

# [The the most rigorous and bitter torments. no](https://assignbuster.com/the-the-most-rigorous-and-bitter-torments-no/)

The Spaniard Quietist Miguel de MolinosI. Factors. The Church, since its origins has suffered from the attack of hereticsand their heresies which have caused many controversies and schisms within it. However, many of the conflicts are the result of other than heresies. There arecases where conflicts arose because of ambition of power, lack of moral, andintrigues, other because of lack of wisdom and a poor theological understanding.

One of the instances in which a mixture of the elements mentioned abovewere present was the case of the Spaniard quietist Miguel de Molinos during theXVII century. Molinos was accused by the Church with charges of heresy as wellas of immoral misconduct. His main work La Gua Espiritual (“ The spiritualGuide”) was placed in the Index of the Church, and Molinos himself wascondemned to life imprisonment, “ to be perpetually clothed in the penitentialgarb, to recite the Credo and one third of the Rosary, and to make confessionfour times every year”. Molinos recanted publicly. His admirers said that he was behavingconsistently with what he believed and taught.

His accusers said that hisrecanting was a proof of his guilt. What were real motives why Molinos admitted his “ guilt”? Molinos oncesaid: “ The true quietists are always quiet, serene and eve-minded in Graces andin extraordinary favors as also in the most rigorous and bitter torments. Nonews causes them to rejoice, no event saddens them”.

Was Miguel de Molinostrying to be consistent way with his mystical teachings of total passivity?, orwas he really guilty as charged? Was Molinos a victim of the jealousy of theJesuits? Was his fall caused by “ the machinations of a corrupt clergy who sawthat they would loose their living if his plain and simple method of devotionwere generally adopted”? Did he ever had any other options than recantadmitting his culpability? Was martyrdom his only other option? II. ProtagonistsMolinos was a man of noble character and a “ brilliant and widelycultured mind”. His reputation of director of consciences and spiritual guidegranted him the admiration and esteem of all kinds of people among whom wasCardinal Benedict Odescalchi who later became pope Innocent XI. At his arrestthose who new him close were very distressed. His servants kissing his feet andcalling his “ a saint” where convinced that all was a mistake.

When all thistook place in 1685 Molinos was fifty-seven years old, (he was born in 1628 ). Although when arrested he lost control , during the trial he show noapprehension, “ he was a quietist by conviction” . The pope Innocent XI ( former Cardinal Benedict Odescalchi and personalfriend of Molinos ) was born in Como (Italy) and pursued his studies in Geneva, Rome, and Naples. He was elected pope by the Cardinal College in 1676. He isportrayed by catholic historians as pope that was committed to keep anhonorable life, which was hard to do in his age – and office -. He made reformsin the Church specially in relation with the abuses of nepotism. In order to beconsistent with his convictions he kept his own nephew away from the Roman Curia.

Because of his campaign against king Louis XVI Innocent was called theProtestant pope by the Gallican party. He was considered a man of “ iron hand” when needed. “ He made some prescriptions concerning the behavior of the clergy, forbade the entering of women into the Vatican Palace (except the royalty), …. and condemned the Quietism of Molinos”. Concerning his former friendship withMolinos he claimed “ Veramente siamo engannati”.

III. The ConflictThe teachings of Molinos were not knew for the Church. In Spain themystic Juan Falcon (1596-1638), had a large number of followers during hislifetime. Another group, the “ Alumbrados” influenced many people in Cadiz andSeville in the late 1500’s. They taught that vocal prayer, and thinking in thehumanity of Jesus or in his passion must be avoided.

In 1623 the Inquisitioncondemned them as heretics. It is clear that both, Falcon and the Alumbrados, influenced Molinos’ thought. Molinos’ doctrines about mysticism were world wide appreciated andpracticed. It is said that in Naples he had “ more that 20.

000 followers”. Hispopularity among the royalty was notable. Queen Christina of Sweden, andprincess Borghese were among his devoted followers. The main work of Molinos LaGua Espiritual was subject of investigation by the “ Holy Office”.

However theconflict arose when the Jesuits begun to question his practices and theteachings found in his writings which at one time were highly praise by theclergy . Molinos has taught that “ if souls in a high state of prayer aretempted to commit the most obscene and blasphemous acts, they must not leavetheir prayer to resist the temptation; the devil if being allowed to humiliatethem, and if the actions are committed, they are not to be confessed as sins”. For him Quietism was the mean to reach God and to find peace: ” Rest isnecessary for the soul as well as the body; rest in which the force of gracerefresh and recreate thesoul. This rest can not be obtained by employing the soul in variousspiritual activities. Just as the body needs sleep in order to recruit hisenergies, so the does the soul requires a silent resting if the presence of God”. This kind of teachings caused that in many convents the nuns thought lightly ifconfessions, indulgences, penance, and vocal prayer, and regarded themselves asnot blameworthy for their material faults.

After months of investigation ofhis books, and personal letters (about 20. 000 were analyzed by the Inquisition), the Inquisition sponsored by the Jesuits presented 263 charges against Molinos. Sixty eighth of his propositions were condemned as “ Heretical, erroneous, blasphemous, dangerous, and in practice, incompatible with Christian morality”. It is interesting that only two witness accused him with of obscenities . Whatwere those so called obscenities? It is not possible to answer this question. There is no access to the reports of Molino’s trial.

They are “ buried inthe secret files of the Holy Office”. Molinos retracted from his teaching publicly in 1687 at the Church ofSanta Mara Sopra Minerva. Along with Molinos more than two hundred personswere arrested in Rome, and “ several communities of nuns” found themselvesimplicated in the scandal. One month after his sentence the “ Gazette de France” published the news of Molino’s dead; however, historians tells us that Molinoslived nine more years, dying at the age of sixty-eight on December 28, 1696. The Catholic Encyclopedia ends its article about Molinos saying: “ He lived 9more years of pious and exemplary behavior, perhaps practicing his teaching thatelevated souls seek only the humiliations and scorn that it might please God tosend”. IV. Possible OptionsIt is evident that the Molinos was facing a dilemma.

The Church hascalled him to repent of serious charges. What should be his response to themandate of the Church? Shall he be consistent with his Quietism and recant inobedience? He chose to recant admitting the charges against. In doing so hetried to be consistent.

By the other hand the other only option was to keephimself standing in his beliefs and to pay a the higher price of martyrdom. Weprobably never know what was in his mind during the trial. It may be that theaccusations of immoral behavior were real and that he just was “ caught” and hadno other option. V. Biblical Principles. The Scriptures leave no place for immorality and lack of repentance inthe life of true believers .

We don’t know the heart of man, (God is the finaljudge), but if Molinos was living an immoral lifestyle the Bible have very clearteachings. The Apostle Paul dealing with immorality in the Church of Corinthsays: “ It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and suchfornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should havehis father’s wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that hethat hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. 1 Cor. 5: 1-2.

TheChurch must never allow immoral people to continue living in sin. In 2 Th. 3: 6Paul again gives specific commandment concerning this issue: “ Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves fromevery brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which hereceived of us”.

There is not only immorality that is to be forbidden intheChurch but heresy as well: “ A man that is an heretic after the first and secondadmonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, beingcondemned of himself, Titus 3: 10-11. Was this the case of Molinos? Was he one ofthose whom “ profess that they know God; but in works they deny him”? Titus 1: 16. VI. ConclusionMiguel de Molinos have passed to the history as accused of being bothheretic and immoral. He has been judged by the Roman Catholic Church and foundguilty. However the lack of historical evidences bring doubts upon his blame. Only God the Supreme Judge of all men will have the last word concerning thecase of this mystic of the middle ages. BIBLIOGRAPHYBell, Mary.

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