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SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER AND THE SHIMAZU FAMILY

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Introduction

Exactly 450 years ago, more precisely on the 15th of August 1549, Xavier set foot on the coast of Southern Japan, arriving at the city of Kagoshima situated in the kingdom of Satsuma. At that point in time Japan was politically divided. National unity under an Emperor did not exist. The great families of the daimyos, or “feudal lords” held sway in the main regions. The Shimazu family dominated the region of Kyūshū, the large island in Southern Japan where Xavier disembarked. Xavier was accompanied by Anjirō, a Japanese native of this region whom he had met in Malacca in 1547. Once a fervent Buddhist, Anjirō was now a Christian, and had accompanied Xavier to Goa where he was baptised and took the name Paulo de Santa Fé. Anjirō’s family, his friends etc. helped Xavier and the two missionaries who accompanied him (Father Cosme de Torres and Brother Juan Fernández) to instantly feel at home in the city of Kagoshima. The voyage in the junk captained by the Chinaman known as Awan, nicknamed “the Thief”,¹ had been far from tranquil, in addition to being spiritually devastating, and there were no Portuguese friends to be found aboard the ship, but rather only pagans who did much to aggravate Xavier’s suffering.²

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When Xavier disembarked in Kagoshima, the principal chiefs of the two branches of the Shimazu family³ were warring for the sovereignty of

1 In this detail we differ from P. G. Schurhammer, *San Francisco Javier. Su Vida y su tiempo*, IV, Pamplona, 1992, pp. 338 ss., who opines that Xavier embarked in Duarte de Gama’s ship, and concur with J. Ruiz de Medina, *Documentos del Japón, 1558-1562*, II, Rome (MHSI), 1990, p. 693, see all of Appendix No. 1.

2 *Cartas y Escritos de San Francisco Javier*, ed. by F. Zubillaga, Madrid (BAC), 3rd edition, 1979, see document 90, 5th Nov. 1549, pp. 148ss, where he provides a description of the entire voyage and the suffering he underwent upon seeing the superstitions and sorcery performed by the captain and his companions.

3 About the origins of the Shimazu family and their establishment in the South, Satsuma, see J. Murdoch, *A History of Japan, I: From the Origins to the Arrival of the Portuguese in 1542*,

these lands. The Northern region was under the control of Shimazu Sane-hisa, and the South, where Kagoshima was located, was under Shimazu Katsuhisa. The continuous civil wars that had lasted almost fifty years had created profound scars within the Shimazu family. Katsuhisa did not have any descendants and had adopted Takahisa, the young son of Tadayoshi, who with his vast political power had slowly gone about re-conquering the territories of the kingdom to the north of Satsuma. Much warfare ensued, until the entire Shimazu family recognised Takahisa as their head once and for all. It was the year 1542. Takahisa was a skilled diplomat and in the following year received the Portuguese merchants who had disembarked a short while ago on the island of Tanegashima, to the south of Satsuma. The Portuguese taught the use of firearms to the inhabitants of those lands who, apart from warring with each other, also fought against Chinese corsairs.

Let us examine the environment in which the Shimazu lived, more specifically, the environment which was created by Tadayoshi, a man who was extraordinary in both political and cultural terms, and by his son Takahisa (1514-1571), to whom Xavier paid an official visit. It would also be an appropriate moment to study the relationship between the holy missionary and the Shimazu family. Takahisa, who was sometimes referred to as the “Duke” and sometimes as the “King of Satsuma”, welcomed Xavier:

“The King of Satsuma ordered that a small house be lent to the Father in which everyone was lodged. And in the time that they had to spare from their labours, along with Paolo de Santa Fé and Brother João Fernandes, they composed a lecture about the creation of the Universe, and the coming of the Son of God in the Japanese language...”⁴

This was the first contact, even if it was not in person, that Xavier had with a member of the Shimazu family.

London, 1910, pp. 419-420. For the very complicated genealogy of the Shimazu family see K. Asakawa, *The Documents of the Iriki*, 2nd edition, Tokyo, 1955.

4 “O rey de Saçuma mandou alli emprestar huma cazinha ao Padre em que estavam todos recolhidos. E o tempo que les vagava de suas occupaões, com Paolo de Santa fé e com o Irmão João Fernandes tirarao en la lingua de Japão huma pratica sobre la criação do universo, e da vinda do Filho de Deus...”; Information given to us by the historian who was a contemporary of Xavier, L. Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, I, edition annotated by J. Wicki, Lisbon, 1976, p. 25. We know of the first catechism made by the missionaries, more specifically by Xavier, that dates from this time.

In this “small house” the missionaries made their first catechism, assisted by the precious help given by Paulo de Santa Fé at the time to render it into Japanese. In a letter dated 5th November 1549 Xavier wrote:

“It seems to me that this winter we shall occupy ourselves in making a declaration about the articles of the faith in the language of Japan, which is somewhat copious, to later print it, as all the more important people know how to read and write.... Paulo, our brother who is so dear to us, will faithfully transcribe into his language everything that is necessary to save their souls”.⁵

The holy missionary does not mention if he had an audience directly with Tadayoshi (1492-1568), because he had renounced his rule in 1542, leaving the reins of government in the hands of his son, and retired to a monastery, as we shall later see, still being able, however, to maintain contact with the entire spiritual and cultural environment founded by him. He would visit his son who was then ruling in Satsuma. It is known that for a number of years father and son lived together, in the castle of Uchiujijō, 18 kilometres from the capital Kagoshima, a castle that our pioneering missionaries also visited. These years of living together were an education for Takahisa. In 1539 his father wrote the “ten rules of comportment” (*fugen jikkō*),⁶ based upon the concepts of fidelity and obedience. His norms of conduct and governance written in a poetic genre, that we shall study later in this article, also date from this period, as do his norms on the art of governance and the domination of the heart. Finally, in 1542, after the two factions of the Shimazu family had made peace with each other, he retired to the monastery that we shall describe later, taking the name of *Nisshinzai* (New Eternal Sun). The monastery belonged to the Zen sect known as Sōtō.

Religiously speaking, one of the two major Buddhist sects that were established in this region was that of the Zen school, to which we have already alluded and which was introduced in Southern Japan by the erudite monk Keian Genjū (1427-1508)⁷ at the end of the 14th century. During the

5 “Paréceme que este invierno nos ocuparemos en hacer una declaración sobre los artículos de la fe en lengua de Japón algún tanto copiosa, para hacerla imprimir pues toda la gente principal sabe leer y escribir... Pablo, nuestro carísimo hermano, trasladará en su lengua fielmente todo lo que es necesario para la salvación de sus almas”; *Cartas y Escritos de S. Fr. Javier*, Doc. 50, No. 58-59. A better edition can be found in *Documentos del Japon. 1547-1557*, I, edited and also annotated by Juan G. Ruiz de Medina, as also Vol. II, presented in the 1st note, pp. 168-169.

6 P. Aoyama succinctly presents them in *Die Missionstätigkeit des h. Franz Xaver*, p. 54.

7 H. Dumoulin, *Zen Buddhism. A History. II. Japan* (translated by P. Knitter), New York-London, 1990, p. 261. The Zen Buddhism that this master introduced was that of the Rinzaï sect.

course of several years he taught *bonzos*, nobles and samurais, a lower social class or a military class within Japanese society, the neo-Confucianism that was so in vogue in China at that time. Genjū was one of the last representatives of the *go-zan* (five mountains) movement.⁸ I would also like to remind the reader that Anjirō belonged to the Zen sect. In Satsuma, Zen Buddhism had spread the philosophy of the Shu-Shi (in Japanese *Shu-ki*) school that had been brought from China. We should not overlook Kyūshū's geographical proximity with continental China and continuous contacts over time between these two regions. Genjū opened a school in Satsuma where laymen, samurais and monks could perfect their studies of the Chinese philosophy. Zen has always been intimately linked with Confucianism and its philosophy of morality and fidelity. For this reason, Zen monks strove to make contact with scholars, their superiors, and even political authorities, and were skilled at the method of debates known as *mondō* or questions and answers. These are elements that help to explain the dialectics of the meetings that Xavier, and particularly Cosme de Torres, had with the *bonzos*, more specifically those that took place in Yamaguchi.⁹

And talking of Zen, we should recall the foundation of the temple-school called Fukushō-ji, this time of the Sōtō-Zen sect, that Anjirō described to Xavier before his arrival in Japan, as Xavier narrates in a letter written from Malacca:

“Paulo de Santa Fé, a Japanese (= Anjirō), and our companion, told me one thing, which left me greatly comforted, and this is that he told me that in the monastery in his land, where there are many monks and much study, they have amongst themselves a meditation exercise, which is thus: the one who is in charge of the house, their superior, who is the most learned one, summons everyone and gives them a talk, in the fashion of a sermon, and then tells each one of them to meditate, during an hour ...”.¹⁰

8 D. A. Matsunaga studies “The *Gozan* (Five Mountain) Temple System”, specific to the Zen Buddhism of the Kamakura period in his work *The Foundation of Japanese Buddhism, II*, Los Angeles-Tokyo, 1976, pp. 223 ss.

9 As Brother Fernández narrates in his letter to Xavier dated Yamaguchi, 20th October 1551, in *Documentos de Japón, 1547-1557*, I, Doc. 44, No. 3 ss., “there were many kinds of questions that the Japanese asked...first many *jenxu* (zenshu) priests and laymen came to whom we asked ... we asked them...” [“uvo muchos géneros de preguntas que hicieron los japoneses... Primeramente vinieron muchos padres y legos *jenxus* [zenshus] a los quales preguntamos ... preguntámosles...”].

10 “Una cosa me dijo Paulo de Santa Fe, japon(= Anjirō), nuestro compañero, de que quedo muy consolado; y es que me dijo que en el monasterio de su tierra, donde hay muchos frailes y estudio, tienen entre ellos un ejercicio de meditar, el cual es éste: el que tiene el cargo de la

Obviously, this temple had close ties with the Shimazu family. It was built in 1394 by a monk of the Sōtō sect called Sekioku (1345-1423), a relative of the Shimazu family. The Shimazu princes were buried in its cemetery. Years later, a Jesuit historian who was a contemporary of Xavier, Father L. Fróis, visited this area and gathered other information directly from the people, as did Brother Luis de Almeida, who also travelled through this region shortly afterwards:

“Of this and many other things, that Father Francis passed in Satsuma, was later discovered by Brother Luis de Almeida, as many *bonzos*, who were disciples of this aforementioned Ninjit, spoke about it at length as they were present when Father Francis was there”¹¹

Another Buddhist sect that was popular in Satsuma was that of *Shingon*, with its complicated theories about the nature of the Great Buddha (*Dainichi*) that was present in all beings and their many exoteric rites. We know that Anjirō had belonged to this sect and this fact explains some of Xavier’s material errors at the time when he sought a middle way to speak of God. Obviously, Shimazu Tadayoshi was well informed about all these religious movements. Shingon Buddhism, partially due to the efforts of its founder, Kōbo Daishi (741-835), did much to develop the arts such as literature, calligraphy, painting and poetry in this region.¹²

From as early as 1527 onwards the soldier-monk Tadayoshi lived a double life of arms and meditation, and finally retreated to the monastery as we have seen. It is true that his son did not match his father in the depth of his thinking. In one of the Zen monasteries, called Fukushōji, where Tadayoshi continued his studies, there lived another monk called Ninshitsu with whom Xavier would later speak at much length and whose name, according to Xavier’s interpretation, signified “heart of truth”.¹³ However, the name’s Sino-Japanese ideographical characters as we have seen on his tomb mean “patience” (*nin*) and “place” (*shitsu*). We shall focus for one

casa, superior de ellos, que es el más letrado, llámalos a todos y háceles una plática, a manera de predicación, y entonces dice a cada uno de ellos que mediten, por espacio de una hora...”; *Cartas y Escritos de S. Fr. Javier, op.cit.*, Doc. 85, No. 17.

11 “Destas e de outras muitas couzas, que el P. Mestre Francisco passou em Saçuma, foi depois sabedor o Irmão Luiz de Almeida, por las referirem por extenso huns bonzos, discipulos de este sobredito Ninjit, por se acharem presentes quando o P. Mestre Francisco ahi estava”; L. Fróis, *História de Japam*, I, edition cited, p. 27.

12 J. López-Gay, *La mística cósmica del Shingon*, “*Studia Missionalia*” 26 (1977), pp. 215-235.

13 *Cartas y Escritos de S. F. Javier*, Doc. 90, No. 18.

instant upon this monk who served as a bridge between Xavier and the Shimazu family.¹⁴ In fact he was the Superior from 1545 to the date of his death.

Ninshitsu was the Superior of the Fukushō-ji temple-school where Tadayoshi lived. Xavier writes that he spoke “many times” with the most learned men of the monastery. And in this context focuses upon Ninshitsu who everyone held in great esteem for his erudition, life and venerable age “he is eighty years of age” (he died shortly after in 1556) “and is like a Bishop amongst them. In the many chats that we had, I found him full of doubts and unable to determine whether our souls are immortal or whether one dies with the body, sometimes he would tell me that is was and on other occasions that it wasn’t...This is Ninxit, who is such a dear friend, and a marvel”. Father Luis Fróis adds some interesting details:

“In that city of Cangoxima there was a monastery, that, amongst all of them, was the main monastery of the region, that the king treats as his own [note this link between the monastery and the Shimazu], where there are some 100 or so *bonzos*, with vast revenues. The superior of this monastery is greatly revered by the king [note the link between Ninshitsu and the Shimazu] and by all the lords, of a rank that in Japan is called *tōdo* [East-temple], who was, at that time, an elderly man called Ninjit, a man who was by nature affable, kind and inclined towards pious deeds and had other innate good qualities. For which reasons Father Francis often visited him to converse with him, and he would rejoice in hearing our things and they seemed to him to be very consistent with reason. It is this, the monastery of the *jenxu* [*Zenshū*] sect, that holds that there is nothing beyond being born and dying, and that there is no other life...nor a creator who governs the universe”.¹⁵

Later, the historian copied some of the specific themes of the discussions that Xavier had with Ninshitsu, in which, who knows, perhaps Tadayoshi himself may have been present.

¹⁴ In addition to Xavier’s writings, his famous letter number 90, we have further information in the *Historia de Japam*, Vol. I, by Luis Fróis, edition cited. Also of interest is the article by J. Laures, *Notes on the Death of the Ninshitsu, Xavier’s Bonze Friend*, “Monumenta Nipponica”, 8 (1952), pp. 407-411.

¹⁵ “Estava naquella cidade de Cangoxima hum mosteiro que, entre todos, era o principal do reino, que el rey tem como couza sua propria, aonde havia 100 e tantos bonzos, con grande renda; è o superior delle em extremo venerado d’el-rey e de todos os senhores, cuja dignidade en Japão se chama *tōdo* [oriente-templo], que então era hum velho chamado Ninjit, natural-

Xavier began by asking about the meaning of the *zazen* (written as *zagen* in the manuscript) meditation during a period of 100 days consisting of “one or two fixed hours”. Accompanying this *bonzo*, Xavier was able to enter the hall and see that “in the arrangement of their bodies they were so modest, contemplative and tranquil, as though they were entranced in a divine contemplation”, and asked about the meaning of this meditation. On another occasion, undoubtedly in the garden of the temple that dominated the bay of Kagoshima, Xavier asked the *bonzo* which was the moment in which the passengers of a ship in danger should rejoice, whether it was in the midst of the storm or near a port where, once safe, they could choose to disembark. The *bonzo* replied that for his age, and he was already old, he could not think about the port that he would choose.

Obviously, in those months, no time was lost. Xavier himself, while recollecting this experience in the Buddhist temple, tells us that:

“Everyone, *bonzos* as well as laymen, are very much at ease with us, and are very amazed to learn how we came from such far off lands, as Portugal is distant more than six thousand leagues from Japan, solely to speak of God’s things and how people must save their souls by believing in Jesus Christ, saying that the fact that we had come to these lands had been ordained by God”.¹⁶

Above all, thanks to these discussions on the subject of the “religions of Japan”, more specifically about Zen and Shingon, and other information that they gathered from the *bonzos*, they would later compile the *Sumário dos erros en que os gentios do Japão vivem e de algumas seitas gentílicas en que principalmente confiã*.¹⁷ The first version seems to date from 1549 (in Spanish) and the definitive version from 1556. Obviously the kerygmatic orientation of the missionaries was not primarily one of “refuting”, except for the Christology of Jesus, the Saviour. This summary presents Shintoism

mente homem affavel, benigno e inclinado a obras de piedade e tinha outras boas partes naturais; pelas quales o P. Mestre Francisco frequentava muito conversá-lo, e elle folgava de ouvir nossas couzas e lhe parecia mui conformes à razão. Era aquelle, mosteiro da seita dos jénxus [*Zenshū*], que tem para sy não haver mais que nascer e morrer, e que não há outra vida... nem autor que govern o universo”; L. Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, edition cited, p. 26.

16 “Todos así legos como bonzos, huelgan mucho con nosotros, y se espantan en grande manera en ver cómo venimos de tierras tan lejanas, como es de Portugal a Japón, que son más de seis mil leguas, solamente por hablar de las cosas de Dios y cómo las gentes han de salvar sus almas creyendo en Jesucristo, diciendo que esto a que nos venimos a estas tierras es cosa mandada por Dios”

17 Critical edition in *Documentos del Japón, 1547-1557*, I, Doc. 124, pp. 652-667. In the introduction to the document the sources, author and date of composition are discussed.

with its commandments and mythology, and in the second part presents Buddhism (*buppoo*) with its main sects, and one already hears of Amidism, the *Boddhisattvas* (such as Kannon) and, one mustn't forget, Zen.

What was the cultural ambience of Satsuma, and especially in the court of the Shimazu? Certainly, they strove to maintain a high level of culture, despite the many wars. The reading of Buddhist and Confucian classics, poetry, music and the art of calligraphy were honed. It was a tradition that Tadayoshi had taken almost to the heights of perfection. They were in the habit of composing many diverse forms of poetry, especially those that were more in vogue in 16th century Japan.

There was no dearth of great emperors in our period, such as Go-Hanazono (d. 1471) or Go-Tsuchimako (d. 1500), or distinguished members of the great military families such as the Ashikaga, Hosokaga, Kitabatake, etc. who followed this "pathway of poetry" (*uta no michi*). And amongst them, one should keep the Shimazu in mind.¹⁸ Here, we would like to focus upon a composition that is more intellectual rather than simply poetic, the *Iroha-uta*. "Iroha" are the first syllables of the Japanese alphabet, which consists of 47 syllables, and "uta" means "song, composition". It is classified within gnomic poetry, which contains rules of moral conduct, and is made up of 47 stanzas. Each stanza consists of two lines, the first of which contains 17 syllables and the second 14. The accent and use of certain endings is important. Shimazu Tadayoshi composed one of these "*iroha-uta*" that is known as the *Code of a Samurai*, possibly written in 1545, some years before Xavier's arrival.¹⁹ The underlying theme of this composition is the philosophy of the *bushidō* (*bu*, arms; *shi*, gentleman; *dō*, path) and it deals with a heroic moral that regulates just behaviour. Some authors considered the *bushidō* to be a kind of religion, the religion of everyday life. *Bushidō* had close ties with Zen and with neo-Confucianism, from which it adopted the ideal of control over one's passion and the necessity to do one's duty. The characters that are repeated most often are those of *shin* (the heart), *chū* (fidelity), *shin* (truth), *rei* (courage or valour) etc. Saint Francis Xavier undoubtedly knew of this text and, through his Japanese friends, was able to understand its meaning. And it is not difficult to see reflections of this in his letters when he speaks of the Japanese.²⁰

18 R. H. Brower, E. Miner, *Japanese Court Poetry*, London, 1962.

19 I have translated this work along with integrated comments in J. López-Gay, "El código de un samurai. Traducción y comentario del «Iroha-uta» de Shimazu Tadayoshi (1545)", *Boletín de la Asociación española de orientistas*, 19 (1983), pp. 245-260.

20 The text already appears in an ancient collection dating from 1549, and has since then been transmitted orally down to our times, as Father Schurhammer can testify when he visited some

Here, I would like to present just a few of the stanzas, to give us an idea of the environment created by one of the Shimazu, which was also the environment with which Xavier came in contact.

“Nobility or vulgarity resides neither in the grand palace nor in the humble shack, but rather in the heart of the man who inhabits them.

It is good to deal with a friend with whom you get along well,
But it is better to do so with a friend of excellent habits.

In this inconstant world it is easy to invoke the law and reason,
But it is difficult to control the heart that is like a steed.

Pleasures and pain pass with time without leaving a trace,
The only thing that remains is a good name and it is of this that you should think.

As a bird has two wings,
Learn to seek anger and sweetness, the bow [military skills] and the brush [art].”

Let us now deal with Xavier’s meeting with Takahisa. Takahisa was a follower of the Confucianism that arrived in Satsuma along with Zen and Shingon as, at the tender age of sixteen, he had been sent by his father to the monastery of Ichijō-ji (in Bōnotsu, South West of Satsuma), a Shingon monastery famous for its library and arts.²¹ Takahisa promptly received Anjirō and they prepared for the meeting with Xavier. Paulo de Santa Fé (=Anjirō) gave Xavier a detailed account of this visit, which Xavier transmitted to us in one of his letters.²² On behalf of the holy missionary, Anjirō offered Takahisa a painting of the Virgin Mary, who later showed it to his mother who was a woman of great culture. “A few days later the Duke’s mother requested that another such image be made, but because there were no materials in that land, it was left undone”. Moreover, “this lady requested

authorities in Kagoshima in 1957. See his work *Francisco Javier. Su Vida y su Obra*, IV, *op. cit.*, p. 78, note 82. In my article cited in the previous footnote I have added some observations about the translations and commentaries.

21 P. Aoyama, *Die Missionstätigkeit des h. Franz Xaver*, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

22 *Cartas y Escritas de S. Fr. Javier*, dated 5th November 1549, in the BAC edition, Doc. 90, No. 39. In *Documentos del Japón, 1547-1557*, I, better edition, see pp. 156-157.

that we should send to her in writing what Christians believe, and thus, Paulo spent some days in doing this, and wrote many things about our faith in his language". This was the second attempt by the missionaries, more specifically by Paulo de Santa Fé, to write a catechism.

Xavier's meeting with the Duke Takahisa took place in the castle of Uchiujijō, which we have already described, situated some two hours away from Kagoshima. It was the 29th of September, the festival of the Archangel Saint Michael:

"On St. Michael's day we spoke with the Duke of this region and he honoured us greatly, telling us that we watched over the books in which the law of the Christians was written very well, saying that, if the law of Jesus Christ was true and good, that it must weigh heavily with the devil. A few days later he gave all his vassals permission, so that all those who wished to become Christians could do so".²³

There certainly existed a great opportunity for the propagation of Christianity, and many reasons to set their hopes high. Takahisa showed himself to be benevolent and he had already allowed freedom of worship and freedom to convert. He and his mother (as well as his father) showed themselves to be favourable. On the other hand, he had great influence in the country, an influence that extended well beyond the limits of Satsuma. One only needs to recall his friendship with the Emperor Go Nara Tennō, from whom he obtained honorific titles for his temples, and was able to call them *Chūkugan-ji*, or temples in which one prayed for the prosperity of the state by the grace of the Emperor.²⁴

23 "El día de Saan Miguel hablamos con el duque de esta tierra y nos hizo mucha honra, diciéndonos que guardásemos muy bien los libros en que estaba escrita la ley de los cristianos, diciendo que, si era la ley de Jesucristo verdadera y buena, que le había de pesar mucho al demonio con ella. De ahí a pocos días dio licencia a sus vasallos, para que todos los que quisiesen ser cristianos, que lo fuesen"; *Ibidem*, Doc. 90, No. 58. In the edition of the *Documentos del Japón*, I, p. 168. One must not forget that Xavier would have placed all his hopes for the conversion of Japan in "Jesus Christ and the very sacred Virgin St. Mary, his mother, and in all the nine choruses of the angels, and from amongst all of them especially in the Archangel St. Michael, prince and defender of the entire militant Church, trusting greatly in that Archangel, who is particularly committed to the defence of this great kingdom of Japan" ["Jesucristo y en la sacratísima Virgen Santa María su madre, y en todos los nueve coros de los ángeles, tomando por particular valedor entre todos ellos a San Miguel Arcángel, príncipe y defensor de toda la Iglesia militante, confiando mucho en aquel arcángel, la cual le es cometida en particularla guarda de este grande reino de Japón"], a magnificent text, *Ibidem*, No. 49.

24 P. Aoyama, *Die Missionstätigkeit des h. Franz Xaver*, op. cit., p. 54, G. Schurhammer, *Francisco Javier. Su vida e su tiempo*, IV, p. 78.

Nevertheless, Shimazu Takahisa did not help the missionaries, nor did he favour the Church. Perhaps this was due to the pressure brought to bear by the Buddhist *bonzos* who were opposed to the Christian missionaries activities. Or perhaps it was due to his mercenary character, seeking merely to obtain economic benefits from these foreigners. One has to doubt the sincerity of his interest in the Christian faith. This first great missionary opportunity was lost. Xavier soon tired of the promises that Takahisa made to him to assist him in finding a way to the centre of affairs - the court of the Emperor - and went to Yamaguchi, thus beginning the so called Yamaguchi period.

Even after Xavier's death in 1552 Shimazu Takahisa continued to interact with the missionaries and maintained some contacts with them. We have one of his letters addressed to the Viceroy of India dated 3rd January, 1562, ten years after Xavier's death, in which he requested that the Portuguese ships stop at his ports in Satsuma, such as Hirado.²⁵ The translator and scribe of the letter was Brother Luis de Almeida who, as we have already mentioned, sojourned in this region. It only has the following mention of the missionaries: Last year two brothers of the Society of Jesus came to my lands and travelled around preaching, however, due to the fact that I was otherwise occupied with the wars "I was not able to host them in the manner that I wished and that they deserved". In another letter addressed to Father António de Quadros the then Provincial of India²⁶ with the same date, he again mentioned that two brothers who were companions of Father Cosme de Torres had come to his kingdom of Kagoshima, praised the force of their preaching and their generosity at having come from so far away. There are sentences full of praise for the Portuguese, and yet other phrases that could not have been attributed to Shimazu Takahisa, such as, for example, when he speaks of the "love of the Creator of the world". However he insists that, "as the Portuguese are good men, we greatly rejoice that they have come to our lands. Because here they shall not be harmed, but rather, shall be greatly favoured. Because after the world was created we have not seen such a people as the Portuguese. I would greatly rejoice if they came to my lands to carry out their activities... I beg Your Highness to

25 Published in *Documentos del Japón 1558-1562*, II, Doc. No. 52, p. 480. At that time Constantino de Braganza (d. 1561) was the Viceroy of India. For the history of these letters see the Editor's note in the Introduction, p. 37.

26 *Ibidem*, Doc. No. 53, p. 485 and ss, Even though he mentions two brothers who were companions of Father Cosme de Torres, only one of them was a Jesuit, Brother Luis de Almeida, the other was a "dōjuku" or lay Japanese who had joined the Jesuit missionaries.

send me at an early date fathers, whom I eagerly await upon the beach with all my heart".²⁷

It is very strange that there is no explicit mention of Xavier in either of these two letters, as they had met in his capacity of Superior of the mission. Neither does he mention any spiritual reason with regard to his interaction with the Portuguese. He only thinks of the arrival of the ships as a means of strengthening his lands in the face of corsairs and above all as a means of enriching himself with their commerce. On the other hand, Takahisa could see how the missionaries' attention and the ships themselves shifted to other ports and other daimyos who were more generous. One only needs to recall the invitation extended by the daimyo Omura Sumitada and his offer of his port of Yokoseura.

27 "Pelos portugueses serem bons homens, folgamos muito que eles venhão a nossas terras. Porque aqui não lhe farão nenhum agravo, antes en tudo sarão favorecidos. Porque depois que o mundo hé criado não vimos tal gente como são os portugueses. Folgaria muito que viessem a minha terra fazer sua fazenda... Rogo a V.R.^a que mande mui cedo padres, os quais como o coração eu estou esperando na praia"; *Ibidem*, pp. 486-487. Due to his Shingon religious tradition Takahisa could not refer to God, speaking of the "love of the Creator of the world".

Abstract

The Shimazu family ruled over southern Kyūshū. Shimazu Tadayoshi was an extraordinary man: his humanist and religious education. His association with the Zen sect (Sōtō - Zen). His “bushidō” traits. He composed some moral norms, whose spirit (and perhaps, who knows, even the text) was known to Xavier. In this article we shall, specifically, comment upon the “Code of a Samurai”. One of his last masters was Ninjitsu, a Zen monk who, later, was acquainted with Francisco Xavier. The dialogues between Ninjitsu and Xavier.

During the administration of his adoptive son, Shimazu Takahisa (1515-1571), the Portuguese arrived in his lands and Xavier entered his dominions (1549). His mother held both Xavier and Christianity in great esteem. Takahisa was a good warrior. Religiously speaking, he was not a follower of Zen but rather of the esoteric Shingon sect. He did not get along well with Xavier and Christianity. His son Shimazu Yoshihisa (d. 1611) initially favoured the missionaries and received Luís de Almeida. His son adopted the same attitude. Xavier’s contact with the world of the Shimazu family, more concretely with Takahisa and the monk Ninjitsu, is reflected in Xavier’s letters and those of Brother Fernández as well as in Japanese documents of the time.

Resumo

A família Shimazu governava o sul de Kyūshū. Shimazu Tadayoshi era um homem extraordinário: a sua formação humanista e religiosa. Pertencia à seita Zen (Sōtō - zen). A sua característica o “bushidō”. Compôs umas normas morais, cujo espírito (e quiçá a letra) conheceu Xavier. Neste artigo comentamos, em concreto, o “código de um samurai”. Um dos seus últimos mestres foi Ninjitsu, monge Zen que conheceu, mais tarde, Francisco Xavier. Os diálogos entre Ninjitsu e Xavier.

Durante o governo do seu filho adoptivo, Shimazu Takahisa (1515-1571), os portugueses desembarcaram nas suas terras e Xavier entrou nos seus domínios (1549). A sua mãe estimou Xavier e o Cristianismo. Takahisa foi um bom guerreiro. Religiosamente não seguiu o Zen, mas a seita esotérica Shingon. Acabou mal com Xavier e com o Cristianismo. O seu filho Shimazu Yoshihisa (m. 1611) no princípio favoreceu os missionários recebendo Luís de Almeida. Esta mesma atitude teve o seu filho. O contacto de Xavier com este ambiente da família Shimazu, em concreto com Takahisa e com o monge Ninjitsu, está espelhado nas cartas de Xavier e do Irmão Fernández e nos documentos japoneses da época.

要約

島津家は九州の南部地方を治めていた。偉大な人物島津忠良。忠良の人論と宗教。曹洞宗の信奉者。武士道。忠良が道德律を作成しその精神あるいはその文字をザビエルが伝え聞いた。この論文は忠良の「いろは歌」について論ずる。忠良の宗匠の一人はザビエルと面識があった忍室であった。忍室とザビエルとの会話。

嫡子の島津貴久(1515-1571)が領主であったときポルトガル人が藩領に到着しザビエルが領国に入った(1549)。母親はザビエルとキリスト教を尊重した。貴久は優れた武士であった。宗教的、禅ではなく真言宗を奉じた。最終的にザビエルとキリスト教を否認した。息子の島津義久は最初にルイス・デ・アルメイダを迎え宣教師を好意的受け入れた。彼の息子は同じ姿勢をとった。ザビエルと島津家、特に貴久と忍室の接触、ザビエルとイルマンフェルナンデスの書簡及び当時の日本資料に描かれている。