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SQUABBLES BETWEEN THE JESUITS AND THE FRANCISCANS: A HISTORICAL REVIEW OF POLICIES OF TWO CHRISTIAN ORDERS IN JAPAN

Xizi Chen¹

Abstract: Throughout the history of Christianity in Japan, tension and conflict have persisted between the Jesuits and Franciscans. At face value, this appears to be due to their different readings of the policies of Rome and varied approaches to apostolic work. However, upon closer examination, politics also played an important role. Behind the two orders were two rival maritime powers – Portugal and Spain, whose fellow countrymen’s feelings of national sentiment may occasionally have outweighed their interests in the mission in Japan. In an attempt to keep the peace, Rome had issued the *Patronatus missionum*. However, it *intensified* the conflict and rendered the situation into an irreparable state of disarray. This eventually caused heavy losses to the whole mission. For a better understanding, in this thesis I summarize the following arguments between the Jesuits and Franciscans. The first, and most salient, argument pertains to commerce; the second pertains to the separation of parishes; the third to their apostolic approaches, and the final argument is on their practical policies. It is also worth mentioning that the relationship between the Jesuits and the Franciscans was not eased by the 26-person Nagasaki martyrdom incident. Indeed, this was a heavy loss.

Keywords: The Christian mission in Japan. Jesuit. Franciscan. Portugal. Spain.

INTRODUCTION

Two of the most influential Christian orders in ancient Japan were the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) and the Order of Saint Francis. The Jesuit Order was founded by the Spanish nobleman, Ignatius de Loyola, a vigorous opponent of the Protestant Reformation. Ignatius and six other Christians gathered

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in 1534 and professed vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience to the Pope. They used IHS (Jesus Hominum Salvator) as their monogram. The Pope approved this new order in 1540. In order to revitalize the withering Roman Catholicism with new blood, the Jesuits set out for Japan, an unevangelized land. The pioneer of the Japanese mission was Francis Xavier, who was one of Ignatius' followers, and one of the seven co-founders of the Jesuits. Prior to the Jesuits, another Catholic order, the Franciscans (Friars), was founded in 1210, by Saint Francis of Assisi in Italy. The Friars were barefoot mendicants, clad in rough garments. They professed vows of poverty, obedience, and innocence (SHINMURA, 1941, p. 10). Although both orders were Catholic, they had more differences than similarities. For example, they read the decrees and policies of Rome differently, based on their own interests, and had varied approaches to apostolic work. Tension developed due to the complex connections between the two rival Catholic kingdoms, as did intense feelings of national sentiment and departmentalism. Conflict between them persisted, despite their solidarity in the face of prosecution. To maintain the peace, the Pope issued the *Patronatus missionum*, but unfortunately, both groups read it for their own purposes. This led to even more chaos and disaster.

1 ORIGIN OF THE TENSION AND CONFLICT

During the Age of Exploration, tension and conflict proliferated between the two neighboring maritime powers. To keep the peace, Pope Alexander VI decided to redefine their spheres of political interest, and established a line known as the Papal Meridian from the Azores Islands to the North Pole in 1493. This limited Portugal to the East and Spain to the West. Under the guarantee of the *Patronatus Missionum*² (ZHANG *et al.*, 2001, p. 144-145), the king of Portugal had the privilege to send missionaries to and assign bishops in Africa, East India, and other colonies of Portugal. Moreover, each European missionary sent to Asia had to sail to Goa first via a Portuguese vessel, and receive the Portuguese king's approval. Then they would await assignment from the archbishop of Goa, who was appointed by the king. For a long time, the Portuguese king had held the orient parish in hand. However, under pressure from other groups, the Pope decided to undermine the Portuguese king's *Patronatus Missionum*, and separated some rights from

² The *Patronatus Missionum* is a grant of rights, privileges and obligations from the Pope to the Portuguese imperial, the financier of the Roman Catholic Church in Catholic parishes and churches across Asia, Africa, and Brazil.

the Jesuits. He did this with no regard for their dissatisfaction. So as to secure direct control over the global mission, Rome established the Congregation of Propagation in 1622 and took back the privileges given to the Jesuits. In 1659, Rome also implemented a system called Vicar Apostolic in the Far East to eliminate the Patronatus Missionum, in which Rome established the Tokyo, Cochín and Nanking Parishes governed by the Vicar Apostolic, appointed directly by the Pope. With this, the Jesuits' influence and power in the Far East received a heavy blow, while the Franciscans and Dominicans were given access to the Far East. This is where the conflict ensued.

Unfortunately, Japan was located at the centre of these conflicts. The *consultas* were consultative meetings with senior missionaries convened by Valignano Alessandro, the Jesuit Inspector of the East Indies. During his first visit to Japan, one question discussed at length had been the desirability of other religious orders entering and working alongside the Jesuits.³ The reasons in favor of cooperating with other Catholic missionaries advanced in the *consultas* were apparent. By that time, Japan had been evangelized for twenty years, but the *Society of Jesus* was still the only religious order operating in the remote island country. Several missionaries argued that a missionaries' plurality was in itself desirable, enabling the various orders to concentrate on different aspects of the apostolate; in this way, their labors, at least in theory, would be complementary, and combine to constitute a united whole. Some of the Jesuits felt that the time had come for experimentation along these lines.⁴ Furthermore, there was a missionaries' shortage in Japan. In 1580, there were only 59 Jesuits in Japan. Ten years later, this number had increased to 140, two thirds of whom were unordained and therefore unable to celebrate mass or administer the sacraments. There were scarcely enough priests to tend to the baptized Christians' needs, let alone concentrate on the work of converting non-Christians. As Valignano observed: No matter how many missionaries were sent to Japan, it was not enough.⁵ Vice-Provincial Coelho substantiated this statement with concrete figures. In 1581, he noted in writing. There are 6,000 Catholics in Ōmura alone, and the Jesuits only sent four priests, making it impossible to take care of all believers. Four priests listen to the confessions of up to one-sixth of the faithful a year, and most do not receive

³ The series of meetings held in October 1580, July 1581 and December 1581 in Bungo, Azuchi and Nagasaki, respectively, according to historical material from ADDITIONAL MANUSCRIPT SERIES, British Library n. 9852, v. 72-73.

⁴ ADDITIONAL MANUSCRIPT SERIES, British Library n. 9852, v. 72-73.

⁵ ADDITIONAL MANUSCRIPT SERIES, British Library n. 9852, v. 72-73.

the gospel until their deaths. Moreover, due to the shortage of missionaries and the inability to regularly tour Catholic villages, some Japanese people have difficulty converting to Catholicism, and do not understand Catholic doctrine at all.⁶

Against these cogent reasons was raised the objection that the introduction of other orders, with their disparate habits and customs, might confuse the Japanese faithful, leading to an undesirable loss of uniformity in the apostolate. Furthermore, experience in other countries, especially in India, showed that conflict and rivalry was practically inevitable among religious orders. Moreover, in Japan there was neither a bishop, nor a secular arm to which one could appeal to settle such disedifying squabbles. Finally, it was argued that inexperienced missionaries were bound to repeat the same mistakes the Jesuits had made at the beginning of their work in Japan, and that the advent of other orders would only increase Japanese suspicion that the foreign missionaries had come to pave the way for European colonial expansion.⁷ Valignano left nobody in any doubt that his sympathies lay with excluding other missionaries from Japan. Thus, it became an article of official Jesuit policy to exclude other orders from the country (COOPER, 1991, p. 97).

The problem was aggravated, and in fact largely caused, by intense national sentiment. The treaties of *Tordesillas* and *Saragossa* had demarcated the Portuguese and Spanish spheres of political and commercial interest in Asia. This had been a moderately successful attempt to prevent disputes between the two great colonial and maritime powers. The Jesuits, including Rodrigues, had no doubt that Japan fell within the Portuguese zone of influence, and that the Spanish friars from the Philippines should stay out of the country.⁸ Even though Philip II's accession to the Portuguese throne in 1580 united the two nations under one ruler, the rivalry and antipathy persisted.⁹

⁶ COELHO, CHINESE AND JAPANESE ANCIENT CUSTOMS SERIES. *Tabularium*, Archives of Jesus Church, IX (I), v. 44-45, May 13 1581.

⁷ Later, other monasteries entered Japan successively to preach, and many events transpired. This corroborated the opponents' worries at this meeting.

⁸ RODRIGUES, *Jesuitism* - Asia Series, The Ajuda Library, Lisbon n. 49-IV-53, v. 29.

⁹ VALIGNANO, CHINESE AND JAPANESE ANCIENT CUSTOMS SERIES. Archives of Jesus Church, XII (Ib), v. 126, June 15, 1593.

2 WHAT CAUSED THE TENSION AND CONFLICT?

The most inciting consideration that caused the rivalry was the problem of commerce. Although the two countries had the same ruler (Philip II of Spain/Philip I of Portugal),¹⁰ their colonial interests remained separate. The Portuguese enjoyed a virtual monopoly over European commerce with Japan, and they were determined exclude Spanish trade interests from the Philippines. This was because the prosperity of the Portuguese community in Macau depended on trade with Japan.

Complicating the problem of commerce was another problem—the separation of the parish. In an attempt to keep the peace, Gregory XIII, who had received the young Kyushu ambassadors at Rome, issued the papal brief *Ex pastorali officio* on January 28, 1585. Under pain of ecclesiastical censure, it forbade anyone other than Jesuits from entering and working in Japan (COOPER, 1991, p. 98). King Philip duly instructed the viceroy of India, Duarte de Meneses, to ensure that the papal directive was obeyed. Accordingly, in 1586, Meneses ordered Domingos Monteiro, that year's captain-major, to prevent any friar from entering Japan; if he were to find any already in the country, he was to deport him to Macau. With the publication of the brief, the matter seemed beyond dispute: the Japanese mission was reserved for the Jesuits. But at the end of 1586, Gregory's successor, Sixtus V, issued the brief *Dum ad uberes fructus*, in which he raised the status of the Franciscan mission in the Philippines, and granted its Spanish Superior permission to found other houses in the Philippines “and in other lands and places of the above-mentioned Indies and kingdoms of China”.¹¹ There was obvious overlap between the scope of the two papal documents, and even today, canon lawyers argue over its interpretation.

The situation in Japan was complicated by the fact that the Jesuits were not united in their opposition to the Franciscans. In particular, the Spanish Jesuits faced the difficult conflict of loyalty between the Order and their fellow countrymen in the Philippines. Rightly or wrongly, some of the Portuguese Jesuits suspected that the Spanish vice-provincial Pedro Gomez had sympathy for the friars. Although not named by the friars as their friend or ally, Rodrigues' professor of theology, the Spaniard Pedro de la Cruz, was an ardent supporter of his countrymen; he argued for Jesuit Superiors to allow the Franciscans to

¹⁰ The Spanish called him Philip II, while the Portuguese called him Philip I.

¹¹ VALIGNANO, CHINESE AND JAPANESE ANCIENT CUSTOMS SERIES, *Tabularium*, Archives of Jesus Church, XLI, v. 13-14.

enter Japan, and even wrote to Cardinal Robert Bellarmine in Rome about the issue, asking for his intervention. In fact, some non-Spanish Jesuits in Japan were equally concerned about the ban, and doubted the wisdom of the official policy of the Order. Both the Portuguese Diogo de Mesquita, who had accompanied the Kyushu ambassadors to Europe, and the Spaniard Antonio Critana sent letters to Rome, explicating their views.¹²

The differences between the Spanish and Portuguese Jesuits went deeper than the question of whether to admit the friars. Although Japan was held to be within the Portuguese zone of influence, the mission had actually been founded by three Spanish Jesuits – Xavier, Torres, and Fernandez. In addition, not only was Pedro Gomez, vice-provincial of the mission from 1590 until his death in 1600, a Spaniard, but so were many other local superiors. In 1598, Valignano reported to Rome: “The Portuguese and Spaniards distrusted each other, and specifically, the Portuguese Jesuits were outraged by the belief that the Spaniard Jesuits not only approved of the entry of the Franciscans, but also held real power in the Japanese Church.”¹³

Valignano summoned the Spanish Jesuits at Nagasaki and exhorted them to unity, warning them to be prudent in their speech. The visitor pointed out one of the problems of running the Japanese mission:

One of the many organizational problems of the Church in Japan was that the Indian Jesuit authorities, in order to keep capable and learned priests, adopted the policy of never sending (Portuguese priests) to the East. There was a period when eight even made solemn oaths.¹⁴ Of the Jesuits, there were four Italians and three Spaniards, while the Portuguese had only one.¹⁵

The first Franciscan to set foot in Japan was Fray Juan Pobre. He reached the country as a result of a storm which damaged his ship and obliged

¹² MESQUITA, Nagasaki, CHINESE AND JAPANESE ANCIENT CUSTOMS SERIES, *Tabularium*, Archives of Jesus Church, XII (Ib), v. 120-121, June 12, 1593.

¹³ ORGANTINO, Nagasaki, CHINESE AND JAPANESE ANCIENT CUSTOMS SERIES, *Tabularium*, Archives of Jesus Church, XIV (II), v. 279, March 28 1607.

¹⁴ The Jesuits who took solemn vows were to make special oaths to the Pope in addition to the four monastic vows – poverty, purity, poverty tolerance, and obedience. The Jesuit elders and professors were selected from among those in this capacity.

¹⁵ ORGANTINO, Nagasaki, CHINESE AND JAPANESE ANCIENT CUSTOMS SERIES, *Tabularium*, Archives of Jesus Church, XIV (II), v. 279, March 28, 1607.

it to port at Hirado in 1582 or 1583.¹⁶ Pobre stayed no more than several months in Japan, but during that time he influenced various Christians. The Dominican Fray Juan Cobo came to Japan in 1592 on behalf of the governor of the Philippines; he too did not stay permanently, and during the return voyage to Manila, he died in a shipwreck in Formosa.¹⁷ The first friars to reach Japan with the intension of permanent settlement arrived in 1593. Although the Jesuits in Manila had objected to their departure, four Franciscans, under the leadership of Fray Pedro Baptista Blázquez, left the Philippine capital a few days later and duly arrived in Japan in two groups. With this assurance, four Franciscans, under Fray Pedro Baptista Blázquez's leadership, left the Philippine capital a few days later and duly arrived in Japan in two groups. Following Valignano's example three years before, they circumvented Hideyoshi's expulsion decree by being accredited with diplomatic status. This was because Blázquez traveled as the ambassador of the governor of the Philippines and carried an official letter and gifts to Hideyoshi. As the friars later admitted, they were kindly received by the Jesuits, and shown charity at Nagasaki. The Jesuits provided the newcomers with accommodations in their homes for many days. However, this friendly reception thawed when the Jesuits realized that the Franciscans planned to outstay their welcome and settle permanently in Japan.¹⁸

The difference between the Jesuits and Franciscans was also reflected in their respective approaches to apostolic work. Since the publication of the expulsion edict, the Jesuits had been repeatedly warned by Christian nobles and friendly officials to keep a low profile. Despite the decree and Hideyoshi's periodic outbursts, they were assured that they could remain in Japan as long as they lived quietly and conducted their work unobtrusively. Hideyoshi was no fool, and he did not have to be omniscient to know that his decree was neither strictly obeyed nor enforced. For the sake of Portuguese trade, Taiko was prepared to turn a blind eye to the missionaries' continuous presence in the country, as long as they refrained from extreme actions which would force him to act. Frois explains: "Although Hideyoshi is well aware that we are all in Japan, he still pretends not to know this." (COOPER, 1991, p. 106).

¹⁶ The date of the visit might have been as late as 1584; most likely it was after Fray Odoric arrived in Japan in the 14th Century; VALIGNANO, CHINESE AND JAPANESE ANCIENT CUSTOMS SERIES, Archives of Jesus Church, XLI, v. 9.

¹⁷ VALIGNANO, CHINESE AND JAPANESE ANCIENT CUSTOMS SERIES, *Tabularium*, Archives of Jesus Church, XLI.

¹⁸ *Jesuitism* - Asia Series, The Ajuda Library, Lisbon no. 49-IV-56, V. 24.

In this spirit of compromise, typical in Japanese affairs and practical in the field of human relations, neither party would lose credit and both would remain satisfied. By that time, the Jesuits had firsthand experience of Hideyoshi's volatile moods, whose outbursts of anger became more irrational over time, and they learned the hard way that patience and prudence usually won in the end. Taiko was no longer young, and his presumptive heir, Hidetsugu, was friendly towards the missionaries, providing them with hope for better times to come.

It is in this context that one must view the Jesuits' consternation when the Franciscan friars founded a church in Miyako in October 1594, and openly conducted services therein. Jerónimo de Jesús declared: Hideyoshi regarded the friars benignly, and wrote enthusiastically about the ruler's loving and caring for the Order of Saint Francis with such an excessive love, and he said that the friars in Japan enjoyed "the same security as in Spain" (COOPER, 1991, p. 106).

Blazquez concurred: "Hideyoshi had granted permission to build a convent and church, and to conduct divine service, as in Spain, singing masses and other devotions *con voz alta* and ringing bells."¹⁹

At that time, as a Jesuit missionary and Portuguese interpreter, João Rodrigues warned the Franciscans to moderate their outward zeal, and to place less trust in Hideyoshi, about whom both a Jesuit and a friar had written that nobody dared tell him anything he did not wish to hear.²⁰ But Blazquez held that, in his audience with Hideyoshi at Nagoya in 1593, he had received express permission to build the church and preach the Gospel. Whether it was the poor translation at the time or Blazquez's wishful thinking, in fact, Hideyoshi never said the words Blazquez publicly preached.

When describing the Nagoya audience, Blazquez equivocates: "To which the king (Hideyoshi) replied that we were welcome and that he wished to give us a house and food, and desired friendship; and that we should write to him from time to time, as he himself would do."²¹

The Jesuits maintained that the ruler had denied them permission to preach. This view must have been largely based on Rodrigues' testimony. From

¹⁹ PEREZ, CHINESE AND JAPANESE ANCIENT CUSTOMS SERIES. *Tabularium*, Archives of Jesus Church, XLI, v. 36.

²⁰ FROIS, *Jesuitism* - Asia Series, The Ajuda Library, Lisbon n. 49-IV-57, v. 190-192.

²¹ FROIS, *Jesuitism* - Asia Series, The Ajuda Library, Lisbon n. 49-IV-57, v. 190-192.

September 28th to 30th, 1593 at Nagasaki, he declared under oath that he had been in the audience at Nagoya, and that Hideyoshi had stated “[...] the friars should not preach in Japan.”²² The inquiry had been organized by the Jesuits, and all five witnesses asked to testify were favorably disposed to their cause; furthermore, the statements to which they testified were ‘loaded’ in as much as they presented the Jesuit view. Rodrigues was an experienced interpreter and a student for the priesthood. Under oath, he stated that he had heard Hideyoshi tell the audience that the friars should not preach. However, it is possible that this never actually happened.

Only a few weeks before the inquiry, Bugyo Maeda, who had been in the audience, wrote to Gomez and confirmed that Hideyoshi had forbidden preaching. Even if the accuracy of the contemporary Portuguese translation of the letter is questionable, the original Japanese text serves as extant verification of this statement. The relevant sentence reads: “This religion has been forbidden, and so it is only natural that it should not be propagated in Japan.”²³

When Bishop Martins arrived in Nagasaki with Rodrigues and the other newly ordained priest in August 1596, he wasted no time in parlaying his feelings to the friars. First, he threatened them with excommunication and forbade (though with little enforcement) the visiting European merchants from using the Franciscan chapel in Nagasaki.²⁴ The man who had accompanied the visionary King Sebastian on his crusade to Africa likely viewed Philip II’s access to the Portuguese with little enthusiasm. He quipped: “Japan belongs to the Portuguese crown”, and was determined to prevent the Spaniards at Manila from obtaining a foothold, either commercial or religious, in Japan.²⁵

The Franciscans were equally determined to remain in Japan, and they protested that they had every right to work in the country. When challenged about his position, Blazquez wrote to Pedro Gomez: “May I inform you that I am in Japan with the permission of God; of King Philip; of Taiko-sama, the

²² CHINESE AND JAPANESE ANCIENT CUSTOMS SERIES. *Tabularium*, Archives of Jesus Church, XXXIa, v. 84.

²³ CHINESE AND JAPANESE ANCIENT CUSTOMS SERIES. *Tabularium*, Archives of Jesus Church, XXXIa, v. 85.

²⁴ MARTINS, Nagasaki, CHINESE AND JAPANESE ANCIENT CUSTOMS SERIES. *Tabularium*, Archives of Jesus Church, XIII (I), v. 16-18, May 23-24, 1596.

²⁵ MARTINS, Nagasaki, CHINESE AND JAPANESE ANCIENT CUSTOMS SERIES. *Tabularium*, Archives of Jesus Church, XIII(I), v. 16, May 23-24, 1596.

emperor of Japan; and of Hoin [Maeda], Governor of Miyako.” (COOPER, 1991, p. 116).

Further complicating the relations between the two religious orders, the Jesuits and Franciscans disagreed over matters of practical policy. The friars were concerned about the Jesuit policy towards absolving usurers in confession, as well as the established practice of performing “mixed marriages” between Christians and non-Christians. There was also disagreement over which fasts to observe, and on what dates. The lively controversy between the Jesuits and the Friars was to cause untold harm to the Japanese mission. As Cooper said: Eventually Clement VIII effected an unsatisfactory compromise by issuing *Onerosa pastoralis* at the end of 1600, ruling that any missionary might go to Japan provided he traveled there by way of Portuguese India. Eight years later, Paul V removed all restrictions, but by that time it was too late and the damage had been done (COOPER, 1991, p. 100).

3 A RIVALRY EXACERBATED IN THE PERSECUTION

After Blazquez and his fellows’ arrival, more Franciscans arrived from Manila, in 1594 and 1596, and joined the original friars’ band in Japan. In October 1596, two more arrived when violent storms forced the Spanish galleon *San Felipe* to port at Urado in Shikoku (COOPER, 1991, p. 115). The arrival of the galleon caused a series of troubles, which exacerbated into an unexpected disaster for its crew and the mission in Japan – all of the cargo was confiscated and 26 men were killed.

For the Japanese missionaries, 1597 was an eventful year. Far from being assuaged by the Nagasaki martyrdoms as might have been hoped, the acrimony between the Spaniards and the Portuguese, and between the Franciscans and the Jesuits, only intensified as charges and countercharges were freely exchanged. Each side blamed the other for the seizure of *San Felipe* and the subsequent mass execution at Nagasaki. According to the Portuguese, the Spanish pilot’s boasting had angered Hideyoshi, prompting him to drastic action. Not so, said the Spaniards: the real reason was that the Portuguese had spread the word that the Spaniards were robbers and pirates. The religious orders joined in the dreary controversy. According to the Jesuits, the friars had ignored all warning signs, and their public preaching had brought trouble on upon their own Jesuits’ hands. The Franciscans answered that the Jesuits had maligned them in court. Furthermore, although

they had probably known about the friars' impending arrest, they had done nothing to help their religious brethren. Both the Jesuits and the Franciscans instituted certified inquiries to present their perspectives.²⁶ Within two weeks after the martyrdoms, Martins presided over a judicial inquiry at Nagasaki. Some twenty-two witnesses, all Portuguese laymen, gave glowing testimony and eyewitness account of the martyrs' consistency.²⁷ This was followed by an inquiry organized by the Franciscans in Macau at the beginning of June that same year. Thirteen statements concerning the friars' apostolate and martyrdom in Japan were drawn up. Additionally, fifteen witnesses, including Figuciredo, the captain who had taken both Martins to and from Japan, testified to their truth. The declarations describe how the friars first arrived in Japan, settled in Miyako, Osaka, and Nagasaki, and were arrested and executed. That same June, another process began in Manila. This time a score of witnesses testified. Many of these witnesses had been passengers aboard the *San Felipe* and one of them was Landecho, the captain of the ill-fated galleon. In another process held in Manila a year later, in June 1598, a more polemical note was introduced. Andres Cuacola, the notary of the galleon, stated in his evidence that he had heard an interpreter inform Landecho and other Spaniards in Urado that, in Miyako, two Jesuits and three Portuguese had told Hideyoshi that the shipwrecked Spaniards had come to Japan as a ruse to overtake the country, and that in a similar way, they had overtaken Peru, Mexico, and the Philippines. It was this false information, declared the notary, which had caused Hideyoshi to confiscate the cargo. He affirmed that he had met Rodrigues near Nagasaki and the Jesuit had told him that at the time of the wreck he had visited Hideyoshi. During the interview, the ruler had offered to return the ship if Rodrigues were to ask him for it, so that the Jesuit could win credit in the eyes of the king. Cuacola then stated that he had asked Rodrigues the obvious question: why he had not favored the Spaniards on that occasion. According to the notary, Rodrigues replied that the Jesuits had not wanted to interfere in the matter, as Landecho and the Spaniards of the *San Felipe* had yet to send their gift to Hideyoshi through the Jesuits' good offices. They also had not consulted with these missionaries, despite their forty years of experience in Japan (COOPER, 1991, p. 125).

²⁶ These proceedings were common at the time. Rodrigues attended at least six of these hearings during his stay in Japan (COOPER, 1991, p. 122).

²⁷ ALVAREZ TALADRIZ, *Original Data, Additional Manuscript Series*, British Library n. 9860, v. 13-20.

The other witnesses' testimony escalated the Jesuits and Portuguese's critique. An account written soon after the shipwreck by the layman Pedro de Figueroa Maldonado offers an extreme example. In some places, it verges on the hysterical:

Martins, Organtino, and Rodrigues had gone to Hideyoshi's minister and told him that the Spaniards were robbers and pirates who went about robbing and disturbing other kingdoms, and that the king of Spain was a tyrant and usurper of other kingdoms. They allegedly denied to Hideyoshi that they were the king of the Philippines' subjects; instead they professed loyalty to Don Antonio, the duke of Beja's son and pretender to the Portuguese throne.²⁸

Fray Jeronimo de Jesus also expressed his suspicion: "It has been claimed that the Society knew about it [the impending arrest] three days before the event, but did not tell the poor friars." (COOPER, 1991, p. 126).

These reports did the Jesuits' reputation little good; if such allegations appeared in writing and in public testimony, it requires little imagination to guess what must have been expressed in rumors and private conversations. Therefore, the Jesuits held their own inquiry from August to October 1597 in Nagasaki. The inquiry consisted of two parts, the first dealing with the *San Felipe* affair and the second with the martyrdoms. The purpose of the exercise was to present the Jesuit view of these unhappy events, and to answer charges against the Order. Fourteen witnesses testified to the seventeen statements in the first part and the ten statements in the second. On August 19th, 1597, Rodrigues appeared as the eighth witness and promised *in verbo sacerdotis* to tell the complete truth:

The deputation from the *San Felipe* had not asked for the the Jesuits' services at Miyako to present their case at court. He furthermore believed that if they had this deputation approached Maeda in the first instance instead of Masuda, Hideyoshi would not have confiscated the cargo. He knew that Organtino had complained to Blazquez that the friars had not asked the Jesuits to help in the delicate negotiations, but Blazquez replied that the Franciscan had the matter well in hand. He also confirmed

²⁸ At this hearing, 13 reports were written on the missionary and martyrdom of the Franciscans in Japan. A total of 15 witnesses, including Figueiredo, the commander of the boat that Martins rode back and forth, attested to the accuracy of the report's records. The reports documented the Franciscans when they had first arrived in Japan, and their arrests and executions during their activities in the capital, Osaka, and Nagasaki. This is according to Perez, *Jesuitism - Asia Series*, Ajuda Library, Lisbon n. 49, v. 3.

that Masuda had already left for Urado before him and the bishop (had) reached the capital. Only Organtino was in Miyako and he was in hiding, so the Jesuits could not have persuaded Hideyoshi to seize the cargo of the ship. Thus, Rodrigues surmised that Masuda must have concocted the hostile speeches, which the Portuguese had allegedly made to Hideyoshi.²⁹ (COOPER, 1991, p. 125).

Rodrigues then referred to the fifth statement of the inquiry, declaring:

He had told Hideyoshi that Mexico, the Philippines, India, and Portugal are governed by the same king. Moreover, Hideyoshi had told him to deal with the matter of the ship and had said that if he, Rodrigues, were to ask him for the ship, he would grant his request. Rodrigues confirmed that Martins had told Blazquez this. (COOPER, 1991, p. 127).

Rodrigues took the stand to testify in the second half of the inquiry into the Nagasaki martyrdoms:

He testified that both in Miyako and Kyushu he had several times advised the friars to be more circumspect in their apostolic work, and that Maeda had also warned two friars that they were heading for trouble. He affirmed that he had not been in Miyako when the guards were placed around the Jesuit and Franciscan houses, but that on his return to the capital he had heard that Maeda had reported a Spaniard's rash words to Hideyoshi, who had thereupon ordered the arrest of the missionaries. This was confirmed, Rodrigues said, by what Hideyoshi later told him in a personal conversation. Rodrigues then described his part in trying to help the victims on their way down to their execution at Nagasaki. (COOPER, 1991, p. 127).

Rodrigues was a key figure in the entire affair, as he was the official representative of both the Jesuits and the Portuguese in the dealings with Hideyoshi. When there were assertions that somebody had vilified the Spaniards in the presence of Hideyoshi, suspicion fell on him. After all, he had the ruler's ear and therefore would have had the opportunity, had he wished to take it, to speak to him against the Spaniards and friars. What, then, was his role in the affair? Rodrigues' movements during the period in question are uncertain, but according to considerable documentary evidence, he is surely

²⁹ Among the witnesses were Francesco Pasio, Pedro Morejon and two Augustinian priests, as well as several believers. There are also believers who came to Japan on the San Felipe.

not responsible for the confiscation³⁰ In all probability, Hideyoshi needed little encouragement to seize the cargo, and in any case, there were precedents for confiscating ships blown onto the Japanese coasts. But the responsibility for the arrest and execution of the Spanish friars must be attached to the Captain's vitriol. If the ruler had actually been told that the Spaniards had come as pirates and robbers, it is strange that he punished the friars and their group living peacefully in Miyako, while allowing the captain, crew, and passengers of the *San Felipe* swift return to the Philippines later the same year. Conversely, if he had been informed that Spanish missionaries had been sent ahead as a fifth column to prepare the way for colonial expansion, the friars' arrest and execution had a certain logic. Certainly, Hideyoshi seems to have heard that Spanish missionaries were a potential threat to his rule. In his August 1597 letter to the Philippines in reply to the embassy, Hideyoshi states: "I have received information that in your kingdoms the promulgation of the law is a stick and deceit by which you overcome other kingdoms."³¹

Thus, the ruler must have been informed that Spanish missionaries had formed a fifth column and prepared the way for colonial conquest. Whether he believed this is another matter. Certainly his fears for national security of Japan were exaggerated, as neither the Portuguese in Macau nor the Spaniards at Manila were even in a remote position to challenge Japan. Persecution happened from time to time after the martyrdoms. This led to hard times for all missionaries in Japan, even during Ieyasu's reign when Portuguese-Japanese trade was promoted. The mission in Japan progressed from bad to worse, hitting rock bottom in 1614 when Ieyasu issued an expulsion decree ordering all missionaries to leave Japan. From then on, Japan closed the door to the outside world.

³⁰ Rodrigues reached Nagasaki from Macau on August 15, and then traveled to court to arrange Bishop Martins' audience. Then, he left the capital with Garces on September 20, and returned to Nagasaki. On Rodrigues' arrival at the port, presumably around the end of September, he found that Martins was away visiting the boys' school, and so he wrote to the bishop sharing the latest news from the court with him. Rodrigues certainly preceded Martins back to court to arrange the audience, but the exact date of his arrival at the capital is unknown. The *San Felipe* was founded in Urado on October 20, and the ship's deputation reached Osaka on October 29. However, certainly, Rodrigues was not in the capital on this date, as Rodrigues and Pasio, Morejon, and Christoval de Mercado later testified to this. Therefore, it can be presumed that Rodrigues had not returned to the capital by October 29. However by that time, the fate of the *San Felipe* had already been decided, as Masuda had issued a decree ordering the preparation of a fleet of barges to carry away the confiscated cargo. FRIAS, *Additional Manuscript Series*, British Library n. 9860, v. 51.

³¹ CHINESE AND JAPANESE ANCIENT CUSTOMS SERIES, Archives of Jesus Church, LXV, v. 159.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the Jesuits and Franciscans often differed in their use of methods of interpretation and preaching, based on the rigidity of the doctrines between the two congregations. This led to constant friction. Behind the dispute between the Jesuits and Franciscans in the Diocese of Japan is a substantial national feeling and sentiment. Moreover, the localism of each one's missionary sphere of influence and the conflict of rights and interests, due to the protection of religious rights, have instigated internal friction in the Missionary Efforts of the Catholic Church in Asia. In the competition for missionary forces in the Far East, Portugal and Spain have long been at odds with one another. Many factors have contributed to this. For example: 1) the issue of trade, the factor inciting the most feelings among the people; 2) the scope of missionary activities, the embodiment of the contradictions between the two sides; 3) the means of missionizing, where there is immense disagreement between the Jesuits and the Franciscans; 4) the conflict between the Jesuits and the Franciscans over specific policies. These contradictions decayed the relationship between the two religious orders, and even the "Twenty-six Martyrs" in Nagasaki did not ease the relationship between the Jesuits and the Franciscans. Additionally, the face-to-face attacks intensified, causing heavy losses to the missionary cause in Japan at that time.

CHEN, X. Disputas entre los Jesuitas y los Franciscanos: una revisión histórica de las políticas de dos ordenes cristianas en Japón. *Trans/formação*, Marília, v. 46, n. 1, p. 235-250, Jan./Mar., 2023.

Resumen: A lo largo de la historia del cristianismo en Japón, han persistido las tensiones y los conflictos entre los jesuitas y los franciscanos. A primera vista, esto parece deberse a sus diferentes lecturas de las políticas de Roma y a sus variados enfoques del trabajo apostólico. Sin embargo, si se examina más detenidamente, la política también desempeñó un papel importante. Detrás de las dos órdenes se encontraban dos potencias marítimas rivales -Portugal y España-, cuyos sentimientos nacionales de sus compatriotas pueden haber superado en ocasiones sus intereses en la misión de Japón. En un intento de mantener la paz, Roma emitió el Patronatus missionum. Sin embargo, intensificó el conflicto y llevó la situación a un estado de desorden irreparable. Esto acabó causando grandes pérdidas a toda la misión. Para una mejor comprensión, en esta tesis resumo los siguientes argumentos entre jesuitas y franciscanos. El primer argumento, y el más destacado, se refiere al comercio; el segundo, a la separación de las parroquias; el tercero, a sus planteamientos apostólicos, y el último, a sus políticas

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prácticas. También cabe mencionar que la relación entre los jesuitas y los franciscanos no se vio aliviada por el incidente del martirio de Nagasaki de 26 personas. De hecho, fue una gran pérdida.

Palabras clave: La misión cristiana en Japón. Jesuita. Franciscano. Portugal. España.

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