



Missions from the Philippines to Portuguese Territories

in Southeast Asia during the 16th and 17th Centuries

VICTOR GOMES TEIXEIRA*

Although the Philippines became known to Europe after the expeditions of Ferdinand Magellan and Sebastião de Elcano in 1519-1522, the archipelago only became part of the Spanish sphere of influence and began to receive regular Catholic missions after 1565, with the arrival of Miguel Lopes de Legazpi's fleet. In 1569, Legazpi was appointed governor and Commander-in-Chief of Cebu, and he began an attempt to unify the archipelago known as Nueva Castilla. After six difficult years, the Castilians under Legazpi's command suggested that the king should also direct military expeditions to the Moluccas, since, although they considered Cebu a good place, they actually preferred a base closer to China. The best solution was, therefore, a location further to the north on the island of Luzon, known as Manila, occupied in 1571 and elevated to the status of a city on 19th November 1595, the year in which it also became an Archdiocese. Manila also became a capital in 1571, following an agreement with the local Sultan and a member of the Legazpi family, which proved to be more

of a token concession and did not last very long. The Spanish assumed direct administration of the district, thus putting an end to the Sultanate. In 1573, Legazpi died, but his grandson Juan de Salceda continued his policy of expansion.

Underlying Legazpi's aim of establishing a colonial capital in a more northerly region, Luzon, the most densely populated and closest to China of the Philippine islands, can be seen the intentions of the Spanish to appropriate trade in the seas of the Middle Kingdom (China) and subsequently be involved in the major missionary drives taking place in the region, where they, naturally, wanted to stake their claim. It should be remembered that Portugal, through the *Padroado Português do Oriente* (Portuguese Patronage of the East), exercised a great deal of influence in the area of missionary work, which it supported in Malacca and, chiefly, in Macao, a pivotal location for the conversion of China, Formosa (Taiwan), Korea, Tonkin and Japan. These two cities also possessed well-defined ecclesiastical structures, with dioceses and active religious orders and previous missionary training and experience in East Asia. The Spanish Philippines, therefore, suffered from a certain lack of experience, both missionary and ecclesiastical, although Spain was determined to establish itself in Southeast Asia through the Catholic religion. In order to lend strength to this objective, the diocese of Manila was created, whose first bishop was a learned Dominican missionary, Friar Domingo de Salazar, OP.¹ During this year, the 1st Synod of Manila was also founded, which lasted until 1586. One of the main aims of this Synod was to deal with pastoral issues and draw up strategies for them, in addition to providing ecclesiastical support for the legitimacy of Spanish dominion in the Philippines. Other problems were also aired, in particular those that directly affected the government of the archipelago.

Previous page: Anonymous Portuguese chart in the *Atlas* by Fernão Vaz Dourado (1571).

* History graduate from the Arts Faculty of Oporto University (1991). In 1996 he finished his M.A. on the Franciscan Order in Portugal during the early Middle Ages. In the same year he started working towards a Ph.D., now near conclusion, on the reforms of Religious Orders in Portugal during the Renaissance. He lectures at the Art School of the Catholic Portuguese University, in Oporto, and is subject coordinator for Art of the Portuguese Expansion in the World and Iconography. He is a researcher for the Portuguese Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, and works with several academic institutions in Portugal and abroad. His research is linked to Portuguese/Spanish-Oriental Art, Religion and Culture.

Licenciado em História pela Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto em 1991, concluiu, em 1996, mestrado sobre a Ordem Franciscana em Portugal na Baixa Idade Média. Nesse ano iniciou projecto de Doutoramento, actualmente em fase conclusão, subordinado ao tema das reformas nas Ordens Religiosas no Renascimento em Portugal. Lecciona na Escola das Artes da Universidade Católica Portuguesa, no Porto, regendo cadeiras como Arte da Expansão Portuguesa no Mundo ou Iconografia. É investigador do Centro Português de Estudos do Sudeste Asiático e colabora em diversas instituições científicas em Portugal e no estrangeiro. As linhas de investigação prendem-se com a Arte, Religião e Cultura Luso/Hispano-Orientais.

RELAÇÕES IBÉRICAS NA ÁSIA ORIENTAL

Great changes were made, one of the most significant of which was the adoption of the native language (Tagalog) to help spread the evangelical message. Philip II of Spain was granted permission by Pope Clement VII to create the archbishopric of Manila in 1595.

Why were the Portuguese and Spanish missionaries so interested in South and Southeast Asia – followed later by the French and Italians of the *Propaganda Fide*? It should be recalled that, since the fifteenth century, the Southeast Asian populations had been becoming increasingly opposed to and unhappy with traditional religions and cults, which were mass, highly ceremonial practices, and had contributed strongly towards creating very hierarchical societies. Economic changes, the greater mobility of the populations and a relative degree of urbanisation had created the necessary conditions for a challenge to these ancestral religious systems, since they had helped spread the notion of new religions, like Islam, which carried messages of equality and fraternity. From the brotherhoods to the mullahs, these all contested the authority of the traditional faiths. These various factors made it easier for new cults to be adopted, preferably those based on individual and group faith and invoking new ethical and moral precepts in fresh social contexts. Islam, therefore, witnessed a steady and massive expansion in Southeast Asia, although not in every single corner. Certain fringes of islands, such as the Philippines and Timor—and even as far as New Guinea—were not converted to the Islamic faith, or were only on the point of attempting this when, first the Portuguese, then a little later the Spanish, began to fill the voids which Islam had not yet reached. It can therefore be stated that Christianity managed to impose itself in these regions, and in others as well, largely due to the fact that it did not have to confront a strong well-established Islamic faith, although in certain spiritual border areas, and even in territories that had been converted to the Islamic faith, they achieved some socially significant results.

It is also pertinent to note that Hispanic-Philippine missionary expansion essentially took place over a time span that also covered most of the period of the Iberian Union (1580-1640) and, to a lesser extent, the Restoration of the Portuguese monarchy in 1640. During this period, the *Padroado* also suffered with the nation's loss of political independence in administrative and geo-strategic matters. Moreover, at

a time when missionary work depended on the support or pioneering activities of armies and fleets, the weakening of the Portuguese position in Southeast Asia opened up breaches which Spanish-Filipino evangelism tried to smooth over, but without great success. In other parts of Eastern Asia, the rivalry between the Portuguese *Padroado* and the Spanish *Patronato* (Patronage) dealt several fatal blows to missionary work, not to mention the war being waged between Macao and Manila over influence in Japan.

RELIGIOUS ORDERS ESTABLISHED IN THE PHILIPPINES WITH OVERSEAS MISSIONS (UNTIL THE MID-17TH CENTURY)

Let us begin by listing the religious institutions devoted to the missionary vocation that were established in the Philippines in the second half of the sixteenth century, and which later spread out across the nearby seas and islands, as well as onto the Asiatic continent.

The Augustinians were the pioneers of evangelical work in the Philippines. They arrived in the archipelago in 1565, with the Miguel Lopez Legazpi expedition. There were five clerics: Friar Andrés de Urdaneta (who might be called the technical adviser of the expedition), Friar Andrés de Aguirre, Friar Martín de Rada, Friar Diego de Herrera and Friar Pedro Gamboa. All of them were highly educated men, and it is worth remembering that, at that time, the Augustinian theologians were the authors of the so-called Counter-Reformation. Their 'first' conversion was the baptism of the niece of Tupa, the king of Cebu, who was himself later baptised in 1568. Until 1578, the Augustinians were the only missionaries in the archipelago. Up till then, when the first Franciscans arrived, the Augustinians, according to their records, which are part apologia and part chronicle, performed many baptisms. They decided, in 1593, to set up the first Philippine printing press, provided by Father Francisco Blancos, which enabled them to print the catechisms that were so important to their missionary work.² The Augustinians became established in Pampanga, Cagayan, Laguna, Batangas, Cebu, Panay and Manila. By 1572, they already had five convents (Cebu, Tondo, Otón, Manila and Mindoro) and various missions. By 1579, the Augustinian province of *Santo Nome de Jesús de las Filipinas* (Holy Name of

IBERIAN RELATIONS IN EAST ASIA

Jesus of the Philippines) was established, with Friar André de Aguirre the first provincial leader. In 1581, the community was reinforced by the arrival of thirty new friars from Spain.

On 2nd June 1578, fifteen Franciscans arrived in Manila, led by Father Pedro de Alfaro, with the intention of founding the *Custódia de S. Gregório de las Filipinas* (Custodial of St. Gregory of the Philippines), which was changed into a province in 1591. Alfaro was the first Custodian. Until that date, there had been no need for more missionaries, particularly in the Philippine orders, other than the Augustinians. However, in 1573 Guido Lavazares, the Governor of the Philippines, wrote a letter to the General Ministry of the Franciscans requesting them to send friars to help with missionary work. The first community was *Nuestra Señora de los Angeles* (Our Lady of the Angels) in Manila. They worked on many islands and in many regions, such as Manila, where they founded Santa Ana, and in Paco, Pandacan and Loreto, where the training and retirement convent now known as the Convent of *San Francisco del Monte* (St. Francis of the Mountain) is situated. Since the days of the Jesuit St. Francis Xavier, the Franciscans had dreamed of extending their missionary work to China. During their first years in the Philippines, they were tireless in their efforts to realise this dream. Friar Domingo de Salazar, OP, the first bishop of the Philippines, considered this Franciscan ambition inconceivable, an opinion that should be viewed in the context of the competition between Manila and Macao.

Following the voyages of St. Francis Xavier, the Jesuits, naturally, became established in the Philippines as well, in 1581 to be precise, with the arrival in Manila of Father Antonio Sedeño and Father Alonso Sánchez. The latter had succeeded in entering China when he was in Macao to announce the crowning of Philip II as king of Portugal. With the arrival of the new missionaries, the Manila establishment was converted into a seminary in 1590; five years later there was already a vice-province there, which developed significantly during the first half of the seventeenth century.

On 21st July 1586, fifteen Dominicans landed in Cavite. After two years they already had their own establishment in Manila, and they were later entrusted with missionary work in the province of Cagayan in 1595.

In May 1606, ten Augustinian Recollect priests and four friars left for Cebu. In June of the same year they reached Manila. At that time the archipelago was divided over the issue of missionary work, but due to huge territorial expansion, there were still many places left that had not yet been converted. One year after their arrival, three Recollect friars went to the Zambales province. The most difficult mission for the Recollect brothers was the mission to Mindanao, which already had a strong Muslim presence, due to its maritime border with Indonesia and, in particular, the island of Borneo. Friar Pedro de San Agustín therefore, organised his own army and afterwards became known as Father Captain. In 1622, D. Pedro de Arce, the bishop of Cebu, pressured the Recollects to occupy the island of Palawan. The people of this island, however, served the Philippine pirates, which made missionary work in the area impossible.

RELIGIOUS ORDERS ESTABLISHED IN THE PHILIPPINES

Order	Date established
Augustinians	1565
Franciscans	1578
Jesuits	1581-1768; 1859-1898
Dominicans	1587
Augustinian Recollects	1606

REGIONS OF THE *PADROADO PORTUGUÊS DO ORIENTE* CONVERTED BY SPANISH-FILIPINO MISSIONARIES

I. SOUTH CHINA, FORMOSA AND MACAO

As we already know, the Jesuits had been carrying out missionary work in China since the sixteenth century. However, their model of missionary work was strongly contested, particularly in relation to the cults and rituals, which had been adapted in response to local contingencies and practices in an attempt to merge customs and traditions. The first challengers were the Mendicants, mainly those who were active in the Philippines and in the Portuguese Eastern *Padroado* (the Franciscans and the Dominicans). China was basically one of the missionary areas most coveted by the European

RELAÇÕES IBÉRICAS NA ÁSIA ORIENTAL

missionaries and was almost exclusively under the control of the Jesuits of the *Padroado*.

Originating from Manila, they installed themselves in the Fukien region in south China (the region where the Chinese established in the Philippines came from), after having obtained permission from the Papacy—in the document *Ex debito pastoralis officii*—in 1633, as long as they did not lead the *Padroado* into missionary work in the great Middle Kingdom (China). This was, of course, right in the middle of the period of dynastic unification in the Iberian Peninsula.

However, such missionary fervour provided disappointing results. In fact, instead of strengthening evangelical ideas and work, it actually proved to be a dividing and, eventually, weakening force. The Mendicants from the Manila *Patronato* were accustomed to operating almost exclusively in the areas they had conquered, and preferred to work with large numbers. They completely ignored the experiences of the *Padroado* Jesuits and accused them of taking part in and encouraging heathen cults. The dispute became international in 1645, due to the less than conciliatory intervention of the Holy See, and dragged on until 1742. It was fundamentally a debate on the nature of missionary work—with the accusation that the Jesuits were involved in unchristian acts—or the missionary programme in terms, for example, of the objectives of the missionaries: the Jesuits worked over a long period of time whereas the Mendicants aimed to convert quickly. The restoration of Portuguese independence in 1640 and the arrival of the *Propaganda Fide* (with strong links to the French crown) in China sharpened the missionary arguments, delaying pastoral work and making it more difficult.

The Chinese emperors had always shown themselves to be more attracted to the methodology of the Company of Jesus, which was based on the cultivation and observance of local customs and rituals, exemplified by Ricci (in China) or Nobili (in India, who himself became a Brahmin). One method followed by Ricci was to make Catholic dogma acceptable by preserving any Chinese customs and rituals that did not contradict the Gospels (see *A Verdadeira Ideia de Deus*). Confucius could thus easily be included, as well as Aristotle, who was a pagan: Ricci even agreed that Chinese Christians could practise their cult of ancestors (such as Confucius), a cult that principally fostered respect and thanksgiving. Longobardi, Ricci's successor, did not agree and returned to the old European



Coat of arms of the city of Manila, adopted on 30th May 1596.

methods. The 'clean slate' method was used by the Mendicants (Franciscans and Dominicans), who worked from the premise that everything that existed in relation to the previous religion or cult had to be wiped out and the reception of the new elements of faith had to be total, with none of the former customs or traditions preserved. In 1645, the Dominicans, who were pure Thomists, managed to get the theologians to condemn the Jesuit methods, but it was only in 1704 that Rome condemned the practice of the cult of ancestors by Chinese Christians.

China fell within the working area of the *Padroado Português do Oriente* (Portuguese Patronage of the East), and for a long time the Manila *Patronato* (the Spanish ecclesiastical structure, similar to the Portuguese one based in Goa) had been intending to enter the Middle Kingdom. In 1575, therefore, the Augustinian friars Martín de Rada and Jerónimo

IBERIAN RELATIONS IN EAST ASIA

Martin, together with a group of Franciscans, attempted to establish missions in China. But the Augustinians were unsuccessful; even though they had erected a small convent in Macao in 1586, three clerics were eventually expelled by the new king of Portugal Philip I (Philip II of Spain) in 1589 and were replaced by Portuguese friars. The Philippine Augustinians only returned to China in 1680 via Macao and Canton (Guangzhou), on a mission that ended in 1709.

In 1579, it was the turn of the first Franciscans to try to establish themselves in China. Their interest in converting China was almost obsessive. Disobeying orders from the Governor of Manila, Friar Pedro de Alfaro and Friar Agustín de Tordesillas secretly left the Philippines that year, to be joined later by two more members of the order. The group reached Canton (Guangzhou) in June of the same year, approximately one month after setting sail. This city on the estuary of the Pearl River was considered at the time to be a major port of entry for the great missionary adventure in China, exclusive at the time to the *Padroado* Jesuits. As we already know, the Franciscan missionary tradition in China goes back to the thirteenth century, under the Yuan dynasty (1280-1368). The minority group led by Alfaro began building the convent of Nossa Senhora dos Anjos 1580. Friar Francisco Gonzaga, in his *De Origine Seraphicae Religionis Franciscana...*, published in Rome in 1587, mentions that this holy community of Hispanic-Philippine origin in Macao was founded in 1579, not 1580, although he does not provide any arguments in support of this claim. Gonzaga also puts a figure on the number of clerics in Nossa Senhora dos Anjos in Macao *circa* 1585-87: twelve friars. The convent was occupied by Spanish clerics of the *Custódia* (Custodial) of St. Gregory the Great of the Philippines until the building of the Macao *Custódia*. Alfaro was expelled from Macao by the Portuguese and sent to Goa, but died in a shipwreck off the coast of Cochin China. In the Philippines, moreover, Alfaro's clandestine assault was vehemently rebuked by the first bishop of Manila, Friar Domingo de Salazar, OP, who told the Franciscans in his diocese to concern themselves only with the huge task of converting the Philippines and to forget their dreams of China. Even after Salazar's warning, however, in 1581 a group of seven Franciscans led by Friar Pablo de Jesus was already secretly on its way to China again. They were prevented from getting there when they were

preparing to cross the South China Sea en route for Macao when orders came saying that only two of them could proceed and that the rest had to return to Manila. They tried again that year, reaching Fukien (Fujian), where they were soon discovered by Chinese soldiers and held prisoner in Canton, their freedom later bought by a Portuguese merchant, Aires Gonçalves de

*In other parts of Eastern Asia,
the rivalry between
the Portuguese Padroado
and the Spanish Patronato
(Patronage) dealt several fatal
blows to missionary work,
not to mention the war being
waged between Macao
and Manila over influence
in Japan.*

Miranda. Some went to Macao whilst the others returned to the Philippines.

At the end of the sixteenth century and throughout the greater part of the following one, there was great rivalry between the Franciscans and the Jesuits in Macao and the surrounding areas. In relation to the friars coming from the Philippines, we include here in this Franciscan chapter the Clarissas, who were established in Macao in 1635, erecting the monastery of St. Clara, which remained standing until 1824 when it was destroyed by fire.

In 1590, the Philippine Dominicans also began to yearn for missionary work in China, which they attempted to achieve with great persistence. The expeditionary group which left in that year was led by the Sinologist and experienced missionary Friar Miguel de Benavides. They had probably already been to Macao by at least 1587. In the last decade of the sixteenth century they had founded the St. Dominic's convent, but were gradually replaced by Portuguese clerics. Their rivalry with the Jesuits was also proverbial in the region, and shortly afterwards they

RELAÇÕES IBÉRICAS NA ÁSIA ORIENTAL

returned to Manila. They tried again in 1612 and 1619 and later in 1630, in Foochow (Fuzhou), but with little success. In 1633, they also installed themselves in Fukien, led by Friar António Cocchi, who already knew the region. Fukien was the centre of the missionary activity of the Preaching Friars in China, who were also established in Shantung (Shandong), Chekiang (Zhejiang) and Kiangsi (Jiangxi). The Franciscans were already in Shantung, where they had an important establishment, which led to the founding of other communities in other areas. Between 1636 and 1742, quarrels between the Dominicans and the Company of Jesus flared up.

Curiously enough, the first Apostolic Vicar in China was actually a cleric from the *Patronato*, appointed in 1649 by Innocent X, named Friar António de Santa Maria, OFM, who had led missions from his order into the Middle Kingdom. After Friar António, who died in Canton in 1669, the influence of the Spanish-Filipino Church was never again evident in China.

Formosa was also a target for the missionary fervour of the Spanish established in the Philippines. The first to go there were the Dominicans in 1626, when Friar Bartolomé Martínez and five other clerics set sail for those latitudes, considered dangerous because they were occupied by 'head hunter' tribes, as a document of the time records. They managed to found a church in Sialui (Keelung), and later moved to Tamsui in 1628. In this same year, the Dutch expelled all clerics. The Franciscans and Augustinian Recollects also tried Formosa, but in a more sporadic manner and without any missions ever having been established.

II. JAPAN

If China was always the pinnacle, the missionary crowning glory desired by a number of religious institutions established in the Far East, especially the Franciscans and Jesuits, another missionary land was revealed as a target of evangelical zeal in Asia: Japan. Japan was the first Asian region to be systematically targeted by missionaries from the Philippines, despite being included in the Portuguese Patronage of the East and although Portuguese Jesuits from Macao had been evangelising there for a long time. The Portuguese Jesuits even invented a Latin alphabet for the Japanese language, which they studied assiduously. There even existed the so-called

privilege of exclusion, which admitted the Company of Jesus as the only mission in Japan, backed up by a brief from Gregory XIII, dated 28th January 1585, entitled *Ex Pastoralis Officio*, which forbade other religious orders to work in Japan, on pain of excommunication. The chorus of protest from the Mendicant orders was naturally loud. In May 1593, a meeting of theologians in Manila held that the papal brief did not affect the Franciscans. In 1592, furthermore, two embassies were already on their way from Manila to Japan to visit Shogun Hideyoshi, the first under the leadership of Friar Juan de Cobo, OP (who died in Formosa on the return voyage). Friar Pedro Bautista, OFM, headed for Japan with three other friars after the 1593 meeting. One of these friars, Friar Gonzalo Garcia, spoke Japanese. In September 1594, three other friars from the same order joined them. In accordance with the missionary policy of the order, they straightaway established hospitals and hospices, as was already being done in America and the Philippines. They bravely wore their habits and prayed in public, in defiance of the Jesuits and Christian *daimyos* (Japanese nobles), who were displeased by such boldness. Their prayer routine, used in America and the Philippines, was much more dangerous here, as it failed to observe and respect local customs, contrary to the practice of the Company of Jesus, as we have seen. In this respect, the Jesuits showed more prudence, following as far as possible the gentile customs and the feelings and culture of the Japanese. The Franciscans did have one advantage: they sought out the poor and destitute, the marginalized, where they always achieved significant results from their evangelical activities.

In 1596, however, things changed for the Franciscans, and they began to suffer real and tragic problems. The famous episode of the Manila galleon, the *San Felipe*, was at the bottom of this turn of events. This large vessel had set sail for Acapulco with a valuable cargo and was taking the best and fastest north Pacific route, as usual, when it was struck by a typhoon. In October, about three months after leaving Manila, it therefore had to seek refuge in Japan, in Urado, on the island of Shikoku. The vessel's cargo was then seized by samurais and *daimyos* in the name of Hideyoshi. Portuguese sources relative to Japan refer to a secret conspiracy on board the galleon, which was to be the last preliminary advance mission

IBERIAN RELATIONS IN EAST ASIA



The Philippines in a map by Jodocus Hondius, 1606.

of Spanish soldiers, with a view to conquest. The Jesuits' influence with the Japanese aristocracy was considerable, and so Hideyoshi's seizure of the galleon could reveal possible Portuguese pressure, especially by the Jesuits. Given this situation, a certain amount of annoyance with the Christian missionaries was generated among the Japanese in the light of Hideyoshi's 1587 anti-Christian laws, which were, however, not specifically anti-Jesuit. The Protomartyrs of Japan suffered torture in 1597 in Nagasaki, one year after the galleon issue: many of them were Franciscans and Spanish-Filipinos. In 1598, however, two Friars Minor were once again in Japan, and this was the source of the Franciscans' diffusion in the country, which began in the mid-seventeenth century along the Manila-Nagasaki axis, despite the difficulties experienced in the Ieyasu persecution between 1612 and 1614.

Between 1602 and 1637, the Dominican Rising Sun missionaries, coming from Manila with a number of recruits, also worked in Japan, it is said with some success. Some, such as Friar Alfonso de Navarrete (1617) even achieved the accolade of martyr. Though the hardships were many, they were never enough to demobilize the evangelisers, not even the persecution unleashed by Ieyasu, when some missionaries stayed in secret in the country. To get around these problems, since there were so few permanent preachers in Japan, they began to send Japanese candidates to study and become novitiates in Manila, in the mother Church of the Filipino Dominicans. In 1622, the Japanese also banned trade between their country and Manila, another harsh blow to the missionary activities emanating from the Philippines. The last Dominicans left Japan in 1637.

The Augustinians and Recollect Augustinians also worked there. The former had been there since

RELAÇÕES IBÉRICAS NA ÁSIA ORIENTAL

1602 (Friar Diego de Guevara and Friar Estacio Ortiz), working in small groups, but with enough spirit to erect a church in Nagasaki. In 1622, one friar (Friar Pedro Zúñiga) was also martyred following a denunciation by the English who were trying to penetrate Japan by fomenting anti-Iberian feelings, accusing the Spanish and Portuguese of being spies and papist agents. The Recollects were the last Spanish-Filipino missionaries to enter Japan, in 1623, in a very difficult period, as we have seen (after the dreadful year

At the end of the sixteenth century and throughout the greater part of the following one, there was great rivalry between the Franciscans and the Jesuits in Macao and the surrounding areas.

of 1622). The most important of these Recollects was, interestingly, Portuguese, Friar Vicente de Carvalho. These friars found Japan already geographically 'divided' by other orders, and so they had to seek other, more obscure, places, such as the north of Honshu, and even Hokkaido. The year 1632 was the *annus horribilis* for the order in Japan, with some of their priests being captured and martyred.

In 1639, however, the final blow was struck against the Christianisation of Japan when the *Sakoku*, or 'closed country' was declared, banning the last legal trade route, the renowned 'Great Ship of Macao'. More than 300,000 Japanese Christians were left without spiritual guidance (a significant number, given the extreme hardships, if we consider that at this time there were 650,000 in the Philippines and 3,000,000 in Mexico and Peru). The last two mission attempts left Manila for Japan after the *Sakoku* to comfort the country's Christians. Many Portuguese Jesuits remained in the country, among which was the Company's Provincial in Japan, Father Cristovão Ferreira. The two Manila groups were known as the *Rubinos*, because their leader was Father Antonio Rubino. The first *Rubino* arrived in Satsuma in 1642 accompanied by five fathers, of whom

only two came ashore, subsequently becoming victims of persecution and torture. The second group of five fathers—one of whom was Japanese—and a group of lay catechists (Chinese and Japanese) arrived in 1643, and suffered the same fate as the first.

III. TONKIN AND COCHIN CHINA

Nothing is known of any missionary activities in the Tonkin region, in the north of present-day Vietnam, undertaken by evangelists from the Philippines, although the occasional 'sporadic' missionary may have gone there, perhaps en route to other parts of Indochina. Cochin China, a region that historically included the South Vietnamese territory of Da Nang, is known to have been visited by eight Franciscans who left Manila in 1583, and came to that city (Da Nang) by way of Macao, intent on preaching the Gospel. Two friars who were already well known in the East and who had wide experience and knowledge of missionary work headed the group. They were Friar Diego de Oropesa and Friar Bartolomé Ruiz. However, having fallen out with the soldiers in Da Nang, they were sent back to Macao after a shipwreck. By no means disheartened, Oropesa, in his refuge in Macao, then asked his superior in Manila to send five more friars back to Cochin China with him, but he was immediately stripped of his authority. In Macao, Ruiz also prepared a mission, but without success. Some missionaries arrived in 1584, to return to Da Nang, but they abandoned the project after six months, exhausted and unsuccessful, and returned to Manila. Only in 1700 were missionaries from the Order of Friars Minor sent to Cochin China and Tonkin, establishing stable and promising missions there (1719 in Hué and 1722 in Saigon).

IV. CAMBODIA

With respect to missionary work, this kingdom also relied on the Patronage, in this case on the diocese of Malacca. It was mostly Franciscans and Dominicans who preached there, but they worked without having any defined plan. Rather, they were at the level of western advisers to the Cambodian royal family or ministers to Portuguese communities in the kingdom. Requests were made to Malacca to establish missions but this was never agreed due to political

IBERIAN RELATIONS IN EAST ASIA

problems and the lack of friars in the diocese who were ready and willing to go to Cambodia. A few individual friars did go there, however. For example, at the end of the sixteenth century, king Satha I had a Dominican, Friar Silvestre de Azevedo, as his adviser. Furthermore, Manila was at that time an important centre of power in Eastern Asia, especially in this phase of the Iberian Union. Subsequently there were also wars with Siam, with Satha seeking help from the Spanish-Filipinos to expel the Siamese from his country. Some Dominicans, including a number of Portuguese, had gone back, accompanying Satha's ambassador, Diogo Veloso, a Portuguese adventurer. The Dominicans from Manila stayed there, to be joined by others from the Philippines in 1603. The dependence on Malacca, in ecclesiastical terms, continued, even though the missionaries came from Manila. But when the Portuguese position in Malacca weakened, thanks to the arrival of the Dutch in Southeast Asia, the difficulties for both the Dominican missionaries in Cambodia and the Portuguese Franciscan missions mounted. At the same time, the pro-Siam tendency was gaining in importance in the kingdom, and a great deal of resentment was naturally felt for the Spanish-Filipinos. The Dominicans from Manila were expelled towards the end of the first quarter of the seventeenth century, and only one Portuguese community, with its own priests, remained there. The Franciscan province of St. Gregory the Great, from the Philippines, later founded a mission in Kankao, and this thrived, with the establishment of a number of churches and oratories, lasting until 1813.

V. SIAM

At the end of the sixteenth century, the first Spanish-Filipinos arrived here, albeit in a rudimentary form and with no organizational power. After the weaknesses of the Franciscans in Cochin China, one of the friars working there, who then came to Siam (Thailand) was that same Friar Diego de Oropesa. They were kindly received and were then channelled to the support and spiritual guidance of the important Portuguese community in the country's capital, Ayutthaya. There was little conversion among the Siamese, however. With the wars against the Burman kingdom of Pegu in the

first half of the seventeenth century, they had to return to Macao and only went back in the second half of the eighteenth century.

RELIGIOUS ORDERS ESTABLISHED IN EAST ASIA
BY SPANISH AND FILIPINO MISSIONARIES

Region	Order
China	Augustinians (1575) Franciscans (1579) Dominicans (1590)
Formosa (Taiwan) (Spanish in 1595)	Dominicans (1626-42) Franciscans (mid-17 th century)
Japan	Jesuits (2 nd half of the 16 th century) Franciscans (1592) Dominicans (1602-37) Augustinians (1602) Augustinian Recollects (1662) ³
Cochin China	Franciscans (end of the 16 th century) ⁴
Siam	Franciscans (17 th century) ⁵
Cambodia	OFM (end of the 16 th century) OP (<i>idem</i>)
Molucca Islands	OFM
Vietnam	Jesuits (mostly French after the 17 th century); Dominicans (1676)
Celebes (Sulawesi)	OFM

VI. INSULINDIA

After the conquest of Malacca in 1511, the Portuguese launched themselves both in the quest for rich new lands in Southeast Asia and the Far East, and in the spiritual conquest of all these vast regions, and tens of thousands of islands. From 1512-1515, they made their mark in the Moluccas and Timor, for example, opening up a trading post in the Moluccas in 1521. As a matter of interest, this was the year in which a Portuguese in the service of Spain, one Ferdinand Magellan, reached the Philippines. With the Iberian Union and the Dutch threat, Spain was having to defend the 'Portuguese' position in the Moluccas from the Philippines, even from the missionising point of view, since Malacca seemed to be about to sink under the pressure from the United Provinces. In 1593, in fact, Wibrand and his army of Dutchmen were already in the Moluccas. In 1606, we hear that

RELAÇÕES IBÉRICAS NA ÁSIA ORIENTAL



The Cagayan river in the north of the island of Luzon, by Juan Luis de Acosta, c. 1720.

a fleet left Manila under the Spanish governor of the Philippines, Pedro Bravo de Acuña, against the Dutch. Four Franciscan friars were in this expedition, and they established themselves in Ternate, where they founded a church and a small convent (plus an oratory), as well as a hospital, all in timber. The convent was later moved to a more convenient and safer spot, to enable it to expand. This it did from 1626, and thus became the centre for Franciscan missions in the Moluccas and in Celebes.⁶

There were several Spanish-Filipino Franciscan missions in Celebes (Sulawesi) as Félix Huerta, OFM reports:⁷

- Cauripa – founded by Father Sebastian de S. José, first missionary in the Celebes (mid-seventeenth century). Aroused a certain interest among local rulers, according to Huerta.
- Bool – founded in 1612 by Juan de Caño and Cristóbal Cruz. The mission failed, with much illness and death.
- Macassar – 1619-1662, unsuccessful; hard to

keep up its activity.

- Manado – The most important mission. Established in 1619, by friars Pascual Torrelas and Benito Diaz. Other smaller missions were set up from here. It closed, however in 1644, following an anti-Spanish revolt, the profile of which remains obscure. It nevertheless enjoyed success, sending friars out to strengthen the mission and also to establish small Christian units in the south of Sulawesi.

In other parts of Insulindia, evangelists from the Philippines continued to work, though with some difficulty. In Jilolo, for instance, in the Moluccas, a Franciscan mission was founded in 1613, but lasted only a short time. Another example is that of the island of Sanguir, with the missions of Tabuca and Calonga, which functioned between 1639 and 1656, but with reasonable results, according to Huerta. Four friars were on Sanguir, which probably helped towards the relative success of these missions, where there were many baptisms and

IBERIAN RELATIONS IN EAST ASIA

conversions. In Cale, a mission founded in 1619, missionaries remained until 1642. Also in 1619, a mission was founded in Bantan, in the Moluccas; it was suspended in 1624 but reopened in 1640, before finally closing in 1644, after an anti-Spanish uprising. This and many other missions came to an abrupt end, not because of disagreements or tragic events of a religious nature, but as a result of popular uprisings or the hostility of the local people towards the garrisons, first Portuguese and then Spanish. These were not welcome, and they used to perpetrate countless illegal acts.

Huerta made the following overall calculation regarding these Spanish-Filipino Franciscan missions established in the Moluccas and Celebes: Weakness—weakness from the point of view of religion, because anthropologically and geographically we are faced with highly interesting cases of European cultural penetration in Insulindia. With regard to the idea of the ‘weakness’ of these Spanish-Filipino missions in Insulindia, its main causes may be seen among the following:

- Islam was firmly embedded among the people, especially in the princes and nobility: Islam was strongly established in the higher social groups, nourishing government systems and court societies;
- Firm and unwavering opposition, therefore, to the implantation and development of Christianity, which is still the case today;
- Lack of constant and active continuity of friars *in situ*, due to the intrinsically itinerant nature of religious preachers;
- Lack of a continued clear and distinct methodology—indeed, a lack of stability. Pilgrimage for Christ was renowned, but met with little success in terms of converts: the friars were not aware that in these much-divided kingdoms, where there was no security for Christians, it was dangerous to abandon a newly-established mission and go at once to another one (a problem also common to the Catholic missions in Indonesia

and Southeast Asia until the nineteenth century);

- Lack of permanent missionaries: There were not enough in the Philippines, let alone here, in Insulindia. Besides, Japan was then the pinnacle of greater missionary zeal at that time among the evangelists of the Viceroyalty of Manila. Other, wealthier parts of the region, too, were targeted by missionaries, with Insulindia always taking second place;
- The constant presence of Muslim pirates and the Calvinist Dutch;
- Difficult political-economic circumstances.

Alongside the Franciscans, priests from the Company of Jesus wandered the islands of what is today known as Indonesia and Papua New Guinea from their base on the Philippine island of Mindanao. The Jesuits were the undoubted rivals of the Friars Minor in the Mission sphere, often supplanting them in terms of continuity and results. Their presence is also better documented and has been studied more deeply.

CONCLUSION

Based on sound cartography, there is an urgent need to fix and classify all the works, printed or manuscript, that document the history of the presence of European religious orders in Southeast Asia. These were the operational beginnings and cultural, spiritual and civilizing mainstays of Iberia's presence in the Far East. It can safely be said that the crucial role of the Spanish Philippines in the establishment of missions of Southeast Asia should never be detached, in harmony, in conflict or independently, from the Portuguese missions. On the basis of concrete knowledge of the historical-geographical existence of religious missions from Iberia in the Far East, we are left in no doubt that we are looking at a deeper knowledge of the civilizing presence—or otherwise—of the Iberian Peninsula's people in the region; a presence making possible a multifaceted approach, and involving other scientific aspects of this same meeting of peoples and cultures. **RC**

NOTES

- 1 Domingo de Salazar was a character with a substantial educational background; a Master in Holy Theology and a graduate in Canon Law.
- 2 The catechisms were printed in Spanish-Tagalog and Spanish-Chinese editions.
- 3 Among whom was Padre Vicente de Carvalho, a Portuguese.
- 4 From the Franciscan Province of St. Gregory the Great, in the Philippines.

- 5 Coming from the Philippines, they served and supported the Portuguese community in Siam's capital, Ayutthaya.
- 6 Cf. in “Missões Franciscanas em Celebes (Sulawesi),” Félix Huerta, OFM, *Estudo geográfico, topográfico, estadístico, histórico, religioso de la santa apostólica provincia de San Gregorio Magno*, Binondo, 1865.
- 7 *Ibid.*