

FROM BRAZIL TO JAPAN: THE JESUITS UNDER THE PORTUGUESE PATRONAGE'S AUTHORITY FROM THE CASES OF JUAN DE AZPILICUETA NAVARRO AND FRANCIS XAVIER (16TH CENTURY)

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Abstract

The Society of Jesus was founded in 1540 and right in 1549 the Order established a mission in the geographical limits of the Portuguese Patronage's activity, Brazil and Japan. The information about other regions came to be gradually spread across Europe, flow in which the experience from Far East Asia, especially in Japan, was taken as an example to be followed by other missions within the Jesuit campaign. What this article aims is to reflect on some aspects of this dynamic from considering the cases of Juan de Azpilicueta in Brazil and Francis Xavier in Asia, missionaries who were relatives and pioneers of the Jesuit activity in the respective regions. To do so, it analyses some letters of their authorship as others in which both were mentioned. From their consanguineous relationship and the work that they promoted, it was described that Father Navarro worked in Brazil as if he was another Francis Xavier in the Orient. As the experience of Xavier came to be exalted by the whole Society of Jesus, and some of his characteristics were recognized in Navarro, this article starts from the idea that a way of proceeding was being endorsed by the Order, or at least by those who were working in the non-European territories.

Resumo

A Companhia de Jesus foi fundada no ano de 1540 e logo em 1549 a Ordem estabelecia uma missão nos limites geográficos da actividade do Padroado Português, no Brasil e no Japão. As informações sobre outras regiões começaram gradualmente a espalhar-se por toda a Europa, num fluxo em que a experiência no Extremo Oriente, especialmente no Japão, foi tomada como exemplo a ser seguido por outras missões da campanha jesuíta. O objetivo deste artigo é refletir sobre alguns aspectos dessa dinâmica, considerando os casos de Juan de Azpilicueta no Brasil e de Francisco Xavier na Ásia, missionários que eram parentes e pioneiros da atividade jesuíta nas respectivas regiões. Para isso, analisa-se algumas cartas de sua autoria como outras nas quais ambos surgem mencionados. Por causa do seu relacionamento consanguíneo e do trabalho que promoveram, o padre Navarro que trabalhava no Brasil foi descrito como se tratasse de um outro Francisco Xavier do Oriente. Como a experiência de Xavier foi exaltada por toda a Companhia de Jesus, e algumas das suas características foram reconhecidas em Navarro, este artigo parte da ideia de que um modo de proceder estava a ser suportada pela Ordem, ou, pelo menos, por aqueles que trabalhavam em territórios não europeus.

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要旨

イエズス会は1540年に創設された。その後1549年になるとすぐに、同修道会は、ポルトガル布教保護権を根拠とする活動に関する地理的制限内、ブラジルそして日本にて宣教を開始した。イエズス会の布教運動における極東アジア、特に日本での経験が他の地域での布教活動の好例となり、ヨーロッパ外の地域に関する情報は、徐々にヨーロッパ全体に広がるに至る。本研究では、親戚関係であり、担当地域における布教開拓者であった兩人、つまりは、ブラジルでのファン・デ・アズビクエルタの布教活動さらに東洋でのフランシスコ・ザビエルの布教活動について考察する。この目的のために、兩人たちが記したいくつかの書簡および他の書簡であって両者について言及のある書簡を分析する。彼らの血縁関係、さらには、彼らが展開した布教活動を言及したノブレガの記述が残存する。そこには、ナバロ神父はブラジルにて、まるでもう一人のザビエルであるかのように働いていた、と書かれている。ザビエルの経験はさまざまな地域のイエズス会によって高められ、ザビエルの布教活動での特徴がナバロの布教の進め方にも認められる。本稿では、特定の布教の進め方がイエズス会全体とは言わずとも、少なくとも現場で布教に携わる人々により奨励されていたことを検証する。

Keywords

Society of Jesus; Jesuits; Evangelization; Brazil; Japan.

Companhia de Jesus; Jesuítas; Evangelização; Brasil; Japão.

イエズス会、イエズス会士、福音伝道、ブラジル、日本

The religious campaign was one of the crucial elements of the expansionist project of the Iberian crowns during the 16th century. In this scenario, the Society of Jesus gained special prominence within the Portuguese empire. Having only been founded in 1540, the new religious group was rapidly absorbed into the Portuguese Patronage, and as soon as 1549 some of its members could be found in its geographic limits of action: Brazil and Japan. Overall, given the embryonic stage and the reduced number of individuals involved, the missionaries sent to these missions had a similar background and an equivalent educational formation. Nevertheless, the geographical dimension to which the missionary campaign came to be spread could only imply that their rules would need to have some flexibility, being adaptable to the distinct realities encountered. In this sense, considering the circumstances the Jesuits had to face could not be predicted from Europe, the evangelization was largely dependent on the missionaries' individual position when working directly in the field.

In this context, even if in a different pace, the news from the various territories started to circulate in Europe. From the repercussion some cases came to achieve, through this flow the Society of Jesus started to promote the experience of some missionaries as a model to be followed in other missions. At the beginning, the experience of the Jesuits in Far East Asia, especially in Japan, was identified as a positive example within the Jesuit evangelization campaign. Seen in these terms, it became a model to be pursued, inclusively by those missionaries in Brazil. From this dynamic, what this paper seeks is to analyse some aspects of the activity of Juan de Azpilicueta Navarro (1522/23-1557) in Brazil and of Francis Xavier (1506-1552) in Asia.

These two priests had in common not only their consanguineous relation but also the fact that they were at the same time pioneers of the Jesuit activity in the respective regions. Even though they had no evident contact with one another and that there were no orientations in this regard, it is curious to notice that both came to explore a similar strategy of work. Their connection and experience might help us to visualize the panorama of the Society of Jesus in her embryonic stage, as what were the new strategies and struggles faced within the evangelization project of the Order. For this analysis, were selected letters written by Navarro and Xavier, besides other documents in which they were mentioned.

Francis Xavier was one of Society of Jesus' founders, group that had as leader Ignacio de Loyola and was first organized at the University of Paris in 1534. Around this same period – more precisely from 1538 to 1555 –, Doctor Martin de Azpilicueta Navarro (1492-1586) was teaching at the University of Coimbra. He was not only Xavier's relative as also one of the most prominent humanists in Portugal. In fact, a grandfather of Doctor Navarro, named Miguel de Azpilicueta, was the brother of Juan de Azpilicueta, the great-grandfather of Francis Xavier through his mother, Maria de Azpilicueta.² Even not being a member of the Society of Jesus Dr. Navarro was in direct contact with the Jesuits, relationship demonstrated by his role as mentor of other priests as Manuel da Nóbrega (1517-1570), who would become first Superior and Provincial of the Jesuit mission in Brazil. From his side, Father Navarro, as Juan de Azpilicueta was recognized, was among the first group of Jesuits to arrive in Brazil, having distinguished himself by rapidly learning the indigenous language. Coming from the kingdom of Navarre, he was a member of the Azpilicueta family, therefore a relative of Francis Xavier, whose mother was Maria Azpilicueta Aznares.

These three individuals, connected by their blood and name, were all involved with the academic environment and the religious work – even if in different levels. Connections that reinforce that these activities were carried out by a privileged group, influencing the profile of the entities involved.

The life of Juan de Azpilicueta in Brazil is less known than of Xavier in Asia, who would later become the 'Apostle of the Orient'. Even though their relationship is uncertain, it is clear both came from the noble family of the Reign of Navarre, the Azpilicueta. Juan de

² Lucena 1959; Lucena 1989.

Azpilicueta was born around 1522-1523. Being nephew of Dr. Martin Navarro, he moved to Coimbra in 1540. He joined the Society of Jesus in 1542, same year of the foundation of the Jesuit College in Coimbra and of the arrival of Xavier in Goa. In 1549, he departure together with the first group of Jesuits sent to Brazil. What this highlights is the fact that even though both had no direct contact with one another, Juan de Azpilicueta Navarro and Francis Xavier counted with a strong bond that connected them to one of the most important centres of the Jesuit activity in Portugal.³

Francis Xavier, born as Francisco Jasso in 1506, was son of Juan de Jasso y Atondo, president of the Royal Conceal of Navarre, who participated in the conflict which led to the annexation of the Reign of Navarre into the Castilian Crown (1512-1515). After his father's death, Xavier engaged in his journey to a religious life and to a higher education. Moving to Paris in 1525 he entered the Santa Barbara College, where he met Ignacio de Loyola and the other companions who would form the new religious order. The creation of the new group around the purpose of serving the Pope in complete obedience conducted Xavier to Rome, where he arrived in 1538. Francis Xavier went to Portugal after king John III requested some Jesuits to promote the evangelizing campaign in the Indies, what he did through his ambassador Pedro de Mascarenhas (1470-1555).⁴ Having arrived in Lisbon in 1540, the priest was sent to Goa along with other missionaries right in 1541, reaching the territory in 1542.

Considering these priests were not only relatives but also the pioneers of the Jesuit activity in the respective missions, it is curious to notice that both came to explore a similar way of proceeding even though they were in completely distinct regions and had no contact with one another - even while still in Europe. Facing a dimension with no precedent, this juncture is an example of some of the characteristics of this first phase of opening of the world in a global scale, process which had the Catholic missionaries as one of its main intermediators. Considering that the circulation of the Jesuit epistolography through Europe, America, and Asia would take years, it is quite representative that some elements were common to distinct missions, even if they could not be predicted in advance. What is to say, the Jesuits encountered a wide range of cultures and populations but, even with this diversity, it is possible to identify a convergence in their work.

From this flow, acknowledging the achievements narrated by Francis Xavier in Asia and the exceptional work of Azpilicueta Navarro in America, Manuel da Nóbrega, who was then Superior of the Jesuit mission in Brazil, described that Father Navarro worked in Brazil as if he was another Xavier in the missions of the Orient. This register reflects the echoes of the religious activity in the non-European territories, in the 'head' and other

³ In 1542, Father Simão Rodrigues founded the Jesuit College in Coimbra, institution that became a common interlocutor of the missionaries outside Europe. Paiva, Bernardes and Mote 2013.

⁴ Lopes 2003.

'arms' of the Society of Jesus campaign.⁵ This statement illustrates how these different pieces were still considered as part of the same project, and how they also constituted a long and intense process of consolidation of identities and of a global consciousness around the world. In this perspective, it seems fruitful to consider these two realities under the same light to reflect on the role both held within the evangelizing project of the Society of Jesus.

The Order was created embedded in the Counter-Reformation of the Catholic Church, which was a response to the Protestant Reformation. In this environment, the Society of Jesus attributed to herself the vows of discipline and unconditional devotion to the Church, ideas that were reinforced by the Council of Trent.⁶ Responding directly to the Holy See, it is understandable that by this time the Jesuit work was immersed in the values and framework defended by the Council in Europe. What means that even being a young group with some openness to new strategies of work, from the issues raised at the period, the Jesuit action and discourse remained in a large part attached to a Eurocentric perception of the world. But the experience outside Europe gave to the missionaries the possibility to be confronted with completely distinct realities, what inevitably made to flourish new concerns and demands.

In what concerns the new strategies that came to be implemented, in different territories we can recognize missionaries who demonstrated not only a distinct talent but also disposition to learn the indigenous languages, as others who tried to adapt their behavior and style in order to follow the precepts of the local culture. But, this kind of initiative was organic precisely in the attitude of those missionaries working outside Europe, as it was an approach that only could flourish in a completely different context from the one of their origin. However, even if the image of the Society of Jesus was fed as being an engine in perfect function,⁷ these strategies were not unanimously explored by all missionaries, never truly achieving a uniformity of their practice. Within this scenario, the analysis of the cases of Navarro and Xavier might be an interesting contribution to reflect on some aspects of the new methodical spirit that was being shaped by the Jesuits.

From the 16th century, the expansionist project of the Iberian crowns was promptly accompanied by the missionary campaign unrolled inside and outside Europe. Indeed, the promotion of the Catholic Church was one of the main ambitions of both the Portuguese and the Spanish empires. It was an intrinsic element of the expansion, serving not only

5 The headquarter of the Order in Rome and Portugal represent the 'head' and the distinct non-European mission the 'arms' of the Jesuit campaign around the world.

6 This ecumenical council was held from 1545 to 1563 in the city of Trent, located in the south of the Holy Roman Empire and northern Italy. The principal motivation was the reconquest of the areas taken by Protestants and a more effective administration of the territories in which they still prevailed. The missionary work inside and outside Europe proved to be an extremely promising tool, and as such it gradually received more investment and support. Proserpi 2008. Gouveia, Barbosa and Paiva 2014.

7 Alden 1996, 229.

religious but also political purposes. As such, the missionaries had to face different strifes consonant a distinct establishment of other Europeans on land and consequently other interests nurtured in the region. In what concerns the Society of Jesus` objectives, from the evangelization of the non-European people, the Order intended to consolidate a universal Church and the mondialisation of Christianity. A subject that was in the essence of the militant church and of the Holy See, which the Jesuits assumed as one of their crucial purposes.⁸

But, even though the distance from Europe gave an opening to the implementation of new approaches, the closeness to the Portuguese empire forced the evangelization to stay in many senses limited and dependent on the Crown. This dependence forced the missionaries not only to accompany and follow the empire`s expansion⁹ but also the imperial project to stay reliant on their presence. since in some regions the missionaries would be the only representatives of Portuguese interests.

As said before, the first Jesuits arrived in Portugal from Rome already with the expectation of being sent to India. Until that moment, the Jesuits only drove their obedience to the Pope`s authority. As such, right after the King`s request, the leader of the Order, Ignatius of Loyola, replied that being of the Pope`s will, they would gladly go wherever it was necessary.

You will understand it from what I shall tell you. We all who are gathered in this Society are offered to the Supreme Pontiff, as he is the lord of the whole harvest of Christ. Through this oblation, we promise to be ready to put all we can to Christ. Thus, if he sends us wherever you invite us to go, we will go gladly. The cause of our resolution, which subjects us to his judgment and will, was to understand that he has greater knowledge of what is convenient for the universal Christianity.¹⁰

The Jesuits` incorporation into the Portuguese expansionist project was a pillar of the new dynamic that was being built, culminating in the shipment of the first Jesuit missionaries to India in 1541 and to Brazil in 1549.¹¹ In this sense, the Catholic Church shared with the Portuguese Crown the leading role both in the construction of the

8 Prosperi 1991; Clossey 2008; Hsia 2018.

9 Barreto 1998, 91.

10 This and the following citations are based on a free translation of the author, being accompanied by the original version in the footnotes. "Compreendereis isto pelo que vou dizer-vos. Todos quantos estamos reunidos nesta Companhia estamos oferecidos ao Sumo Pontífice, pois é o senhor de toda a messe de Cristo. Por esta oblação lhe prometemos estar prontos para tudo quanto dispuser de nós em Cristo. Assim, se ele nos enviar aonde nos convidais, iremos alegremente. A causa desta nossa resolução, que nos sujeita ao seu juízo e vontade, foi entender ter ele maior conhecimento daquilo que convém ao cristianismo universal". Loyola 2006, 66.

11 They accompanied the same fleet of the first General-Governor of Brazil, Tomé de Sousa.

Portuguese Orient,¹² which was a space of great circulation and dispersion, as in the effective administration of Portuguese America. Inevitably, the interests of both the Portuguese Crown and the Catholic Church for many times came to get mixed, counting with more or less convergence in virtue of the individuals that were involved in the enterprise, as we can partly identify from the cases here selected.¹³

The Jesuits established a mission in the Japanese archipelago in the same year that in Brazil, in 1549. These two regions represented the geographical limits of the Portuguese Crown outreach and, consequently, of the Royal Patronage. In fact, the Jesuits for a long time were the only religious group to work simultaneously in America and Far East Asia. Situation that only changed in 1593, precisely when a group of Franciscans entered in Japan making the Jesuits lose the monopoly they held until that moment – even though a few Franciscans went to Brazil since 1500, they never properly settled a mission before the Jesuits arrival. Being regions of great interest but that offered many obstacles, the priests came to often perform a role that extrapolated the catechesis and the conversion of the native people. This situation came to generate many disturbances, ending to reinforce the need to explore and defend new strategies for the evangelization, what was being taken individually by some missionaries, as it was the case of Juan de Azpilicueta and Francis Xavier.

What is to say, even if this methodical spirit is recognized as an essence of the Society of Jesus action around the world, the experience shows that this opening was not supported by the whole group, being much more result of a personal inquietude. In both territories, the Jesuits came to expand their activity beyond the lands where the Portuguese community was established or present. In such new and distant regions some priests were able to act in a radically different way from those who were working exclusively in Europe or among Europeans. After all, the farther the missionaries were, the less they were monitored.

The Portuguese began to act in the American territory since 1500, but it was only in the 1530s, with the division of hereditary captaincies,¹⁴ that a real effort was made to occupy and administer the region. However, with still limited interests and resources, the exploration of the territory was under the responsibility of the captains who received the donation of the captaincy. The Portuguese Crown started to effectively administer these lands only in 1549, with the institution of the General Government of Brazil. In front of the interests that aroused in the territory and the closeness to Portugal, we can identify in Brazil a genuine colonial experience. Thus, the missionaries had to deal with the establishment of a Portuguese community and with the political mechanisms that were

¹² Flores 1998, 33.

¹³ Aiming to develop a wide analyses of the Society of Jesus activity from edges of the Portuguese Patronage authority that I concluded my Ph.D. thesis in 2018, having as specific subject the Jesuit mission in Brazil and Japan during the 16th century and the prominence of the missionaries in what regard the evangelization in these territories. Boscarriol 2018.

¹⁴ Wehling 2005; Frago and Gouvêa 2014.

being organized to administrate the territory. Even so, the Portuguese presence in the region was almost entirely restricted to part of the Brazilian coast, gradually expanding to the countryside due to the missionaries' intents.

In the other hand, the first time the Portuguese arrived in Japan occurred in 1543. The news about the territory soon began to circulate in Asia, arousing much attention, but still took a long time before reaching Europe. The first voyage deliberately organized to the archipelago was made in 1549, having been carried out by merchants and the Jesuit group led by Francis Xavier. In any event, the missionaries were the only ones to travel with the intention of getting established in Japanese lands, taking into consideration the merchants and the ship's crew would only temporarily stay.

In Japan, there was no administrative control from the Portuguese Crown. Even from India, it was not possible to manage or control what was happening in the territory. Nor would the Japanese population and the political scene of the territory to allow the Europeans to conquer their space by force or imposition. These circumstances made the priests to strictly follow the Japanese rules. In the archipelago, they would be the ones to be firmly controlled and policed. Officially, at the beginning, what was taking place in Japan was under the authority of the Portuguese administration in Goa, through the Portuguese Patronage and the State of India,¹⁵ with no direct contact with Portugal. In its turn, in Brazil, there was a direct connection with the kingdom and, consequently, with the European colleges of the Society of Jesus. What is to say, from the American territory, the communication with the members of the Order in Europe was much more direct, condition that made the supervision over what happened in the mission much more effective.¹⁶

Even if the religious campaign was an inseparable element of the expansionist project it was formed by not many individuals and limited territories. Furthermore, the missionaries did not count with much experience to guide the evangelization, having no stable space to properly develop the mission. What is to say, the first Jesuits formed a small group that had little practical experience. The father Juan de Azpilicueta Navarro went to Brazil not only with the first group of Jesuits but also the first group of Christian religious to properly settle and develop the evangelization in its lands. At the beginning, the priests were concentrated in Salvador, capital of the new General-Government and place where the most part of the Portuguese community was fixed. Navarro was also a pioneer in virtue of his abilities with the indigenous language, a complete novelty at that moment. But gradually, during his seven years in Brazilian lands, the priest started to work more intensively with the villages that surrounded Salvador, having after moved to Porto Seguro

¹⁵ The State of India is a term that appears in the middle of the sixteenth century. It encompasses all territories, individuals, establishments and products under Portuguese authority in the Orient. That is to say, it did not determine a well-defined geographic area, but rather a sea route, whose establishments remained essentially along the coast. Thomaz 1994, 207.

¹⁶ About the Jesuit mission in Japan, see Laures 1957. Elisonas 1991. Bourdon 1993. About the Jesuit mission in Brazil, see Couto 1992. Metcalf 2014. Montero 2006.

and later more into the hinterlands. Getting distance from the Portuguese, he found more space to work with the indigenous people, what apparently was one of his main objectives.

In India, Francis Xavier was the pioneer of the Society of Jesus, but there already was some activity of other religious groups. Certainly, the approach he made to the locals was different from the previous one, and this distinction signaled many options the Jesuits would make in and outside Europe. But in Japan there was no preceding Catholic activity, a territory that until 1542/3 was unknown by the Europeans. In this region, Xavier was not only the first to introduce the Christian precepts and to start the bases for the evangelization, but he also started to propose new strategies of work that not even in other territories of Asia were considered.

As in the case of Father Navarro, we are talking about a gradual evolvement of the missionary's individual work that is directly related to a gradual distance from European settlements. Not long after he explored the Indian territory, Xavier went to Malacca (1545), Moluccas (1546), returned to India, and later went to Japan, where a mission was founded in 1549. Not having spent many years in the archipelago, the priest went on a voyage to China in 1551 motivated by the purpose of founding a Chinese mission. But he died in the island of Shangchuan (*Sanchuão*) afterwards, in 1552. One acted for almost ten years in Asia and the other one only seven years in Brazil, but both, for their skills and disposition, left deep marks in the mission and in the evangelization to be carried out by other missionaries.

Francis Xavier achieved such a projection and recognition that he became known as the 'Apostle of the Orient', even though the priest had not shown the same interest for the mission in India or other localities in comparison to the one in Japan. The priest's experience reinforces that the development of the mission was largely dependent on the personal attitude of the missionary, considering most part of their work would be subject to his individual interests and character. In the other edge of the Portuguese Patronage's route, Father Navarro had a completely different experience as he worked exclusively in Brazil, even though he was dealing with a very extensive territory and a great variety of tribes and languages.

It was from the foundation of the Brazilian mission that the Society of Jesus campaign was unrolled at the same time in four continents, always seeking to manage and to soften the disparity among the missions founded and sustained. However, in this scenario, was predictable the emergence of different methods of work, and the missionaries were struggling to sustain a cohesive evangelization action. As a rule, the priests eventually exploited the customs and local knowledge - language, tastes, symbols - in the contact with the indigenous, but without completely marginalizing the knowledge, techniques, and conceptions brought from Europe. Being so, the adoption of this kind of strategy by the missionaries came to be explored in distinct ways, what promoted different and new forms of interaction. This was inevitable as the characteristics of the local culture differed considerably from one another, including the elements of the native language, as mentioned before. At the same time that in Japan they encountered a single language and

a written system – which was completely strange and of great difficulty to be learned but enabled them to use texts and books for the catechesis –, in Brazil the missionaries came across a considerable variety of tribes of exclusive oral tradition.

Thus, while in the American territory the priests concentrated their work on preaching through oral communication, in Japan the missionaries came to increasingly explore the translation and the publishing of texts about the doctrine, material that came to be used in the colleges and seminars that were built from the 1580's. With no doubts, the investment and concernment on learning the native language was an important element of the Brazilian mission, but among the missionaries was growing a resistance to it and to get proximity to the indigenous, initiatives that were seen as derogatory and a less edifying work.¹⁷ It doesn't mean the Jesuits didn't work to translate and publish any material in Brazil, only that the possibility of its use was much more restricted. In the first steps of the Japanese mission, right on November 5, 1549, Father Francis Xavier wrote:

Here we are not surprised that some Christians have been made, and as many of them know how to read, and write, so they learn the prayers: please to God our Lord to give us the language, so thus we can talk with them about the things of God, because then we will make much fruition with his help, grace, and favor. Now we are among them as statues: as they speak and practice many of our things, and we stay quiet for not understanding the language. And now we must be like boys to learn the language.¹⁸

In other words, the priest realized that to convert the Japanese the missionaries needed to learn the language better. It was the only way they could be able to preach appropriately and with fewer misinterpretations. For this purpose, they should be in Japan as children, willing to learn the correct way to speak and behave. In another fragment, referring directly to the printing of books, Xavier continued to write:

It seems that this winter we will be busy making a statement about the articles of the faith in the language of Japan, somewhat copious, to make it prints, because every principal people knows how to read and write, so that our holy faith may be understood, and it spreads to many parts, because we cannot go to all of them. Paul, our dearest brother, will faithfully translate into his language all that is necessary for the salvation of their souls.¹⁹

17 Charlotte de Castelnau L'Estoile 2006.

18 "Ca não estranhão agora fazeremse Christãos, & como grande parte delles sabem ler, e escrever, asinha aprendem as orações: prazera a Deos nosso Sñor darnos lingoa, para lhes poder falar de cousas de Deos, porque então faremos muito fruto com a sua ajuda, graça, e fauor. Agora somos antre elles como húas estatuas: porque falão & praticão de nos muitas cousas, e nosoutros por não entender a lingoa nos calamos. E agora nos cumpre ser como meninos em aprender a lingoa [...]." Garcia 1997, 12v.

19 "Pareceme que este inuerno nos occuparemos em fazer húa declaração sobre os Artigos da fé em lingoa de Iapam, algum tanto copiosa, para a fazer imprimir, pois toda agente principal sabe ler & escrever, para que se entenda nossa santa fé, & se estenda por muitas partes, pois a todas

Facing this situation, Francis Xavier identified that the printing of texts could serve to better spread the Christian message, as the "main people" of the land, to whom they promptly began to dedicate their work, generally could read and write.

In a completely different position, Manuel da Nóbrega assumed that the indigenous of Brazil had a lack of knowledge, of religion, and culture – at least from what was understood by the missionaries as such. This condition kept the indigenous in a state of a 'blank paper', in the sense the priests could fill them and do whatever they consider it would be more convenient for the mission. As the priest stated, "[...] Few letters would suffice here, because everything is blank paper, and there is no need to do anything else, but write down the virtues most necessary to be zealous on the Creator of these creatures to be known [...]".²⁰ Vision widely shared by other missionaries to act in the region. In this perspective, Father Azpilicueta Navarro made a clear distinction within the Brazilian mission between the evangelization of the indigenous people and the work to be carried out with the Portuguese community in the territory. About this, he wrote to the Jesuits in Coimbra, in 1550:

[...] that should come priests to cover the necessities of these parts, mainly of this gentility, in which would make fruit those who love very much the charity and chastity, without many letters, that little is necessary among them, having the two above mentioned virtues, with physical strength to attend to the distant necessities. Notwithstanding this, the letters are very necessary among the Christians [...].²¹

Thus, as the priest attested, what was most important to the mission in Brazil were missionaries with many virtues and strength, since these were the most necessary qualifications for the work with the Indians in the villages. The missionaries considered the use of many "letters" in the evangelization among the indigenous as a waste, as this element would be better explored among the Christian community concentrated in the urban centers.

This understanding was opposed to the one manifested by Francis Xavier, who wrote to Ignatius of Loyola from Cochin, in January 1552:

não podemos acudir. Paulo nosso carissimo irmão tresladará em sua lingoa fielmente tudo o que he necessario para saluação de suas almas." *Ibidem*, 15.

20 "[...] Poucas letras bastariam aqui, porque tudo é papel branco, e não ha que fazer outra cousa, sinão escrever á vontade as virtudes mais necessarias a ter zelo em que seja conhecido o Creador destas suas creaturas [...]". Nóbrega 1931, 94.

21 "[...] que viniessen los Padres para abrangir a las necesidades destas partes, principalmente desta gentilidad, en la qual arán fructo los que aman mucho la charidad y castidad, sin muchas letras, que poco son necessarias entre ellos, teniendo las dos sobredichas virtudes, com fuerças corporeales para acudir a las necesidades distantes. No obstante esto, son muy necessarias las letras para entre christianos [...]". Leite 1956, 185.

I write to Father M. Simão, and in his absence to the Rector of the College of Coimbra, that he does not send from there people to these Universities, unless they are approved and seen by your holy charity [...] In order to answer their questions we need letters, mainly good Artists, and those who are Sophists will soon be taken in contradiction. These Bonzes run to react when they are caught in a contradiction, or when they do not know how to answer [...].²²

With this communication, Xavier asked the provincial of Portugal to send to Japan highly capable individuals, preferably those with ‘many letters’, who should arrive in the archipelago already prepared to learn the Japanese language and to face the disputes with the bonzes. In the territory, the Buddhist monks were the Jesuit’s direct rivals.

Indeed, in Japan, the priests intended to assume many of the activities that hitherto were carried out by the bonzes, such as the teaching of the boys and the events promoted with the *daymio*.²³ Also in correspondence with the priests and brothers of Coimbra, Father Navarro wrote about the work he was developing in Brazil, from Salvador, in 1551:

After this, with the permission of Father Nóbrega, I went to another village of one hundred and fifty fires, and I gathered the boys together, and I gave them the doctrine in their own language. Here I found some very skilled and of such capacity, that well taught and indoctrinated we could make great fruit with the gentility, for which we have much necessity of a college in this Baya to teach the children of the Indians; we already have some and they would give us more if we had the possibility to pick them up and sustain them, that the land to be newly populated it cannot be done [...] This college will not only be good to gather the children of the Gentiles and of the Christians, to teach and to doctrine them, but also for the peace and tranquility of the land and profit of the republic.²⁴

In this fragment is registered the existence of schools created to serve the education of the children in the Brazilian lands. It was in these spaces where the missionaries putted

22 “Eu escreuo ao padre M. Simão, & em sua ausencia ao Reitor do Collegio de Coimbra, que não mande de lá pessoas a estas Vniuersidades, senam aprouadas & vistas por vossa santa caridade [...] Para responder a suas perguntas são necessarias letras, principalmente bõs Artistas, & os que forem Sophistas tomaloshão logo em contradiçam manifesta. Corrêse muito estes Bonzos quando os tomão em contradição, ou quãdo não sabem responder.” Carta do padre mester Frãisco, para o padre Mestre Inacio de Loyola. De Cochim a 19. De Ianeiro, de 1552. Garcia 1997, 21v-22.

23 This term literally means great lord, being commonly correlated in the historiography with the figure of the Feudal Lord in Europe.

24 “Despues desto com licencia del Padre Nóbrega me fuy a outra aldea de ciento y cincuenta fuegos, y hize ayuntar los muchachos, y hizeles la doctrina en su propria lengua. Hallé algunos aqui muy hábiles y de tal capacidad, que bien enseñados y doctrinados podían hazer mucho fructo en la gentilidad, para lo qual tenemos mucha necesidad de un collegio en esta Baya para enseñar los hijos de los Indios; ya algunos tenemos y nos darían más si tuviésemos posibilidad para recogerlos y sustentarlos, que la tierra por ser nuevamente poblada aún no lo puede hazer. [...] Este collegio no solamente será bueno para recoger los hijos de los gentiles y christianos, para los enseñar y doctrinar, mas también para paz y sossiego de la tierra y provecho de la república.” Leite 1956, 281.

mostly of their hope in what concerns the future and success of the mission. Navarro defended that a good work within the colleges would not only be positive for the conversion of the indigenous children but also for the appeasement of the conflicts lived in the territory, what could even facilitate the evolution and government of the land.

Looking to create an approximation to the autochthonous, the missionaries had to value some of the local characteristics, even though they were still trying to make them more European. The case of Japan was quite peculiar, where the local customs and culture caused much strangeness but also could be comprehensible through their eyes, in the sense it could be compared to the own European structure – a rigid hierarchical society, a writing system, a religion, an economic and governmental structure. This recognition made some level of adaptation to be last conflictive, or at least more acceptable – after a few decades, China came to be the most exceptional case in what concerns the use of the cultural accommodation strategy within the Society of Jesus activity.

Nevertheless, even with such remarkable differences, both Brazil and Japan would be the first territories where the missionaries effectively explored this method of work.²⁵ Even considering that Francis Xavier passed through numerous regions in Asia, it was in Japanese lands where the priest understood the missionaries should adapt their behavior to the local culture and be in accordance to the Japanese code. In the year 1551, two years after his arrival in the archipelago, Xavier tried to visit the *daimyo* Ōuchi Yoshitaka. Since the priest had no success in a first attempt, he organized another visit, this time dressed richly and with more refinement. With this move, he intended to cause a better impression in the Japanese leader since the simple Jesuit habit did not have such a good impact. This event would concretely mark the first steps of the adaptation to the local culture in Japan, method that would be gradually consolidated as the guiding principle of the Japanese mission.

The main name in what concerns the effort to adapt the preaching and bringing the evangelization closer to the natives in Brazil was of Nóbrega. Even so, in this matter, Father Navarro was the one who achieved prominence putting it into practice, especially since, among his peers, he had exceptional communication skills with the indigenous and worked directly in the villages. As it was described by Father Vicente Rodrigues in a letter written to the priests and brothers in Coimbra, in 1552:

[...] Fr. Navarro was in charge of the children, so to teach them on the spiritual as on the reading and writing and on the prayers in the language, so to the whites as *mamelucos* and Indians, with who he goes through the Villages of the Indians preaching to them the law of the Lord: some of them declare the Gospel in the language with much edification of all, and this during Sundays and festivities [...].²⁶

²⁵ Costa 1998, 124.

²⁶ “[...] el P. Navarro tenía cargo de los niños, así para los doctrinar en lo spiritual como en leer y escribir y en las oraciones de la lengua, así a los blancos como *mamalucos* y Indios, con los quales

Although in a very different way from Xavier, since Juan de Azpilicueta never had the same kind of authority over the mission, the priest contributed to lay the foundations of the work that would be developed by those who already were or would come to the territory. In fact, due the evangelization carried among the indigenous for several times the Jesuits in Brazil came to get into conflict with the Europeans. For the most part, the Portuguese community in the territory did not admit the indigenous could be converted, nurturing, in the other hand, a deep interest in their capture and enslavement.

As signalized before, the two priests lived in the two missions for only a few years, as Xavier died in 1551 and Father Navarro in 1557. Nevertheless, both were determinant to settle the bases of the evangelization in the respective regions, especially in what concerns the relationship the missionaries came to maintain with the indigenous. During this first stage, the Jesuit missionaries in Japan and Brazil implemented convergent proceedings. But what is important to emphasize, rather than the particularities of the adoption of certain methodology, is that, considering the characteristics of their training and their origin, there was a posture somehow organic to the group. After all, they had a common background and, until that moment, the internal scenario of the Order was not much diverse, as can be seen from the cases of Juan de Azpilicueta and Francis Xavier.

Through the approach with love (*via amorosa*), a strategy that privileged the conversion of the indigenous by persuasive and non-coercive means, the priests from this first stage of the Brazilian mission intended to catch the indigenous attention, to attract them into Christianity before being able to actually convert them. This was a common measure among the different missions, but was shaped in a singular way in the American territory given the missionaries understood the indigenous in a lower degree of civility. But there were many obstacles to achieve this goal. They not only faced the struggle to bring the indigenous closer to the European standards, what is to say, to remove from them what was seen as their bad habits and their wild and bestial behavior, as also with the barriers to make them reach a true sensitivity of the foundations of the doctrine. In this impetus, and immersed in the work with the local population, Azpilicueta Navarro and other missionaries sought to adapt part of the ceremonial and preaching to the indigenous manner, so that they would be more attractive and less distant from them.

Supported by these principles, the Jesuits also instituted some colleges to invest in the education of the younger locals, mainly from initiative of Manuel da Nóbrega. In 1570, when Nóbrega died, there already were five schools of elementary studies (Porto Seguro, Ilhéus, Espírito Santo, São Vicente e São Paulo de Piratininga) and three colleges (Rio de Janeiro, Pernambuco and Bahia),²⁷ where they cared specially for their literacy. As Superior of the Brazilian mission, Nóbrega also defended the initiative of making the

sale muchas veces por las Aldeas de los Indios praedicándoles la lei del Señor: algunos dellos declaran el Evangelio por la lengua com mucha edificación de todos, y esto a los domingos y fiestas [...].” Leite 1556, 311.

²⁷ Shigunov Neto and Maciel 2008, 169-189.

conversion as attractive as possible to the natives. As the priest wrote to Simão Rodrigues, in the year 1552:

The children of this house use to sing, in the same tone of the Indians and with their instruments, songs in the language, to praise Our Lord for the hearts of the Indians to be attracted; and so some of the children of the land wore their hair cut in the manner of the Indians, who have very little difference from our customs, and did everything to win them all. The bishop was greatly astonished, and in his first preaching he spoke a lot about the customs of the Gentiles, and all the audience took him for this; and it was so, because he censured me very harshly, nor took the chance to excuse me that there was not rites or customs dedicated to idols, nor they prejudice the Catholic faith.²⁸

In this fragment, the Superior of Brazil reported that the boys of the land (children of the Portuguese) sang in the same tone of the indigenous, using the local instruments and singing in the native language. The priest saw this practice as a positive measure, considering that he did not recognize it as an idolatrous rite nor even as conflicting with Catholicism. In his point of view, it was a legitimate way of stimulating sensitivity in the natives, inciting them to participate in the same practices than the missionaries.

Being first received by members of the Society of Jesus and by the king of Portugal, all this information started to be disseminated from the kingdom to the other territories within the Jesuit campaign, inside and outside Europe. For example, in this flow, in another letter written by Nóbrega in 1549, the priest referred to what was occurring in Asia.

(Juan de Azpilicueta Navarro) takes advantage on us all, that our Lord seems to have made a special grace to the nation of Navarre, to attend the infidels like Master Francis in the other Indies of the King of Portugal and this Father in the lands of Brazil: where he runs with so much fervor from one land to another, that seems to embrace the mountains with the fire of charity [...].²⁹

What we can observe from this fragment are elements that manifest the existence of a connection and circulation among the various missions. It was the 'fire' to embrace the

28 "Os meninos desta casa costumavam cantar, pelo mesmo tom dos índios e com seus instrumentos, cantigas na língua, em louvor de Nosso Senhor com que se muito atraíam os corações dos índios; e assim alguns meninos da terra traziam o cabelo cortado à maneira dos índios, que têm muito pouca diferença do nosso costume, e faziam tudo para a todos ganharem. Estranhou-o muito o Bispo, e na primeira pregação falou nos costumes dos gentios muito largo, por donde todo o auditório o tomou por isso; e foi assim, porque a mim o repreendeu mui asperamente, nem aproveitou escusar-me que não eram ritos nem costumes dedicados a ídolos, nem que prejudicassem a fé católica." Leite 1940, 32.

29 "(Juan de Azpilicueta Navarro) a todos nos leva vantagem, que parece Nosso Senhor ter feito especial graça à nação de Navarra, em acudir aos infieis como fazem Mestre Francisco nas outras Indias do Rei de Portugal e este Padre nas terras do Brasil: onde corre com tanto fervor de uma terra á outra, que parece abraçar os montes com o fogo da charidade." Nóbrega 1931, 93.

challenges with which they were confronted and the disposition to, in such distant and unknown regions, go across all lands seeking to attend and convert the infidels. With this narrative, Nóbrega registered that the priests in Brazil had received some information about the great fruits reported by the missionaries from India. In fact, when he wrote this letter the mission of Japan not even existed. Furthermore, even after they were established in Japan, it would take some time to the first news regarding the mission to be received by the members of the Order in Europe. In any case, the experience of the missionaries in the 'other Indies' was seen as a positive example and an inspiration to be followed by other missions. It quickly became a reference and a stimulus to the difficulties faced elsewhere.

From their consanguineous relationship, Nóbrega claimed that the Kingdom of Navarre received great grace considering both, Juan de Azpilicueta in Brazil and Xavier in Japan, achieved great projection in the respective missions. Thus, the accomplishments of Father Francis Xavier in the 'other Indies of the king of Portugal' started to be promoted even in Brazil, being consolidated as one of the solidest examples to be imitated.

On January 17, 1555, at the College of Bahia of the Province of Brazil was the death of Fr. João Aspilcueta Navarro, a relative of Francis Xavier, and true imitator of his virtues. He entered the Society in Coimbra already a priest, and having reached the Mission of Brazil shortly after finishing the Novitiate, he worked in that new world with such an Apostolic zeal that he seemed to be another Xavier in the missions of the East. The Fr. Jozé de Anchieta praised him as a fervent missionary, who not satisfied with the great fruit, which he made in the Villages of the Indians, he entered in the *sertão* [hinterland] on foot more than 200 leagues by mountains, by bushes, and by *brendas*, taking a great number of Gentiles converted to our holy faith [...].³⁰

Portugal was the first to receive all this information, as well as other people and products coming to Europe from other territories, starting to spread them from the kingdom to the rest of the continent. A substantial part of the news to reach Europe were filtered by the Jesuits, circumstance from which it is necessary to consider that the missionaries' narrative was not only influenced by the specific instruction received within the group but also by their own individual experience.

From the moment Francis Xavier was everywhere exalted, a way of acting started to be assumed as more beneficial to the religious enterprise unrolled outside Europe than others. But, even though the missions from Far East Asia were in some sense assumed

30 "Aos 17 de janeiro de 1555 no Coll^o. Da Bahia da Provincia do Brazil foi a saudoza morte do P. João Asplicuelta Navarro, parente de el Francisco Xavier, e verdradr^o. Imitador de suas virtudes. Entrou na Comp^a em Coimbra já Jacerdote, e alcançando a Missão do Brazil pouco depoes de acabar o Noviciado, trabalhou naquelle novo mundo com tão Apostolico zelo, q parecia outro Xavier nas missões do Oriente. O V. P. Jozé de Anchieta o louvava de fervorozo Missionario, q não se contentando com o grande frutto, q fazia nas Aldeas dos Indios, entrou pello Jertão a pé mais de 200 legoas por ferras, por mattos, e por brendas, tornando com grande numero de gentios convertidos à nossa Janta fe [...]." ARSI. Inventarium ARSI - P.I. Ass. Et Prov. Provincia Brasiliensis et Maragnonensis. 13 - Menologio I [ian.-iun.].

as a model to be followed by the Jesuit campaign in a broader perspective, a successful experience to be sought by the missionaries from other missions, this do not mean they only had good accomplishments in their evangelizing efforts.

Still, even in missions that were seen with less prestige there were missionaries who were well evaluated by the Order, as can be seen from the case of Juan de Azpilicueta Navarro in Brazil. This recognition was mainly due to the work they promoted with the local population, what remained the fundamental purpose among the priests of this first phase of the Jesuit activity. In any case, even though the conversion of the indigenous prevailed as the core of the Japanese mission, at least until the persecution and expulsion edicts started to be released, it increasingly lost ground in Brazil. This matter remained as the primary objective of some missionaries, but many of them came to be isolated in their goals and without much support.

Nevertheless, the fact is that in the first steps of both missions we can recognize an openness to the autochthonous world, as demonstrated by the experience of Navarro and Xavier – even considering that this was a way to get what they sought and not an end in itself. The other spheres that encompassed the Jesuit campaign inevitably caused a direct impact on what could be done by the missionaries in the various territories. Apart from the administration of the Order itself, this dynamic was what promoted a connection among regions that until that moment had no direct contact with one another.

These two realities showed to be very dissimilar experiences of the missionary work, but both were part of the same project promoted by the Society of Jesus in and outside Europe. With an emphasis on the Jesuit missions of Brazil and Japan due to their particularities previously mentioned, we might consider that it was partly an opening to the local culture that first conducted the evangelization in these regions – either from its adoption or rejection. These two cases were part of a pioneering movement that exposed the western civilization to other values, which, even that still in a very conditioned way, helped to promote a re-evaluation of the own European culture. In this regard, the experience of Francis Xavier in Asia and of Juan de Azpilicueta Navarro in Brazil are extremely representative of the launching of the Jesuit missionary enterprise and its development in two of the most iconic missions of their formative period.

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