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ALESSANDRO VALIGNANO ATTITUDE TOWARDS JESUIT AND FRANCISCAN CONCEPTS OF EVANGELIZATION IN JAPAN (1587-1597)1

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1. The Franciscan presence in Japan and its connection with the Spanish authorities in Manila

The different concepts of evangelization that existed between the Society of Jesus and the Franciscans has to be understood in the context of the existence of divergent ideas as to what the Church should be and its relation with the outside world. However, this rivalry in the Japanese archipelago originated when the Franciscans who were based in Manila arrived in Japan, a territory that had been consecrated as an exclusive area for the Jesuits of the Portuguese Padroado by the brief Ex pastoralis officio issued by Pope Gregory XIII in 1585. In this way, the conflict between these two orders within the

1 This article is the result of a synthesis of two chapters of my Masters thesis in Modern History, that I presented to the Faculty of Arts of the University of Lisbon in January 2001, entitled A concepção de missionação na Apologia de Vaignano. Estudo sobre a realidade entre jesuítas e franciscanos no Japão (1587-1597) [The Concept of Evangelization in Valignano's Apologia. A Study of the Rivalry between Jesuits and Franciscans in Japan (1587-1597)] about the Apologia en la qual se responde a diversas calumnias que se escrivieron contra los Padres de la Compañia de Japon y de la China penned by Alessandro Valignano. The publication of the Apologia was aimed at countering the accusations made against the Society of Jesus by two Franciscans, Friar Martin de la Ascensión and Friar Jerónimo de Jesus. The work was begun by Valignano in 1597 in Macao and finished in October 1598 in Nagasaki. Valignano considered these accusations to be symbolic of the criticism of the Jesuit presence in Japan made by the Mendicant Orders. In the words of the Jesuit Visitor, “[...] entre los Frayles descalsos de las Philipinas no solo se miente, y escrive mal de las cosas de la Compañia acerca de lo que hasen en Japon y en la China, mas (lo que es pior) que aviendose comensado a escrivir, con poco fundamento por algunos dellos (movidos, o de falsa aprehencion, o de passion) tan graves cosas contra los nuestros Padres, todos los demas se persuaden, que son verdad ciertas [...] y desta manera [...] se van imprimiendo en el entendimiento de otros muchos Religiosos, y de otras personas virtuosas, que no sabiendo, ni por experiencia, ni por otra parte, lo que passa en Japon, y en la China, facilmente se persuaden, que las cosas altas, y escritas por hombres Religiosos, y por Frayles descalsos [...] seran ciertas, y verdaderas, y assi padece la Compañia mucho detrimento en la openion que dellos se concibe [...].” Valignano states that “Determino de escrevir esta apologia en la mesma lengoa castellana, en que ellos escriviieron estos tratados, y cartas, que quiere disir en nuestra lengoa, defension, satisfacion, y respuesta.” in Apologia, Preface, ff. 1-2. For this study of the Apologia en la qual se responde a diversas calumnias que se escrivaron contra los Padres de la Compañia de Japon y de la China, codex 49-IV-58 of the Ajuda Library was utilized.
Japanese territory can only be fully understood when one considers that Japan found itself on the frontier of the Portuguese and Spanish areas of influence - the Portuguese having established their presence in India and Macao and the Spanish with their presence in the Philippines, the final frontier of the Spanish presence in America.²

From 1575 onwards, the year in which the Franciscans established themselves in the Philippines, Manila became the base for Franciscan expansion in the Far East. The primary objective, during the decades of the 70’s and 80’s, was to establish themselves in Macao and the interior areas of China. This plan of expansion proved to be a total failure for the Order, due both to the absence of support on the part of the Chinese authorities, as well as the Franciscan hostility towards the Portuguese Padroado.³

² From the very beginning of the Iberian expansion, both the Spanish and Portuguese Crowns, as well as the Holy See, were preoccupied with delineating the Portuguese and Spanish spheres of action in Asia, as is evident from the Treaties of Tordesillas (1494) and Zaragoza (1529). The brief Ex pastoralis officio (1585) issued by Gregory XIII ensured that the Japanese archipelago was included in the Portuguese sphere of influence and was subordinated to the Portuguese Padroado in the Orient. It appears that the situation changed almost immediately when, in the following year, Sistus V published the brief Dvm ad uberes fructus, conferring the right to found missions in the Indias and in China upon the Franciscans based in the Philippines. The interpretation of this brief sparked off an intense controversy between the two Padroados. The Spanish Mendicants affirming that, in this way, the Franciscan entry into Japan was legitimate, while the Jesuits declared that Sistus V's decision, by the generic manner in which it approached the Asian territory, did not validate the status of the Japanese archipelago as an exclusively Jesuit area, as declared by Gregory XIII. Apparently, the solution would be found by Clement VII who, in 1600, issued the brief Onerosa pastoralis, which gave all the Mendicant Orders the right to enter Japan, as long as they worked via the Portuguese Indias. The solution did not please the Spanish Church, given that its solidarity with the Spanish territories obliged it to accept an entry into Japan solely via the Philippines. Thus, the provincial heads of the Dominican, Augustinian and Franciscan Orders would write a joint letter to the King, requesting that "[...]

Towards the end of the 80’s, the Franciscans found themselves facing the obvious failure of the Chinese enterprise and, at the same time, were under pressure from the friars coming from America who, on arrival in the Philippines, manifested their desire to spread their missionary activities beyond the area of the Philippine islands. It was in the light of this situation that an expansion into the Japanese territory emerged as a new missionary objective for the Franciscans of the Spanish Padroado, based in Manila. The Church in Manila began to justify their entry in Japan, alleging the need to reinforce the number of missionaries in the Japanese archipelago.

Contrary to what happened with their entry in China, the situation in Japan was favourable for the realization of this new missionary project. These new conditions resulted from the fact that the Franciscans of Manila found themselves in a different political and religious context from the time of their attempts to establish themselves in China and Macao. Thus, if the authorities who supported the interests of the Portuguese presence in the Far East tried to thwart the entry of elements originating from the Spanish Padroado, at this point in time, the political and ecclesiastical authorities in Manila found the project of the Franciscan evangelization of Japan to be a beneficial factor for their own interests and would therefore create the necessary conditions for the Franciscan entry in Japan.

Apart from their desire to penetrate Japan, from 1587 onwards, in the context of the anti-Christian edict issued by Hideyoshi, the Church in Manila (and the Franciscans in particular) felt an additional justification which stemmed from the notion that Japanese Christendom was facing imminent doom and needed to be saved.

The Church in Manila would prove to be of fundamental importance in ensuring the necessary conditions for the Franciscan entry in Japan. This support was not only due to the consent of the Bishop of Manila, but was, above all, due to the unequivocal support of the other Mendicant Orders, the Augustinians and the Dominicans, in giving priority to the Franciscans in establishing themselves in Japan, given that this would open the doors for the subsequent entry of their orders in this territory. This support of the Mendicant Church of Manila for the Franciscan project of evangelization in Japan is clearly evident in a declaration presented by the provincial heads of the Dominican and Augustinian Orders, namely, Friar Alonso Ximinez and Friar Diego Alvarez, in which they express their complete support for the Franciscan project of evangelization. The alliance between the Mendicant Orders was strengthened by a common opposition to the privileges of the Society of Jesus in the evangelization of Japan, which were considered to be
harmful for the interests of the Spanish Padroado. These two mendicant provincial heads affirmed that “[…] the Fathers of the Society contradicted and imposed the Motu proprio of Gregory XIII, in which it is forbidden for the other Religious Orders to enter Japan. With this we understand that the aforementioned Motu proprio obliged us to do this”, and further added that the support extended to the Franciscan entry “was opposed by the Fathers of the Society […] all the fathers of this Province along with the other Orders supported this venture; and it seemed to us that not only was it justifiable, it was downright necessary […].”

Nevertheless, this acceptance of the urgent need to enter Japan, would be a prelude to the entry of the Spanish Padroado and the Mendicant Orders in Japan, noting that, after all, for the Japanese islands “not even three whole Societies of Jesus would be sufficient to indoctrinate them”, and it was necessary to remember that “it was essential for the service of our Lord and for the spreading of the holy Gospel, that the Fathers of our Father St. Francis, in particular, and the other Orders as well, go to preach and bring succour to these souls in the kingdoms of Japan”.

Apart from the Spanish Church’s desire to establish itself in Japanese territory, the fact that the political authorities in Manila felt the need to have closer ties with Japan would, likewise, prove to be of fundamental importance in the Franciscan penetration of Japan.

The Spanish authorities in Manila considered it important to strengthen relations with Japan so as to ensure the stability of this area. Various factors contributed towards the attempts of the Governor of Manila to ensure the security of Manila by means of closer ties with Japan. One of the problems that necessitated coordination with the Japanese authorities was the existence of piracy. In Manila it was feared that, with the end of the war with Korea, many Japanese would turn their attention to pillaging the coastline of the Philippine archipelago. On the other hand, the Spanish authorities were also aware of the fragile defenses of Manila. There exists correspondence from political and religious authorities that shows Manila’s military vulnerability in the face of a possible attack by the Japanese.

4 In May 1593, Antonio Sendeño, the Jesuit Superior in the Philippines, in a letter to the Governor of Manila, wrote, “[…] que a mi noticia á venido y se por cierta informacion que V. Señoria á procurado y pedido con instancia a los Padres de la Orden de Sant Francisco que vayan a los reynos del Xapon, a titulo de una embaxada para Quambacodono, rey de aquella tierra, pero en realidad de verdad se entiende van a poblar y tomar allí casas y conventos como en estas partes, lo cuales ellos no pueden hazer, por estarles prohibido por un Motu proprio de Gregorio decimo tercio […]. Y asi de todo protesto queexarme delante de Su Santidad y Magestad por no guardarse sus mandatos y ordenanzas, como lo deben guardar e obedecer.” AIA, January-February 1918, pp. 87-88.
5 “Parecer dos provinciais de São Domingos e Santo Agostinho”, Manila, 11th and 23rd May 1595, in AIA, January - February 1918, pp. 244 - 247.
Internal factors would, likewise, contribute to the fact that the Spanish Padroado would violate Gregory XIII's brief. As Juan Gil notes, the trade between Japan and Manila was, in large measure, realized by Japanese Christians, the majority of which were from the island of Kyūshū. As a result, after the edict of 1587, many Japanese Christians utilized the religious issue to request closer ties between Manila and Japan, a process in which the missionaries would be intermediaries. In this way, as Alvarez-Taladriz demonstrates, the edict of 1587, combined with the arrival of a large number of Japanese Christians in the Philippines who petitioned the Bishop to urgently send missionaries to Japan, gave a strong impetus to the entry of the Spanish Church in the Japanese archipelago.

Apart from the Japanese Christians, Hideyoshi also showed himself to be favourably inclined towards closer ties with Manila, with a view to establish commercial competition with the Portuguese that would result in a fall in the prices of gold and silk.

An equally important, albeit often overlooked, aspect seems to have been the intervention of Portuguese merchants, given that the presence of the Spanish Church in Japan would stimulate trade with Manila. The involvement of Portuguese merchants in commerce between the Philippines and the Japanese archipelago is an established fact, and it seems that they extended considerable support to the Franciscans of the Spanish Padroado. So much so,
in fact, that the Franciscan friar Jerónimo de Jesus refers to them in his letters.10

The importance of the Franciscan evangelization in the context of commercial relations between the two archipelagos is even more evident when Friar Jerónimo de Jesus, writing from Nagasaki to his provincial superior, requested him to urge the Governor to favour the merchants who would arrive at Manila with the authorization of Friar Pedro Baptista, the Franciscan Superior in Japan.11

In 1591, Hideyoshi sent an emissary to Manila, a gesture that the Governor reciprocated in 1592, sending the Embassy headed by the Dominican Juan Cobo, who was considered to be the greatest sinologist of the Philippines. On the return journey to Manila, Juan Cobo’s vessel was shipwrecked and, in the wake of a new Japanese Embassy, the Governor of Manila sent the Embassy headed by Friar Pedro Baptista, which would pave the way for the establishment of the Franciscans in Japan.

Between 1593 and 1597, the number of Franciscans in Japan continued to grow. Thus, in addition to Pedro Baptista, Bartolomeu Ruiz, Francisco de San Miguel and Friar Gonçalo Garcia, all of whom arrived in 1593, in the following year, Augustin Rodriguez, Jerónimo de Jesus and Marcelo de Ribadeneira joined the mission. In June 1596, Martin de la Ascensión and Francisco Blanco arrived, who were to be the last two Franciscan missionaries to enter Japan before the martyrdom of 1597. In the six years that they remained in Japan, they built three convents (Miyako, Nagasaki and Osaka) and three hospitals (two in Miyako and one in Nagasaki), where they treated lepers.

The Franciscan missionary activity was abruptly and violently interrupted in 1597. Hideyoshi, in whom the Franciscans had always reposed great trust, alleging the misbehaviour of these missionaries, decreed that three Franciscans who were in Nagasaki were to be expelled and ordered the cruci-

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10 Jerónimo de Jesus states that he is in Nagasaki “[...] para de aquí proveher lo necessário al Meaco y acudir a estos señores portugueses, que están aquí y vendrán de Machan; porque si ellos nos ayudan, la tierra pobre y el demonio atapa los portillos [...], porque no hay mas que lo que el Rey nos da.” “Carta al Padre Comisario y al Padre Provincial de la de San Gregorio”, Nagasaki 10th March 1595, in Jerónimo de Jesús, p. 45.

11 Jerónimo de Jesús stresses to his provincial superior that “[...] diga V.C. al señor governador que, com público pregón mande decir que el navío que viniere de Japon a Manila sin chapa de Quambacodon y de su Embaxador, que es nuestro Hermano [Frei Pedro Baptista], le ha de tomar la hacienda por perdida”. Likewise, the understanding between the Franciscan missionaries and the Christian merchants who traded with Japan seems to be clear as Jerónimo de Jesus further adds that, “[...] Este año solamente dió licencia nuestro Hermano para tres navíos. El en que va esta carta es de christianos de Nangasaque; a estos procure V.C. se les haga más favor. A los otros, que son de gentiles, diga V.C. al señor Governador quen los trate com grandíssima gravedad, que importa mucho;” “Carta al Padre Comisario y al Padre Provincial de la de San Gregorio”, Nagasaki, 10th March 1595, in Jerónimo de Jesús, pp. 46-47.
fixion of the five Franciscans who were at Miyako (Pedro Baptista, Francisco Blanco, Gonçalo Garcia, Francisco de San Miguel and Filipe de Jesus) and Martin de la Ascensión who was in Osaka, along with 17 Japanese neophytes and three Jesuit brothers.

In this way, a turbulent period in the history of evangelization in Japan, during which Franciscans and Jesuits had fought each other bitterly, came to an end.12

2. The Franciscan concept of evangelization
2.1 The Franciscans and the Messianic interpretation of their arrival in Japan

The way in which the Franciscans interpreted their arrival in Japan would reflect the type of relations that these missionaries would have with the territory which they sought to evangelize. The Franciscan arrival would be interpreted in a messianic and providential light, and revealed the central role that the Franciscan missionaries attributed to themselves in the process of evangelization.

The beginnings of the Franciscan evangelization was explained as a natural evolution of the Japanese Church. The Jesuits were viewed as part of a phase that, now, thanks to a providential plan, had ended and a new era - that of the Franciscans, had begun. The hand of God was considered to be behind the happenings that took place upon the Franciscan arrival13. This Messianism, that the Franciscans projected unto the start of their mission, apart from being an apologetic and justificatory strategy, also reflects the relationship that the Franciscan missionaries had with the territory which they sought to evangelize. This kind of conceptualization left no room for doubt. There was no external cause that could explain the Franciscan arrival. Everything was justified based on a providential vision. The apparent contradiction between Hideyoshi’s behaviour, in the context of the anti-Christian edict, and the subsequent opening and acceptance of the Franciscan missionaries, was not viewed with scepticism, but rather, as a demonstration of the inevitability of the Franciscan arrival.

The fact that the Franciscans made their arrival in Japan out to be part of a providential plan to restore the Church should not be viewed as merely strategic rhetoric, but as a manifestation of a school of thought formed in a medieval European context that would be transplanted to the Japanese archipelago.

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13 Friar Juan de Garrovillas, states that the Franciscans arrived in Japan in 1593 “[...] por orden de nuestro Señor, más que humana, los recibió el Emperador [...].” in Frei Juan de Garrovillas, “Relación y certificación de las cosas y estados del Japón, por el Provincial de los Descalzos Franciscos y el Cabildo de Manila”, 29th April 1595, in AIA, January - February 1918, p. 217.
According to the medieval rationale, the relationship between man and nature was not an autonomous relationship between subject and object, but a situation in which the subject was integrated into the outside world. There were no barriers between the individual and the world, a concept that arose from the belief of the unity of creation\(^{14}\). This is a concept influenced by Christian neo-Platonism, where the world is perceived as a perfect and necessary order of things, in which all things have their fixed place and remain in this place and carry out their predetermined function by the infallible force of Divine Providence. This is a “transcendent” view of nature, expressed as such especially by Saint Francis of Assisi, where nature does not have any value of its own, but is merely a reflection of the “image of God”\(^{15}\). This concept is to be found particularly in Saint Boaventura (1221-1274), author of the *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* (1259), a work which was a watershed in medieval thinking and was of profound importance in shaping the relationship between the Franciscan Order and the world. For this Franciscan author, intellectual knowledge was determined by God, which is likewise the model and cause for everything, as there existed a causal dependence for the world in relation with God\(^{16}\).

This conceptualization led to a symbolic interpretation of the world, that enabled an individual of the medieval world to interpret nature as a “great reservoir of symbols” : “Christian symbolism “copied” the world and gave a new and supplementary dimension to space, which was invisible to the eye of the beholder, but was perceptible through a series of interpretations”\(^{17}\). According to Gurevitch, medieval Christian symbolism revealed four interpretative levels of reality:

Firstly, the fact: a real historic event
Secondly, the allegoric interpretation: the fact had to be the analogical expression of another event, that conferred upon it a significance that went beyond its immediate meaning.
Thirdly, the tropological interpretation: the event reveals a moral dimension, and must be interpreted as a moral lesson of conduct.
Fourthly, the anagogeal interpretation: finally, the event represented a sacred religious truth.\(^{18}\)

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\(^{15}\) See ibidem, p. 84.
\(^{17}\) Aron I. Gurevitch, op. cit., p. 103.
\(^{18}\) Gurevitch affirms that these interpretative levels are synthesized in the verse by the Carolingian theologian, Raban Maur: *Littera gesta docet, quid credes allegoria, moralis quod agas, quo tendas anagoge* (“The literal meaning informs one about what happened; the allegory teaches you what to believe in; the moral shows you how to act; the anagoge reveals the path you are following”), ibidem, p. 104.
When the Franciscans affirmed that their messianic arrival in Japan was the manifestation of a providential plan, one should not interpret this situation as being a solely apologetic strategy. Rather, it is, above all, the manifestation of an entire conceptualization of relations with the world that these missionaries would transplant to an external territory far from the society in which this very conceptualization was created. It is this very same quadripartite way of approaching a historical fact that would condition and structure the Franciscan interpretation of their arrival in Japan. Consequently, in these four levels we find:

Firstly, the fact: Hideyoshi accepts the entry of the Franciscans in Japan.
Secondly, the allegorical interpretation: a providential plan, in which the Franciscans are entrusted with the mission of saving Japanese Christendom.
Thirdly, the tropological interpretation: the errors of the evangelization of the Jesuits were decisive for the decadence of Christianity in Japan.
Fourthly, the anagogic interpretation: the Franciscans are the true foundation, based on which the Japanese Church must be rebuilt.

2.2 The missionary as the centre of the process of evangelization: the rejection of experience and knowledge as structural elements of evangelization

The behaviour of the Franciscan missionaries, from their arrival in 1593 to their martyrdom in 1597, would be characterized by an attitude of opposition to Japanese society, which they considered to be a secular and pagan society, in relation to which no concessions should be made. The Franciscan missionary would declare himself to be the centre of missionary activities, as he brought with him an absolute truth that - contrary to what they accused the Jesuits of doing - should never be modified according to the characteristics of the territory which was the object of their evangelization.

To better understand this tension between the Franciscan missionaries and Japanese society, it is essential to comprehend the conceptualization of space that these missionaries took to Japan from Europe. These individuals, in their relationship with society, took with them a dichotomic vision of the world, greatly influenced by Augustianism: the sacred kingdom in opposition to the earthly world, corrupted by sin and temptation. There existed the Civitas Dei and the Civitas Terrena, and the latter resembled the Civitas Diaboli. For the Franciscans, this sacred space was identified with the convent that, in this manner, became the centre of religious activity. Marcelo de Ribadeneira, one of the Franciscans in Japan stated that, for the Superior

19 See Ibidem, p. 77.
Pedro Baptista, prayers were the most important activity for the Franciscan missionaries. 20

This attitude has its roots in the fundamental texts themselves of the Franciscan Order. The *Legenda Perusina*, about the life of Saint Francis of Assisi, relates that Saint Francis himself “[...] used to teach all the friars this [...] telling them that the management of the brothers, the official duties and the zeal for preaching, in a certain way would deprive them of the time necessary for prayer [...]” 21. The realization of prayer in the convent was not interpreted as an escape from evangelization. Rather, it was demonstrative of the fact that the Franciscans considered themselves to be the bearers of a pure and absolute truth that would inevitably prevail over a pagan world and, in the end, conquer it.

The Church, and in this case the Franciscans, were convinced that they represented the true Church, and that one should not innovate, as the truth did not need to be renewed. Innovation would thus appear as a modification of the absolute truth that the Church transmitted. In this context, the Franciscans put the idea of tradition before the idea of renewal or adaptation. The tradition of the Church was inseparable from the truth of the evangelical message. The very history of the Church and the manner in which this became institutionalized in European Christianity were considered sacred elements which were indispensable for the defence of the Christian Faith. 22

The influence of medieval thinking, where there existed the notion that change resulted in decadence, is notoriously evident in the value attributed to tradition as opposed to adaptation, given that what is really true continues immutable and does not change with time. All that was not authorized by time and by tradition had no validity. One notes that, in the Middle Ages, the term *moderatitas*, had a negative connotation, and the Catholic Church condemned the so called *novi doctores* to be heretics based on the accusation of their...
being innovators. Guillaume de Conches stated, “We expound and formulate ancient ideas, we do not invent anything new”. *Antiquas* was synonymous with *auctoritas* (authority), *gravitas* (dignity) and *majestas* (majesty).23

Likewise, experience should not be a criterion for an alteration in the Church’s comportment. Given that, amongst the Franciscans, the notion persisted that their manner of conceiving the Church was the most correct, they thus continued to refuse to regulate the comportment that resulted from this conceptualization in relation with experience acquired in the heart of the society that they sought to evangelize. Intelligence, and the capacity of the missionary to interpret the world in which he was inserted, deriving from his own experience, which would subsequently determine his mode of interaction (a typically Jesuit attitude), is something that is rejected by the Franciscans, in the sense that this was itself interpreted as capitulating to a pagan and sinful world. What was true was absolute and, consequently, should never be modified in accordance with other conditions. It is in this context that the aspects of culture and knowledge as conditioning elements of evangelization came in for criticism, a concept that would prove to be decisive in the manner in which the Franciscans would relate to Japanese society.

The integration of the missionary into society as a way of ensuring a more effective evangelization was considered to be a deceptive strategy. Experience and knowledge of the world as conditioning factors of evangelization were interpreted as a corruption of the Church which was the institution that personified an absolute truth.24

From the very beginning, Franciscan sources reject secular knowledge as a factor that conditioned missionary activity, because its origins sprang from a sinful world. Only the enlightened wisdom of the Holy Ghost was legitimate. Thus, Tomás de Celano, in his “*Vida Primeira de S. Francisco*” would write: “[...] St. Francis traveled throughout the cities and villages to announce

23 See Aron I. Gurevitch, *op. cit.* pp. 149-150.
24 Only an uncorrupted and inflexible Church, in its approach to a sinful world, would succeed in conquering the enemies of Christianity: “[...] la pobreza evangélica y descalsel de San Francisco es muy buena y aún mejor para la predicacion del Evangelio en Japon, que no la sabiduría y riqueza [...]”; y que mas mueven los pies descalços, el hábito remendado y la renunciacion del oro y plata, que todo quanto quanto los hombres pueden con prudencia dezir [...].” in *Apuntamientos del hermano Fray Gerónimo de Jesús para los Padres de nuestra Provincia de San Gregorio, tocantes al Japon.* - Para nuestro hermano Provincional de la Provincia de San Gregorio de los Frayles Descalços de S. Francisco de Manila*, no Japão, s.d., in *Jerónimo de Jesús*, p. 53. This criticism of the Jesuit attitude was not limited to manifesting their discord at the level of the comportment of the missionaries. In the words of Jerónimo de Jesús, the values of the Society as an ecclesiastical institution are inherently censurable, as is the way in which they conceive the Church and the relationship between the cleric and the world around him: “[...] la virtud supone mucha penitencia y vida de mucha estrechez, mengua y necesidad, y de todo esto está muy lexos la Compañía, porque como profesan letras, y las letras han menester regalo corporal, y con este no puede haver mucho de cruz, y sin mucha cruz no hay mucha perfeccion [...]”, *Jerónimo de Jesús*, p. 97.
the Heavenly Kingdom [...], not with the artifices of human wisdom, but with the virtuousness of the Spirit.” 25

The principal Franciscan documents had clear views as to the place of secular knowledge in the process of evangelization. St. Francis himself, in the First Rule, addressing the preachers wrote that, “Thus, brothers, beware of pride and boastfulness. We are the guardians of the wisdom of this world and of the prudence of the flesh [Rom 8,6], because the spirit of the flesh requires a lot and pays more attention to words and less to deeds.” 26 Knowledge was considered to be the antithesis of the simplicity, humility and purity of Christianity: “We must not be wise and prudent according to the flesh [1 Cor 1, 26] but, yes, we strive to be simple, humble and pure.” 27 stated St. Francis.

2.3. Evangelization as an affirmation of Christianity in the face of a sinful world

For the Franciscans, it was important that the Church not only defended its integrity against the corruption of a sinful world, but the legitimacy of the Church was also to be ensured by opposition to the pagan and secular world, i.e. that which was correct could be affirmed only when it acted against its antithesis. Friar Jerónimo de Jesús justifies the necessity to collide with a pagan society, such as that of Japan, affirming that the objective of the Church was to engage in an exemplary battle against a sinful world. 28

The roots of this attitude can be traced to the Middle Ages. In the course of his studies of medieval culture, Aron Gurevitch states that the Greek term ἀσκήσις, which in the Classical period meant exercise, was interpreted in the Middle Ages as a synonym for battle. 29 The necessity of tension and conflict between the clergy and the secular world is a constant feature in the fundamental texts of this Order. Thus, in the biography of the founder of the Order written by Tomás de Celano, the Franciscans would read that St. Francis stated that, “[...] the servant of God should blaze with the sanctity of life, so much so that in the light of his example and in the perfume of his reputation

25 Fontes Franciscanos, p. 259.
27 St. Francis, “Letter to the Faithful”, second essay, in Ibidem, p. 91. In this regard, the narrative of the “Legenda Perusina” is likewise very elucidative : “[...] the saint did not want to see the friars aspiring to science and books, but wanted to see them, as he urged time and again, inspired by pure and holy simplicity, the holy prayers and Poverty.”, p. 971.
28 “El intento y fin que la Yglesia cathólica tiene [...] no es, ni ha sido otro, sino querer animar a los fieles hijos, como madre piadosa porque nos vee pelear contra tan poderosos y fuertes enemigos, como es el mundo el demonio y la carne; y porque nuestra vida es pelea, como dice el santo Job (Job, VII, 1) [...]” in Jerónimo de Jesús, p. 66.
the impious shall see an admonition.” It is in this context that the Franciscan missionaries would introduce the concept of “holy imprudence” as fundamental for the evangelization of Japan. Not only because it was necessary as a way of affirming true Christianity before a pagan society but, above all, as an antithesis - a form of contesting and highlighting the errors of Jesuit Christianity.

As opposed to what the Franciscans accused the Jesuits of doing, the true evangelizer was one who, by means of his behaviour, kept himself aloof from mundane values. In this manner, if knowledge resulted in a corruption of Christianity, in the Franciscan conceptualization, ignorance and simplicity were fundamental to ensure that the missionary did not integrate into a sinful society and, by means of his example in disparaging this very same society, would affirm Christianity. It was in this sense that the Franciscan missionaries in Japan would make their apology for their ignorance and lack of culture, given that the true missionary was one who, by his lack of knowledge, would remain true to a certain model of comportment and would not alter this, regardless of the environment into which he was introduced.

There is a recurrent theme in the Franciscan conceptualization of evangelization, by which that which is considered to be universal prevails over whatever is individual and precarious. Rather than interpreting the individual as an element that would condition the behaviour to be adopted in the context of the specific nature of a particular environment, the Franciscans never questioned a general conceptualization of evangelization that was considered to be the true way and, thus, was universal and absolute, regardless of any particular situation.

It is important to note that, despite the fact that it may appear to be a contradiction, in this conceptualization of Franciscan evangelization, there was no lack of knowledge about the specific nature and the particular characteristics of Japanese society. Friar Jerónimo de Jesus clearly states that Japan,

30 Tomás Celano, Vida Segunda de São Francisco, in Fontes Franciscanas, p. 450. St. Francis himself, in the “Saudações às Virtudes”, would write that “The pure and holy simplicity perplexes all the wisdom of this world and the wisdom of the flesh [...] holy humility bewilders pride and all men of this world [...]”, p. 77.
31 With reference to the Franciscan “holy imprudence”, Jerónimo de Jesús writes, “Y así causó tanta novedad esto en Japon, como se puede creer causaría ver en gente religiosa y predicadora tan diversos modos y maneras. Ver a la Compañía com grandes tratos y mercancías; ver a los religiosos descalços y sin pecunia; ver la Compañía andar en literas en hombros de hombres; ver a los frailes andar a pie descalços, ver los unos en poderosos cavallos com muchos criados armados de espadas y lanceas, y ver a los otros andar a pie, vestidos de sacos remendados o rotos. De aquí levantavan los japones algunas dudas; y la primera duda era, si éramos todos de un Dios [...]”, in Jerónimo de Jesús, pp. 77-78.
32 Jerónimo de Jesús, while making out the apology of the Franciscan friars in Japan, would write that, “Fr. Gonzalo [Garcia] era de su natural tartamundo y no sabía mas de una poca lengua japona [...], y con todo esto, ver el ánimo y fervor com que predicava y hablava de Dios, era espanto, y cómo hablava al Rey de la tierra. El santo Fr. Francisco de San Miguel sabía muy poco o nada de leer y escribir.” in Jerónimo de Jesús, p. 80.
with its characteristics, was different from any other society in which he had carried out missionary activity.\textsuperscript{33} This discourse can undoubtedly seem to be contradictory at first glance. In effect, the Franciscan missionary conceptualization does not reject the existence of the diversity of the world. What it does refute, however, is that this diversity is to be considered as a structural element for the Church’s comportment, and qualifies it as the product of a sinful world. In the Franciscan vision of evangelization, the particular characteristics of a particular territory to be evangelized could never have an effect on the conception of a universal and absolute Church.

3. The concept of evangelization as expressed by Valignano

3.1 A new conception of Nature; the acceptance of diversity

Medievalism, being greatly influenced by Thomism, had consecrated a unitarian concept of the world. St. Thomas of Aquino defended this unity between the world and God, (which, as we have seen, was so decisive in the manner in which the Franciscan would interpret their presence in Japan) stating that all beings created by God had an inherent desire to draw close to divinity. The entire thesis of Thomistic anthropology is based on the presumption that celestial beatitude, i.e. the natural desire to see God, is the ultimate purpose of man. There is no distinction between the subject and the world that surrounds him, given that both are products of divine creation and are, consequently, a manifestation of God.

The theology and anthropology of the Society of Jesus were not influenced by the Thomistic tradition but, instead, by the chronological period in which the Order was founded. The Society of Jesus was to appear in the sixteenth century, at a time when both Europe and the Catholic Church were confronted by diversity, not just within European Christianity itself, but also in the context of a novel knowledge of an entire new world that was spatially and culturally different from Europe.

In the vision of the Society of Jesus, the relationship between the missionary and the society that surrounded him would be completely different from the Franciscan concept. This difference was, above all, rooted in a different conceptualization of nature and man’s relationship with the world.

\textsuperscript{33} Friar Jerónimo de Jesus wrote that, “Quán diferente conversion sea la del Japon a los otras conversiones del mundo, sébese muy claro; porque en todas las Yndias de Nueva España, Perú y Filipinas, el indio no pregunta, sino oye; y lo que les dicen, esto creen [...], a lo menos, a oir, para que entren al conocimiento o noticia de Dios; pero en Japón es tan al contrario de esto, que espanta; [...] y preguntan con tanta viveza cuestiones muy difíciles tanto, que admira oirlas.” \textit{Jerónimo de Jesús}, pp. 78-79.
Fundamentally, with the Society of Jesus, one witnesses the transformation of the notion of natura, with the emergence of the concept of pura natura. At the end of the sixteenth century, the alteration in this conceptualization is clearly visible within the Society of Jesus, especially in authors such as Luis de Molina (1535-1600) and Francisco Suárez (1548-1617). It was, likewise, visible outside Europe as well, due to the manner in which the Society and, in this instance, Valignano, equated the Church’s relationship with the societies that it sought to evangelize.34

The Society of Jesus does not contest the Aristotelian principle that Man seeks essential perfection in his encounter with the supreme divine cause. However, the Jesuit philosophy affirms that this encounter with God is conditioned by nature herself along with the prospects of the being in question, namely, by his means and capacities. This conceptualization of a pure nature thus allows one to determine all the particular aspects of human nature and its natural faculties. Consequently, it is possible to disassociate the natural plan and the supernatural plan which, according to the Thomistic view, were inseparable processes. In this way, one opens the doors to recognizing differences and diversity, an element that was of fundamental importance in ensuring the primacy of the concept of adaptation in the Jesuit process of evangelization, and in this particular case, in the manner in which Valignano would envisage a relationship between the Church and Japanese society that was so different from the Franciscan viewpoint.35

The influence of Aristotelianism was fundamental in this perception of nature. During the sixteenth century, in Italy, one witnessed the development of the study of nature viewed as a phenomenon with its own dynamics, in large measure due to renewed interest in Aristotle’s Physics. Valignano’s intellectual education would be greatly influenced by contact with educational centres which were the nervecentres of a profound reevaluation of the legacy of this Greek philosopher. Thus, Valignano would study at the University of Padua where, during the course of the sixteenth century, an important Aristotelian school had been established, first under the guidance of Agostino Niño (1469-1538) and Pietro Pomponazzi (1462-1525) and later under Alessandro (1508-1579) and Francesco Piccolomini (1523-1607).

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35 Valignano recognizes the undeniable differences that existed between the Japanese and Europeans, “[...] por la diferencia tan grande que hay entre los unos e los otros, que no parece accidental sino intrínseca y natural por ser como fundada en la naturaleza [...]” in Alejandro Valignano, Sumario de las Cosas de Japon (1583), (Alvarez-Taladriz, José Luis, ed.), Tokyo, 1954, p.198. Henceforth, this work shall be referred to simply as “Sumario”.
Likewise, in the Roman College of the Society of Jesus, Valignano would find himself in an environment of cultural renovation based on a reinterpretation of the Aristotelian philosophy. This permitted a better understanding of the uniqueness and diversity of a whole new world that had been opened up to Europe and in particular to the Society of Jesus. In this context, contact with the works of Francisco Toledo (1532-1596), a Jesuit professor at the Roman College who wrote various commentaries on Aristotle’s *Physics*, was undoubtedly of fundamental importance.

However, it was the Jesuit Benito Pereira (1535-1610) who proved to be the most important figure in the Roman College in the renewal of Aristotelian studies. The influence of this Greek philosopher was to manifest itself especially in the vision of a world and nature that were autonomous from an anthropocentric interpretation. Influenced by Aristotle, he would write *De communibus omnium rerum naturalium principiis et affectionibus* (1562), that affirmed the validity of the study of nature distinct from metaphysics.

By means of this generation that was contemporary to Valignano, and later by the generation of Paolo Valla, Antonio Menu, Muzio Viteleschi and Ludovico Ruggiero, the Society of Jesus would establish the necessity of a study of nature as an entity with its own activity, thereby opposing the Mendicant Orders conceptualization of Aristotelianism, particularly that of the Dominicans who, through Friar Crisóstomo Javelli (1470-1538), defended the perpetuity of the Thomistic interpretation of the Aristotelian legacy.³⁶

St. Ignatius de Loyola (1491-1556), in the fundamental texts of the Society of Jesus, would render evident this new comprehension of human nature and the subject’s relationship with the world. The divergence from the monastic mendicant conceptualization is immediately evident in the *Spiritual Exercises*. This text registers the idea that escape from the world is not an indispensable condition for a complete union with God. In Exercise No. 135, Loyola states that. “[...] to attain perfection we must utilize any state or [way of] life that, God, our Lord, allows us to choose.”³⁷

There does not exist the idea of the convent as a sacred space, reserved for prayer and for totally religious way of life, as opposed to a sinful world. The diversities and differences of the surrounding world, and the need for the Church to procure a way of life integrated in this environment is taken into con-

sideration. Ignatius de Loyola delineates himself from medieval tradition, breaking ties with the monopoly of an ideal of monastic perfection. Through the *Spiritual Exercises*, he presents a pedagogy that permits a lifestyle in perfect harmony with God, beyond the confines of a space for religious seclusion.38

In the light of the existence of diversity, Loyola endowed the Society with a structure that permitted mobility and integration with the world. The Constitutions, particularly the 7th part (603-635), establish the missionary vocation of the Society. The Society is constituted for this sole purpose, and to use an Aristotelian expression, can be characterized as a *substance without any noteworthy natural place*.39 Thus mobility and itinerancy are seen to be indispensable concepts for an integration with the world and for the realization of an ecclesiastical ministry that is adapted to human diversity.

This attitude of the Society of Jesus also manifests a different conceptualization of that which constitutes God’s relationship with man. The interpretation of the divine messages is not an externalization of a subjective and aprioristic concept of God. There exists the acceptance of the fact that Divine Providence can be manifested in a manner that is different from what the missionary envisages. In this conceptualization of the relationship with God, experience is considered to be a fundamental concept, as this then becomes the way of gauging the signs sent by Providence, and thereby demonstrates a mindset that is open to the manifestations of God in this world.

### 3.2 Experience and knowledge as instruments of evangelization

It is this concept of the missionary’s relationship with the world, which was so different from the Franciscan notion, that Valignano would take with him to Japan. He thus confirmed the innovative experiences that had been tried by some of the early missionaries such as Luis Fróis, Gaspar Vilela, Cosme de Torres and Organtino Soldo-Gnechi. If, according to the Franciscan conceptualization, the missionary must maintain a comportment that is unalterable because it is the true way, Valignano defended the notion that the missionary, in the light of the acceptance of a *pura natura* and of the world’s diversity, must utilize his experience and knowledge as a form of gauging the quality of the evangelization. In this context, reason and intelligence, in complete contrast to the Franciscan attitude, are considered to be

fundamental premises for the progress of missionary activity.

The importance attributed to knowledge and reason shows a total withdrawal from the Franciscan concepts with regard to the Church’s relationship with the world. With the Jesuit missionary activity, and in this case with Valignano, the utilization of knowledge as a conditioning factor of the missionary process reflects a recognition of the other party, and the necessity of meeting its inherent nature halfway, for the purpose of evangelization. Nevertheless, for Valignano, it was never a question of an abstract rationality. Rationalism always had to have a strong empirical basis, realized by experience and constant observation of the space in which the missionary was inserted. This is an issue that Valignano would express very clearly in his *Apologia*, which illustrates his differences with the Franciscan attitude. As the Jesuit missionary affirmed, with regard to knowledge, “speculative prudence” as opposed to “practical prudence” resulted in errors.40

Valignano’s concept of evangelization, thus, reflects one of the currents that were typical of humanism and the Renaissance cultural movement, by means of its avowal of experience as a primordial concept in the constitution of knowledge. Jesuit missionary activity directly grapples with the problems of integration in areas that were culturally and socially different from Europe. Thus, the effectiveness of evangelization becomes inseparable from an indispensable understanding of the nature of the space which was the object of the missionary activities. One did not find solutions for this diversity that existed in the world within the theoretical-informative framework that was typical of medievalism.41

40 Valignano wrote that the Franciscan conceptualization “[...] parece, que no tiene cuenta, sino con la parte especulativa de la prudencia, y non con la pratica, considerando solamente en la especulacion, lo que de su natural fuera mejor, y no lo que se puede, y deve hazer hic, et nune, consideradas las particulares circunstancias, y toda via la prudencia especulativa ni es la que acierta, ni la que haze a los hombres prudentes, mas la prudencia platica [...] por lo qual bien puede un hombre tener grande discurso, y prudencia especulativa, mas se le faltasse la platica, que considera lo que conviene, hic et nune, con las mas circunstancias particulares, hara muchas imprudencias en sus acciones [...].” *Apologia*, Chapter 10, f. 56v-57.
3.3. The Jesuits and the apology for the adaptation to Japanese society

This rationale, influenced by their experiences, led to the conclusion that evangelization would be more effective, and the Church would thus establish itself within Japanese society, insofar as the missionary would adapt himself to the territory in which he was realizing his missionary activities. This concept, which had been tried and developed since the very inception of the mission, would be further consolidated during the course of the penultimate decade of the sixteenth century, starting from to Regimento para o Superior do Japão (June, 1580), the Guia para os seminários nativos (June, 1580) and the Consulta de Usuki (October, 1580), up until the Advertimentos e avisos acerca dos costumes e catangues de Jappão (October, 1581) and the Consulta de Nagasaki (December 1581 - January 1582). The entire apology for this adaptation is synthesized in the Sumario de las Cosas de Japon (1583). 42

According to Schütte, the Advertimentos e avisos acerca dos costumes e catangues de Jappão (1581), in Valignano’s works, is the zenith of the apology for the missionary method of adaptation. 43 In this work, Valignano defends the notion that it was especially important for the implantation of Christianity in Japan, that the missionaries adopt the ceremonial aspects of Japanese society. This was a question that had already been broached in the Usuki Deliberation, in 1580, but which was given its final form a year later in these Advertimentos.
Contrary to the concepts of Franciscan evangelization, Valignano did not seek to protect the Church from potentially contaminating contact with a sinful and pagan world. It was of paramount importance to acknowledge the differences of Japanese society, so that the Church could succeed in establishing itself within this very society. In this regard, Valignano defended the adoption of the ceremonial aspects of Japanese society seeking, in this way, to place the different levels and groups of people associated with the Society, into the Japanese social order.

In Valignano’s view, this integration into the society that was sought to be evangelized had to be so profound that he counseled that even amongst the Jesuits themselves the Japanese ceremonial system should be used, “Because it is no less important that one maintains the necessary order both within as well as without our establishment, and the outsider will easily treat our [fathers] as they treat themselves, and we will not be discredited in the eyes of the Japanese, appearing that we are rude and discourteous with one another [...]”. 45

However, the divergence in attitude, in relation to the Franciscan evangelization, would also manifest itself in the apology for a greater tolerance with regard to the Japanese.

44 The Jesuit Visitor would assert that, contrary to what had been done up until then, the Jesuits should present themselves in conformance with the ceremonial aspects of men of religion and not as laymen. He was inspired by the ceremonial format of the hierarchy of the sects of Zen Buddhism. Valignano affirmed that, in Japan, “[...] entre os bonzos como entre os seculares, há diversos grados de estados e dignidades, os quais todos com summa diligencia procurão de guardar [...]. Por isto, pera os Padres e Irmãos saberem como hão de proceder, hé necessário a primeira cousa: determinar e saber bem qual hé sua dignidade e em que altura se podem pôr, pera que correspondão com as dignidades e honras que os mais bomzos tem, pera poderem tratar com elles e com os mais senhores japões. Pera isto parece que aos Padres e Irmãos, que são os bomzos da religião cristãa, polo menos convem pôr-se na mesma altura em que estão os bomzos da seyta dos Genxus [Zen] que entre todas hé tida em Japão por príncipal e que tem mais commoicação com toda a sorte de gente de Japão.”


45 Ibidem, p. 234. Valignano, keeping in mind his concept of evangelization, couldn’t help but feel the necessity to justify his options and defend the comportment of the Jesuit fathers in Japan, affirming that his proposals fitted in perfectly with the spirit of the Society. In this regard, he would write to the General that, “[...] alégrese V.P. porque los hijos que tiene en Japón universalmente no solo non degeneran de los más verdaderos hijos de la Compañía, mas com razón se puede dellos decir que son de los mas legítimos e verdaderos [...]. Y aunque por la calidad y costumbres de la tierra, a los cuales necesariamente son forçados a acomodarse [...], todavía proceden con el mismo spíritu y pretenden el mismo fin a gloria de nuestro Señor, de la propia salvación y perfección, y de la salvación y perfección de los próximos. Mas entre gentiles que son tan absolutos y tan voluntarios, y entre christianos tan nuevos e tan descostumbrados a llevar jugo, y en tierras de tan contrarios costumbres e qualidades de los nuestros, no se puede correr de priesa con nuestras leyes e costumbres e modo de proceder; mas es necesario con paciencia e prudencia irmonos e acomodando a ellos [...].” Letter from Alessandro Valignano to the General Claudio Acquaviva, Macao, 1st January, 1593, in Documenta Indica, Vol. XVI (1592-1594), (José Wicki, S.J. and John Gomes, S.J. ed), Rome, 1984, pp.65-66.
The concept of tolerance - to demonstrate that the Church must adjust to the particular situation by which it is surrounded - is one of the differences that Valignano wanted to emphasize in relation to the Franciscan evangelization. According to the Jesuit Visitor, in Japan, one witnessed the birth of a Christian community. Thus, the attitude of the clerics with regard to these Christians should be different from that which existed in any other territory in which Christianity was already established in local society. For this reason, one should not be overly severe in the administration of baptisms and confessions.46

This issue of tolerance would become especially obvious when the problem of a righteous war was debated. The controversy revolved around the comportment of the Japanese Christians in times of war. Once again, Valignano defended the notion that the Church’s actions must take into consideration the characteristics of Japanese society. In his Apologia, Valignano broaches the question of the acts of war carried out by the Japanese Christians in the capacity of vassals of their feudal lords. He affirms that these acts should neither be justified nor reprimanded with excessive severity, but should simply be understood in the context of a comportment that was necessary for survival within an established social order.47

46 Valignano, in his Apologia, affirms that, “[...] que con los que convierten de nuevo, especialmente en terras que son todas de gentiles señor eadas por ellos, no se han de averiguar tantas cosas, quando recibe el baptismo, como quando llegan a confessarse, y tambien en la confession no se han de obligar a tantas cosas, como los obligan a los Christianos de Europa, y hazer estas distincion en las cosas, que se han de enseñar, y en las que han de callar, es conforme a toda doctrina, y prudencia, y lo contrario seria ignorancia, y erro [...]. Por donde si el frayle non entendio esta distincion, que se deve hazer, no le tienen los Padres culpa [...].” Apologia, Chapter. 22, f.110.

47 “Assi mismo considerando los nuestros el peligro cierto, que corren los vassalos, quando no hazen lo que sus Señores les mandan, de ser muertos con sus mugeres, y hijos con crudelidad gentilicia, que tanto reyna en Japon, dizen los Padres que los vassalos quando son embiados a la guerra no son obligados a escudriñar, y averiguar, si las guerras que sus Señores hasen son justas, o injustas: especialmente siendo las de Japon tan entrincadas, que ni los hombres muy doctos las pudieran averiguar, ni si las justicias, que manda hazer por mano dellos, como de sus ministros, en los delinquentes, son hechas con razon o sin ella[...].” Apologia, Chapter. 22, ff. 112v.-113. Valignano, in the Apologia, refers to the contradiction that exists in the requirements to which the Franciscans intend to subject the newly formed Japanese Christian community, because not even in Europe did such a high degree of demands exist with regard to Christians, “[...] por que lo mismo hasen los soldados, y verdugos en nuestra tier-a aun no corriendo peligro de sus vidas, como en Japon, y esta es doctrina cierta, y recebida. Lo mismo digo de algunos contratos, que saben la usura, que con mucha dificultad se conoce, si tenia alguna injusticia, y si quieren ser muy escrupulosos en ellos, no solo se pondrian muchos Christianos en mala conciencia sin ningun fructo, mas tambien seria mu grande empedimento a la conversion, y por esto es razon, que algunos destos contratos se dissimulen ad tempus, como antigamente dissimularon de usuras, y contratos mucho mas claramente ilicitos entre los Christianos de Europa [...]. Por do en una Christandad tan nueva, a donde no ay ningun poder Eclesiastico, ni secular para lo poder complir, ni letras, ni sciencias entre los naturales para poder bien distinguir las cosas, querer que declare todo junto con estos inconvinientes, no es conforme a la doctrina de S. Pablo, ni al uso, que tuvo siempre la Santa Iglesia con los Christianos recien nacidos, y convertidos a la fe, primero con leche, y despues con pan de Corteza, y esto es lo que platican los Padres [...]. “ Apologia, Chapter. 22, f. 113.
3.4. Valignano and the appointing of the Society of Jesus as the sole missionary institution in Japan

3.4.1 The assertion of the incapacity of the Mendicants to evangelize

In his Apologia, Valignano does not limit himself to merely comparing his experience of Japan to the missionary options of the Franciscans. Keeping in mind the purpose of intensifying his criticism of Franciscan pretensions of establishing themselves in Japan, the strategy utilized by the Jesuit Visitor consisted of widening the scope of the problem under review. He propounded the idea that the Japanese question was merely part of the problem, and demonstrated that the manner in which the Franciscans intended to pursue their missionary activities in Japan was no more than a reflection of an attitude that was common to the Mendicant Orders. In this way, the Jesuit Visitor sought to present a critical appraisal that was much more objective, stating that the real problem lay in the Mendicant’s incapacity to carry out missionary activities. Thus, by widening the scope of the problem, Valignano intended to hinder any kind of private solution, as had happened in the case of the Franciscan arrival in Japan.

To realize this objective, Valignano contested Franciscan evangelization in Japan. This level of argument led him to a second level as also to a generalized critique of the capacity of the Mendicant Orders to evangelize effectively, using the work of José de Acosta, De Procuranda Indorum Salute, that enabled him to reinforce his observations with regard to the comportment of the Mendicant Orders. Valignano would terminate his contestation of Mendicant evangelization on a third level. After having generalized his analysis, Valignano would reduce the controversy to the question of Franciscan

48 Father José de Acosta (1539-1600) was born in Medina del Campo and entered the Order as a novice in 1554. In 1557 he went to the Americas and became provincial head of the Society in Peru. He would return to Spain, where he held the posts of Visitor of Aragon and Andalusia and Rector in Salamanca. In Acosta, Valignano would find a conceptualization of evangelization that was similar to his own. Thus, this Jesuit too defended the notion of an evangelization that was appropriate for the space in which it was inserted. In the same way as would happen with Valignano, many of his works stressed knowledge to be an indispensable instrument for evangelization. In this regard, his most famous work, Historia natural y moral de la Indias, en que se tratan las cosa notables del cielo, y elementos, metales, plantas, y animales dellos, y los ritos, y ceremonias, leyes, y gobierno, y guerras de las Indias, published in Seville in 1590, is noteworthy. The Aristotelian influence, by which it is necessary to understand the territory in which missionary activity is carried out, is obvious. Besides this text, other works worthy of note include the Doctrina christiana, catecismo breve e catecismo mayor. Anotaciones sobre la traducccion en linguas quechua y aymará, Peru, 1585, and the Exposicion de la doctrina christiana, por sermones, para que las curas y otros ministros prediquen y enseñen a los Yndios y las demas personas, Peru, 1585. The work that was cited by Valignano, De Procuranda Indorum Salute, was edited in Salamanca, in the year 1588. See also the entry “Joseph de Acosta” in Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus, Bibliographie, (Carlos Sommervogel, ed), Tome VII, Brussels, Province of Belgium, 1890, pp. 31-37.
missionary activity in China, so as to criticize the missionary experience of the Mendicants in an area that was both geographically, as well as culturally, close to Japan.

With this argumentative structure, Valignano realized three main objectives. Firstly, it affirmed the incapacity of the Mendicant Orders to pursue missionary activities. Secondly, it contested Franciscan evangelization in Japan while, at the same time, it presented the Society of Jesus as the sole Catholic institution with a true missionary calling.

Valignano’s criticism of the Mendicant’s missionary activities was structured in concordance with the works of Acosta. In the Franciscan view, José de Acosta’s criticism of the missionary activities of the Mendicants in the Americas reflected the same arrogant attitude of the Jesuits that was shown by Valignano in his attack on the missionary activities of the Franciscans in Japan.

Valignano does not refute the merits of the Mendicant Orders. He does, however, limit the area of their missionary activities to the original and specific characteristics of evangelization that were within the scope of these Mendicant Orders. With regard to the controversy that Acosta initiated, Valignano affirms that, in effect, in the Americas, the Mendicant Orders realized praiseworthy missionary activities, but that this was restricted to what these Orders could do given their nature as Mendicants. Thus, the Jesuit Visitor would clearly write that, “[...] They have done that which they have always done, and very well, [the purpose] for which God ordained them.”

Valignano adopts Acosta’s criticism as his own with regard to the Mendicants, reaffirming the views of this Jesuit missionary in America who attributed the errors of the Mendicant Orders to the structure and nature of the Orders themselves. Acosta’s statements with regard to their missionary activities in America permitted Valignano to substantiate his criticisms of Franciscan evangelization in Japan, in the sense that they allowed him to affirm that the problems of the Franciscans lay in the inadequacy of the rules and structures of the Mendicant Orders, which hindered the integration of

49 Friar Martin de la Ascensión, according to Valignano, expresses the Franciscan rejection of Acosta’s criticisms of the missionary activities of the Mendicants, stating that this Jesuit, “[...] en un libro, que imprimió de las cosas de Perú, y de la nueva España dize, que la conversion de las Indias, es proprio para Teatinos [jesuítas], y los demás Religiosos no son para ella [...], en lo qual hase grande agravio a las ordenes mendicantes, que al pie de cen años andan trabajando en las Indias occidentales, y con immensos trabajos, y con ayuda de Dios han publicado la fe de Christo nuestro Senhor, y la Ley Evangelica, del Polo arctico hasta el Antarctico [...].” Apologia, Chapter 6, ff. 29v-30.

50 Valignano in his Apologia writes that the Mendicant Orders “[...] han hecho en todo aquel orbe (como en todas las mas partes del mundo) muy grande servicio a nuestro Señor en ayuda de las almas, como aquellos que fueron ordenados de Dios, por lumbrera del mundo, y con su doctrina, y Santidad han hecho como hanan siempre, muy prefectamente aquello, para que fueron de Dios ordenados.” Apologia, Chapter 6, f. 30.
their missionary activities into the world around them.\textsuperscript{51}

However, Valignano does not confine himself to merely commenting on the views of José de Acosta as a way of reinforcing his criticism of the Mendicant Orders. In his \textit{Apologia}, Valignano, by widening the scope of the accusations against the Mendicant to other territories, would terminate his argument with a clear affirmation of the disrepute that the Mendicant Orders had brought to the Catholic Church, in the very heart of European Christendom itself. He likewise affirmed that the rivalry between these very same Orders had contributed towards the decadence of Catholicism in Europe.\textsuperscript{52}

Valignano stated that the comportment of the Orders within Europe was very negative, and affirmed that once more, his experiences, in this case in Europe, led him to write in his \textit{Apologia} that this was yet another reason to ensure that the same situation was not repeated in other territories.\textsuperscript{53}

\textsuperscript{51} Valignano defends Acosta's views, writing that the latter "[...] trata de los inconvinientes, que se siguen del mismo de vivir de los Religiosos fuera de sus Claustros apartados, y solos, como Parochos, entre Pueblo, y no que por ello quiera dizir mal de las Religiones: por que claro esta [...] mejor guardan los Religiosos su disciplina regular viviendo en cominidad en los Monasterios, que viviendo apartados, y solos entre los pueblos, como parochos; y deste mismo de vida nace tambien aloxarse la disciplina regular, y mudarse en hun cierto mismo la manera de sus instetutos por que siendo ellos ordenados para vivir en comunidad sin ter nada para suyo, con estar divididos con las Parochias se le sigue tambien lo que el Padre dize [...], vistas las incomodidades, y daños, que a los mismos Religiosos se siguen, como por necessaria consequencia deste mismo vivir [...] de modo que en todo este discursuan, no trata el Padre de dizir mal de los Religiosos, mas de poner, por la otra parte de la question, los inconvinientes que se siguen desta manera de vivir fuera de los Monasterios [...]."

\textit{Apologia}, Chapter 6, ff. 31-31v.

\textsuperscript{52} Valignano writes, "[...] y assi vemos, que acontece muchas vezes entre hombres Religiosos, que pareciendoles, que es virtud el zelo de su Religion [...] y dizir todo lo que quieren, y aun venir a las manos para que queden aventejadas sus Religiones, y pluguiera Dios, que no viessemos cada dia tantos exemplos destos, como vemos con grande escandalo del pueblo, y perdicion del Spiritu, y de la caridad entre los Religiosos, mordiendose, y deshaziendo unos a otros, lo que es tan fora de ser virtud que ante es pecado que de hombres spirituales los hazen carnales [...], y cierto que muchas vezes tengo considerado, que esta es una grande pestilencia, que inficiona a muchos Religiosos en estos tiempos, y esto me parece [...] que muchos Religiosos se entregan tan fuertemente a esta passion que ellos llaman zello de la orden, que lo hazen, como su idolo [...]."

\textit{Apologia}, Chapter 1, f. 5.

\textsuperscript{53} For Valignano, it was of fundamental importance that the newly formed Christian communities did not acquire these problems, "[...] por que los Religiosos, movidos del Zelo que tienen de su Religion, procuran cada qual el acrecentamento, fama, y reputacion della, y oficionar, y atraer assi a la gente. Este zelo (como arriba esta dicho) en muchos Religiosos passa los terminos de la rason, y se convierte en imbidia, y zello dezordenado, de donde nasce entre ellas grandes contiendas, murmuraciones, persecuciones, e a las veses falsos testimonios mordiendose unos a otros, como por nuestros peccados aun en Europa vemos: y por que lo mismo mas facilmente aconteceria en Japon, por esso Su Santidad proveyo que no fuesen por agora alla otras Religiones ado estas contiendas serian tanto mas dañosas, y escandalosas quanto la Christandad es mas nueva, y est mas lexos de Su Santidad, y de Su Magestad, que los pueden hir a la mano [...]."

\textit{Apologia}, Chapter 4, ff. 18-18v.
3.4.2 Citing the Chinese Experience

The structure of the rationale propounded by the *Apologia* allowed Valignano to indulge in a generic accusation, based on the specific situation in Japan, with regard to the comportment of the Mendicant Orders. However, the Jesuit Visitor delineated the areas of his criticism before terminating his argument. To reinforce his fears about the development of Franciscan missionary activities in Japan, Valignano, once more, turned his attentions to the Asian territory, recollecting a disturbing experience in this continent, which had involved the Mendicant Orders in the Far East.

Valignano refers to two situations, the first of which took place in 1582, and the other in 1587. In 1582, a mission with seven Franciscans, headed by Friar Jerónimo de Burgos, the Franciscan Commissioner in the Philippines, and Friar Martín Ignacio de Loyola, left Macao with the purpose of starting a mission in China. In June, they landed on the Fukien (Fujian) coast, where they were taken prisoner and sent to Canton, on charges of piracy. At this stage, the actions of Árias Gonçalo de Miranda (the Captain of the city of Macao) proved decisive, as he used his influence with the Viceroy and the mandarins of Canton and succeeded in arranging the return of the Franciscans to Macao.54

The interpretation of the Mendicant failures in China helped Valignano to affirm, yet again, that knowledge of the situation on the ground was a fundamental factor for the progress of missionary activities. Valignano would base the logic of his views on the complex nature of reality itself. According to the Jesuit Visitor, it was of supreme importance to comprehend the notion that reality was a complex whole, consisting of variables that conditioned the evolution of

55 The Visitor wrote that, in 1582, “[...] vinieron de las Filipinas siete frailes descalsos de la orden de S. Francisco, y entre ellos fray Hyeronimo de Burgos Comissario, y fray Martin Ignacio de Loyola, para intentar de abrir la entrada de la China, y fueron prezos por las armadas de los Chinas, y llevados a diversas partes, y finalmente a Canton, y la instancia de los Portuguezes fueron sueltos, y embiados a esta ciudad de Macan, adonde yo los conoci; y como los Chinas naturalmente son sospechosos, y poco amigo de los Castellanos de las Philipinas, por saber que conquistaron pocos años ha aquellas Ylas, y que estan allí pretendiendo otras conquistas, especialmente de la China por mucho que, ansi estos, como otros frailes tentaron de tener la entrada en la China, nunca la pudieron alcanzar, mas antes fue siempre creciendo con la venida dellos esta sospecha, y por que saben que ellos, y los Portuguezes somos todos vassalos del mismo Rey, esta sospecha que tienen dellos, se comessó tambien a tener de nos otros y ansi, o fuese con la venida destos frailes, o cazo yo no puedo afirmar esto de cierto, hasta que estando algunos dellos aun aqui los Mandarines, al cabo de quatro mezes que los nuestros estaño de assiento en Xauquim los hecharon de alli, y los tornaron a embiar a esta ciudad de Macan [...]” *Apologia*, Chapter 6, ff.33-33v.
missionary activities. The Visitor justifies the incidents that took place in the
wake of the arrival of the Mendicant Orders in China, stating that the situation
occurred due to the Franciscan ignorance of local conditions. In this, Valignano
was referring to the problems faced by the Jesuit mission in Xauquim
[Zaoquing], after the arrival of the Franciscans in China, citing this incident as
a demonstration of the insensitivity of the Mendicant Orders in their missionary
activities and their incapacity to understand the fears of the Chinese subjects.\(^{55}\)

The reference to the incidents that took place in 1587, likewise, served to
highlight the incapacity of the Mendicants to establish themselves in Asiatic
societies in the Far East. In this year, Martin Ignacio Loyola, along with two
other Franciscans were taken prisoner in Canton when they asked for permis-
sion to enter the Empire. According to Valignano, this also seriously harmed the
Jesuit’s missionary activities.\(^{56}\)

As proof of the total lack of comprehension of the Mendicants, in the
context of missionary activities in a society with specific characteristics such
as in Japan or in China, Valignano cited their way of dressing, something that
was absolutely necessary for the integration of the European missionary.
According to Valignano, the use of the vestments of the Chinese scholars was
of fundamental importance for integration into their society. He affirms that,
yet again, the Society of Jesus had demonstrated that it was structurally pre-
pared to carry out missionary activities that were appropriate to the society in
question, given that the Constitution of the Order did not oblige the mission-
aries to use a certain habit while evangelizing.\(^{57}\)

The Jesuit Visitor did not confine himself to merely criticizing particular
situations. His opposition to the activities of the Mendicant Orders also includ-
ed a global criticism of the comportment of these Orders and their

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\(^{56}\) With reference to the events in 1587, Valignano wrote that, “[... el mismo año fray Martin Ignacio
bolvio la 2ª vez a la China por esta via de Portugal, y fue con otros dos frayles a Canton, y hiso nueva
peticion a los mandarines, pedindoles licencia, para entrar a vivir por la tierra adentro, prometiendo,
que havia de venir una embaxada, y presente, que dizia que S. Magestad havia embiado a nueva
Espanha para se embiar al Rey de la China, y como fray Martin Ignacio vino otra vez alli por via de
las Philipinas, bolviendo agora de nuevo por esta otra via de Portugal, crescio mucho la sospecha en
los mandarines, y tomaron muy mal su ida, y memorial, [...], y trataron mal de palabras, y de hecho
al dicho Fray Martin, y sus compañiero, prendiendolos, aun que por intercession de los Portuguezes,
que entonces estavan en la feria de Canton, los soltaron, y finalmente le mandaron, que se bolviessen
con sus frayles para Macan, y nunca mas fuessen a la China, por que de otra manera los matarian. Y
como esta sospecha yva luego tambien a dar contra los nuestros, poco despues que los Mandarines de
Canton hecharon desta manera a fray Martin, escrivieron a los Mandarines de Xauquim lo que pas-
sava y los mandarines de allá ordenaron, que tambien se fuessen los nuestros, [...] y los otros dos, que
avia mas de dos años, que estavan alli, se fuessen para Macan, y desta manera en el mismo año de 87,
poco despues de lo que passo con fray Martin, hecharon tambien dos de los nuestros de Xauquim.”
_Apologia_, Chapter. 6, ll. 33v.-34, see also Lorenzo Pérez, _ibidem_, pp. 224-226.
conceptualization of the place of the Church in the world. It is in this context that the Society of Jesus, as opposed to the Mendicant Orders, appears to be the only Catholic institution that was prepared for the challenges posed by the Church’s missionary activities. It is for this very purpose that Valignano, in his writings, gives voice to the idea of a Providential aspect associated with the Society of Jesus.

However, this notion of the Jesuit’s providentialism, which the Mendicants termed arrogance, was conceived in a manner that was completely different from the Franciscan concept. While Franciscan Messianism developed based on a subjective interpretation of the world, the superiority of the Society of Jesus in the field of evangelization, as well as the affirmation that it was an institution destined to implant Catholicism in new territories, was conceptualized by Valignano to be something objective, arising from an analysis of the complex nature of the world in which the missionary was inserted. Valignano’s concept of missionary activities, and the manner in which he would oppose the Franciscan attitude shows how, within the Society of Jesus, there existed the notion that the Jesuits were the only ecclesiastical body capable of understanding the world and finding the most appropriate solutions to implant the Church. This attitude would further consolidate itself within this institution and would prove to be decisive in the fortunes of the Society of Jesus in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

57 Valignano wrote that, “Y quanto a lo que dize fray Martin, que van vestidos en habitos de Chinas, y que no tratan de conversion, es verdad, que andan vestidos al modo de Letrado Chinos, y que traen las barbas crescidas [...], y esto se hizo por mi orden, y parecer de otras muchas personas graves, y letrados de la Compañia por dos rasones. La primera por que el habito es en si honesto, y grave, y no disconviniente a los Clerigos, y Religiosos, como nos otros somos, que por nuestras constetuitiones non tenemos habito propio, sino el que es comun entre los Clerigos naturales tenidos en la tierra por virtuosos, y entendemos, que terian los Padres mucho mayor contradicion para poder entrar, y quedar en la China, sino se acomodassen a ellos con tomar esta manera de vestido [...]. La 2ª razon fue por que naturalmente este nombre, y officio de Religiosos entre los Chinos a que elos llaman vonxen, y los japones Bonzos, es el mas baxo, y vil de quanto ay en la China, tanto que aun los del pueblo son tenidos en mas cuenta, que sus Religiosos [...]; y por que la primera vez los nuestros Padres entraron en Xauquim con este nombre de Bonzos, padecieron grandissimos abatimientos, y afronta por todo el tiempo que estuvieron en Xauquim [...] por lo qual nos pareció en esta mudança, que se hizo de Xauquim, que seria bien tomar otro habito, y apelidar de Letrados que hazen profesion de las cosas de la otra vida, y de enseñar a los hombres, el camiño de su salvacion, por que solamente los letrados son estimados en la china, y ellos no dan nengun credito a los Bonzos, ni siguen sus letras, por que los tienen por hombres ignorantes, y baldios [...]; y entendimos que hasendo Los Padres profesion de hombres letrados terian mas honesta entrada con todos, y podrian mejor, y con mas authoridad publicar nuestra Santa Ley a los Chinos [...]’’ Apologia, Chapter 6, ff. 35-35v.
Conclusion

The differences between the Jesuits and Mendicants, fuelled by the Portuguese-Spanish rivalry, would be decisive in determining the fortunes of the Christian communities in the Far East. In the 17th century, in China, the efforts towards consolidating the growth of the Church would be consumed by the disunity between Jesuits and Mendicants, whose rivalry and divergence of concepts of evangelization would culminate in the well known “Rites Controversy”. In Japan, in the space of a few decades, shortly after Valignano penned his *Apologia*, commercial competition from the Dutch, coupled with the process of centralization of the Japanese political authorities would result in the collapse of the very foundations upon which Christianity in Japan had been constructed. Japanese Christianity had already been irretrievably weakened by the lack of unity between the Catholic missionaries and was unable to formulate an adequate response to the challenges posed by Japanese society.
Abstract

In the last decade of the sixteenth century, Japan was the setting for a confrontation that took place between Jesuits and Franciscans. On the one hand, this rivalry was fomented by the insertion of the two orders in divergent spheres of political and economic interests. For the Spanish authorities, based in Manila, the Franciscan presence in Japan would prove to be of critical importance, not only to approach the political rulers of Japan but, above all, to increase commercial relations between the Japanese and the Spanish operating from Manila. On the other hand, in the absence of a Portuguese political authority that was as close as the Spanish in Manila, the Society of Jesus would prove to be the main protagonists in ensuring the continuance of Portuguese interests in Japan. This was achieved both by means of their role in overseeing the commerce between Macao and Nagasaki, as well as by the fact that they were an indispensable element in the integration of Japan into the Portuguese Padroado in the East. However, this rivalry would also be further exacerbated by two completely distinct concepts of evangelization, reflected in the way in which the Jesuits and Franciscans viewed the relation between the Church and the world. The Franciscan evangelization would be determined by medieval traditions and was characterized by a refusal to make concessions for the diversities of the territory in which they established themselves and instead, insisted on establishing a sole model of the Church. Simultaneously, Japan would also witness the missionary activities of the Jesuits, whose method of evangelization was the result of a new reforming spirit that had emerged in the heart of the Catholic Church. Alessandro Valignano, the Visitor of the Society of Jesus in Japan, expressed this dispute with the Franciscan concept of evangelization, based on the experiences of the first missionaries who had worked in the Land of the Rising Sun. Valignano’s concept of evangelization is especially evident in his Apologia, which reflects upon the urgent necessity to establish a Church that would evolve within the Japanese framework, based on their knowledge and experience of the specific characteristics of this territory.
Resumo

O Japão, na última década do século XVI, apresenta-se como o palco onde se assiste a um confronto entre Jesuítas e Franciscanos. Em primeiro lugar esta rivalidade é fomentada pela inserção das duas ordens em esferas de interesse político e econômico divergentes. Para o poder castelhano, sediado em Manila, a presença franciscana no Japão será fulcral não só para uma necessária aproximação política mas, sobretudo, para o incremento das relações comerciais entre os Japoneses e os Espanhóis estabelecidos em Manila. Por outro lado, na ausência de um poder político tão próximo do Japão quanto estava Manila, será a Companhia de Jesus a principal garantia de uma ligação do Japão aos interesses portugueses, quer através da sua função reguladora no comércio entre Macao e Nagasaqui, quer como elemento indispensável para a integração do Japão no Padroado Português do Oriente. No entanto, esta rivalidade também será estimulada por duas concepções de missionação completamente distintas, reflexo do modo como jesuítas e franciscanos concebem a relação da Igreja com o mundo. A missionação franciscana será determinada pela tradição medieval e caracterizada por uma recusa na cedência à diversidade do espaço em que se está inserido, fazendo a apologia da implantação de um modelo único de Igreja. Simultaneamente, o Japão assistirá à actividade missionária dos Jesuítas, resultante de uma nova sensibilidade reformadora, emergente no seio da Igreja Católica. Alessandro Valignano, Visitador da Companhia de Jesus no Japão, expressa a sua discordância com a metodologia missionária franciscana também, em grande medida, a partir da experiência dos primeiros missionários. A concepção de missionação de Valignano é particularmente evidente na Apologia, uma obra que reflete a necessidade urgente de estabelecer uma Igreja que evoluisse no espaço nipónico a partir da experiência e conhecimento das características desse mesmo espaço.