūt falsa. Quando P. Provana redierit, Ego determinabo. Ita de ejusdem Imperatoris Mandato Testor, ac Juro Pekini die 14^a Novemb. anni 1716. Theodoricus Pedrini Missionar^{us} Apost^{olicus} —

Itè nos præsentès audivisse testamur.

Kilianus Stumpt S.J. Visitator.	Josephus Suarez S.J.
Joachimus Bouvet S.J.	Joannes Franc ^{iscus} Fouquet S.J.
Dominicus Parrenin S.J.	Petrus Jartoux Soc. J.
Petrus Vincentius de Tartre S.J.	Mathæus Ripa Cæcus Secularis Miss ^{us} A-
Franciscus Cardozo S.J.	plicus Sacræ Congm ^{is} .
	Jacobus Brocard S.J.

Post scriptū jussit Imp^{er}, me scribere nomine meo, quòd si quid scripsi, quòd non conveniret cum ejus mente, erroneè scripserim; quia recentis appulsus in Sinas, non satis intelligebam linguā sinicā, neq; consuetudines, neq; characteres, neq; consului D^{omi} Ript. Obsequens ergo ejus mandato, Dico, quòd si quid scripsi, quòd nō cōveniret cū ejus mēte, erroneè scripsi Theod^{oricus} Pedrini M^{issionar} A^{postolicus}. —

Nul-



III.8 Rubbing of Pedrini's stele



III.9 Xitang in Xizhimennei Dajie today.

1671-1701

A MAN FOR THE MISSION

Early life and training—Collegio Piceno—novitiate at Monte Celio—Edict of Toleration (1692)—accommodation of the Chinese Rites—*Brevis relatio*—convening of the Papal Legation to China.

The choice of Paolo Filippo Teodorico Pedrini for the first papal legation to China was not entirely fortuitous, but while fate played its part in his selection, nothing could have prepared him for the extraordinary events which were to fill his life after his departure from Rome in 1702 until his death in Peking in 1746. Beaten, imprisoned, his name vilified throughout Catholic Europe, he was inevitably caught up in the vitriolic Chinese Rites controversy, an unseemly debacle in which the missionary factions were likened by the Kangxi Emperor to squabbling children. Despite all the efforts to prove the contrary during his lifetime and beyond, up to the present day, Pedrini held no independent view on the matter: a true and obedient Catholic, after the papal pronouncement *Cum Deus Optimus* of 1704 condemning these practices as tainted with superstition, the subject was already a closed book to him before he ever set foot in China. Writing to his repatriated ex-colleague, Matteo Ripa, in refutation of an accusation of Jansenism, Pedrini set out his own Credo in the strongest terms.

[25/10/1726 Ripa, Naples ACGOFM MH 14.2.51, 1-4v]

Until now through the grace of God I have remained in the same mission, and indissolubly attached to my Holy Mother the Roman Catholic Church and to all the doctrines and opinions approved by her. I hate and detest everything she condemns or reproveth, and in particular Jansenism with all its followers, and I give liberty and power to whoever sees this letter to endorse in my name as many formularies as the Holy See wishes its true, faithful and sincere Catholic Christians to endorse, the obedience, veneration, love and respect of which I am ready to spill my very

life-blood and a thousand lives if I had them. And in consequence of which I hate and abhor every other kind of heresy or schism whatsoever, and in particular that which the Jesuits have done in this mission to China, and the resistance they have had and still have in receiving the Constitution *Ex illa die*, and their accursed involvement with the Chinese superstitions, which they still defend. Thus I hate and abhor Jansenism and Confucianism, and as many types of heresy and schism as are found in this world, and attaching myself strongly to the Holy See my most beloved and esteemed mother, and my natural Prince, according to its holy teachings I commit my spirit to God the Creator...

Had Clement XI decided otherwise, Pedrini would still have felt bound to accept his ruling. As it was, after 1704, the theological debate over the nature of the Rites was no longer the issue: rather, it was the Jesuits' refusal to accept the papal decisions.

At the time of his arrival in Peking in 1711, the Europeans at court were all members of the Company of Jesus who firmly believed that a prohibition of the Chinese Rites to Confucius and the ancestors would spell the end of the mission. The Lazarist Pedrini, on the other hand, as apostolic missionary of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide, took it as his bounden duty to uphold the papal Constitution against the heresies of the Fathers. This bitter conflict consumed the whole of his first decade at the imperial court as the Peking Jesuits sought by whatever means, fair or foul, first to prevent the publishing of the papal decrees, and subsequently to have them suspended or revoked. Caught between the papacy and the Company, it was Pedrini who felt the brunt of their displeasure, regardless of the fact that he was merely the messenger. It was he who was to be deemed personally responsible for the loss of the mission to China.

Into the eighteenth century, a wave of polemical literature swept across Catholic Europe. In an effort to silence this plethora of contentious matter, in 1710, Pope Clement XI issued a further decree reinforcing the earlier one of 1704, under pain of excommunication banning the printing of any further debate on the Rites controversy. After 100 years of evangelistic endeavour, the Jesuits were ill-disposed to surrender their hard-won gains. Compromise was unthinkable since the accommodation of the Rites was integral to their *modus operandi*: to renege would render their position untenable. For critics in Europe, this stance only added to the deep-seated distrust of the Company and its arrogant assumption of omniscience, which placed it above the authority of the Holy See itself,

sentiments which ultimately led to its brief suppression in 1773. Neither faction was willing to obey the charge of silence, and as a major player in the denouement, Pedrini was to figure prominently in the anonymous tracts circulating across Europe. His epistles from China became widely known through the vehemently anti-Jesuit *Anecdotes sur l'état de la religion dans la Chine* (Vol. IV Paris, 1734) of the Abbé Michel Villermaules, and in various other writings of Pierre-Curel Parisot under the pseudonym of Platel from the 1740s to the 1760s, culminating in the *Mémoires Historiques sur les Affaires des Jésuites avec le Saint Siègé...*, 7 vols. (Lisbon, 1766).

A considerably fuller (if equally partisan) account of Pedrini's life appeared much later as part of a 7-volume study of the Lazarist order—*Mémoires de la Congrégation de la Mission* (Paris, 1865-6). No less than four of these hefty tomes are devoted to the China mission, and these feature a goodly selection of Pedrini's letters translated into French along with those of his fellow Lazarists in the field, Luigi Antonio Appiani and Johannes Müllener. Its publication provoked such an outcry for its blatantly anti-Jesuit stance and its flouting of the 1710 embargo that its opponents secured its placement on the index of forbidden books. A concerted attempt was then made to have it confiscated and destroyed with the result that very few complete copies remain. Relatively little of this monumental work consists of commentary, but rather of an impressively vast compilation of documents which, by their very nature, express views contrary to those of the Company. Despite the fact that most subsequent studies carried out by members of the Congregation of the Mission rely heavily on this work,¹ it has never achieved the recognition it deserves for its breadth of reference. However one-sided, it remains an invaluable source of contemporary records, the use of which is acknowledged here. In mitigation for this gross act of appropriation, it must be said that its authors relied almost exclusively on the few hundred pages of Pedrini's letters surviving at the Roman house of the Congregation of the Mission, Monte Citorio (now transferred to the Collegio Leoniano), and were entirely ignorant of the other thousand or so folios in the Archivio Storico of Propaganda Fide.

The ban remained in force, if little respected, until 1939 when Pius XII finally concluded that, irrespective of whether the Rites were superstitious in the past, in present-day China they could only have a civil significance and therefore the rulings were no longer relevant. For obvious

¹ See, for instance, J. M. Planchet, C.M. (alias A. Thomas), *Histoire de la Mission de Pékin; Depuis l'arrivée des Lazaristes jusqu'à la révolte des Boxers*, 2 vols. (Paris: Louis -Michaud, 1925).

reasons, this was hardly an auspicious time for historical research, and not until the 1950s did new studies appear. Only then did commentators, mainly Lazarist, draw attention to the fact that, in his role as court musician under three consecutive emperors, Pedrini was hugely important for the transmission of European music to the Chinese Court, if for nothing else.² Unfortunately, by the time serious attention was paid to the Rites Controversy, his reputation was already beyond redemption—not altogether surprising given that much of this new research was carried out by Jesuit historians. Today, this bias is still all too evident in writings on the Rites, and Pedrini seems perpetually condemned to the position of scapegoat with no advocate to defend his much-maligned honour. Beyond the mutual recriminations over the centuries which do little credit to those involved, it cannot be denied that Pedrini's surviving 1600 or so pages of letters covering the period 1702-1746 are a priceless testimony both to the state of the Catholic mission to China in the first half of the eighteenth century, and also to the interaction between two disparate cultures.

1. Early life and training

The very circumstance of Pedrini's birth in the Italian city of Fermo in The Marches on 30 June 1671, as confirmed by his baptismal record, was to have far-reaching consequences.³ Much later, he rather ingenuously claimed that he came from a poor, but God-fearing family: as the most active of all the Fermano notaries, his father's circumstances were hardly straightened. Rather, Giovanni Francesco was a figure of considerable prominence with close connections to the Fermanese gentry. His granddaughter, Beatrice, married Giuseppe Spinucci of the local nobility, and their daughter, Chiara, was wedded to prince Franz Xaver von Sachsen of Poland.⁴ God-fearing they certainly were, and the letter of 25 October 1726 previously cited, places great emphasis on piety, "From a tender age, they brought me up ever in the fear of God and of Christian and Catholic doctrine, and with a respect and filial adherence to the Holy See, and all that it determines as also in things temporal, as beholds a

² For Pedrini's contribution as a musician, see P. Allsop and J. Lindorf, 'Da Fermo alla Corte Imperiale della Cina: Teodorico Pedrini, ^[1]Musico e Missionario Apostolico', *Rivista Italiana di Musicologia* 42, No. 1 (2009), 69-104.

³ These documents from Pedrini's home town are transcribed in *Quaderni dell'archivio storico arcivescovile di Fermo*, N.44, December, 2007. They are also available on www.teodoricopedrini.it, the website of Fabio G. Galeffi and Gabriele Tarsetti.

⁴ www.teodoricopedrini.it also contains the family tree.

subject of His Holiness.” Educated at the hands of the Oratorians and the Jesuits, he continued his studies at Fermo University where he received his laureate in 1692.⁵ At that time he was still following in his father’s footsteps, and shortly after receiving his diploma, he obtained permission to proceed to the public practice of law, subject, of course, to the payment of the necessary professional fees. He had already taken various minor orders suggesting an incipient vocation, but these would not of themselves have automatically led to the priesthood.

Whatever his intentions, in 1692, he decided on a course of action which was to change his destiny for ever—to further his studies in Rome. A broad and convenient pathway opened up before him in the Arciconfraternità della nazione marchigiana known as the Pio Sodalizio which, in 1662, had founded the Collegio Piceno with the main purpose of providing a base in the Eternal City for deserving candidates from The Marches. The ‘Elenco dei convittori del Collegio Piceno in Roma’ confirms his attendance there from 16 November 1692 until 7 August 1697.⁶ In 1669, the Pio Sodalizio had acquired its present church of San Salvatore in Lauro, re-dedicating it to S. Maria di Loreto and converting its convent to accommodate the Collegio which, by Pedrini’s day, housed around 40 *convittori*. The enormous expense of its purchase and refurbishment, far beyond the resources of the Confraternity, was shouldered by one of Fermo’s most illustrious sons, the Secretary of State to Pope Clement IX, Cardinal Decio Azzolino, who occupied the position of Cardinal Protector of the college from 1668 until 1689. Azzolino is perhaps best remembered today for his close liaison with the ex-Queen Christina of Sweden, resident in Rome after her abdication and conversion to Catholicism. She held court in the Palazzo Riario from where she became a frequent guest at the Azzolino palace in Fermo. Christina was surrounded by *marcheggiani* connected to the Pio Sodalizio. In 1716, one of the earliest and fullest accounts of its history was compiled by Giovanni Mario Crescimbeni, himself from Macerata in The Marches, the Custode Generale of the exclusive Arcadian Society formed to perpetuate the academies of Queen Cristina after her death. Pedrini was a familiar of this illustrious institution, having himself become a member of the Academy in 1696 under the name of Florindo Taumasio. His election was presumably as a poet, since he offered four pastoral sonnets in Greek, Latin and

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ The ‘Elenco’ is printed in Sandro Corradini, ‘La Comunità marchigiana in Roma vista da Pier Leone Ghezzi’ in *Cultura e società nel settecento: 3. Istruzione e istituzioni culturali nelle Marche. Atti del XII convegno del centro di studi avellaniti* (Gubbio: Fonte Avellana, 1988), 291-301.

Italian.⁷

Notably absent from any of the early records of his life is any mention of his musical abilities. These may have been an added incentive in his choice of the Collegio Piceno since its founder, Cardinal Giambattista Pallotta, had imposed strict instructions that the college should take on the responsibility for music in its church services, an obligation which was not taken lightly. The preface of Giovanni Antonio Leoni's *Sonate di violino a voce sola* reveals that the church soon acquired some considerable reputation,

Who does not know that the venerable church of the Virgin of Loreto has been constituted in this city as a sacred Parnassus for the benefit of musicians who innumerable times during the year congregate there to demonstrate their noble talents in sweetest consorts of divine praise with harmonious symphonies, imitating the voices of angels...?⁸

On important feast days such as its patronal festival, lavish music was commonly performed involving the finest musicians in Rome, no less than the legendary Arcangelo Corelli. Why so distinguished and renowned a personage should offer his services to a relatively minor establishment may be simply explained: he was *musico da camera* to Queen Christina.⁹ After her death, Corelli enjoyed the patronage of Cardinal Ottoboni, whose residence at the Chancellery was a mere stone's throw away from the Collegio Piceno, and an intriguing passing remark, in a letter of 15 September 1719, suggests that Pedrini may have been a frequent visitor at the palace (see p.336). It was Crescimbeni who provided the earliest 'official' biography of his close friend and member of the Arcadian society, Arcangelo Corelli. Since Pedrini moved in the same circles, it is hardly surprising that, as a composer, he should have come strongly under Corelli's influence. If the not infrequent criticism of Pedrini's surviving sonatas as being plagiaristic is accepted, then he incurs no greater blame than a host of other younger composers who could hardly escape the

⁷ Biblioteca Angelica, Rome, Fondo Arcadia, Libro Crescimbeni n.1, 44r-44v. I am grateful to Fabio Galeffi and Gabriele Tarsetti for supplying me with copies of these documents.

⁸ Op. III (Rome: Vitale Mascardi, 1652).

⁹ For a detailed account of music at the Piceno, see Lepanto de Angelis, 'Arcangelo Corelli nella direzione di un "Concerto e Sinfonia" in S. Maria di Loreto dei Marchigiani di Roma', *Note d'archivio per la storia musicale*, XVII, 1940, 105-110.