



**Luís Fróis's *História de Japam*:
Aims and Methods**

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Abstract

The focus of the thesis is the work of the Portuguese Jesuit missionary Luís Fróis (1532-97). It refutes the view of the historiography that has considered his *magnum opus* the *História de Japam*, produced between 1584-93, as bona fide and as one of the most reliable sources on the basis that he was often either a protagonist or an eyewitness of the events that he relates. As it will be shown in this work, Fróis is selective in the manner in which he deletes, adds or avoids facts, or simply creates narratives purposefully composing an edifying account. Fróis takes the opportunity to put forward his view of the mission by fusing history and sacred rhetoric, such as the use of rhetorical devices, to elevate the volume of the message that had previously been recorded in the Jesuits' correspondence, or sometimes silencing it completely. For this reason, I argue that Fróis should be considered not only the first historian of the mission, but also the first editor of the history of the Japanese mission by writers who took part in the evangelisation of this country. Through the reading of Fróis's *História* there is an underlying theme of the 'opposite cultures' between Japan and Europe. This is not so much born out of a fascination with a very different culture, as some historians have alluded, but my readings are rather that it serves in justifying the Jesuit's controversial method of accommodation implemented at the time in the archipelago. It also signals to a belief of the incommensurability between these cultures, reflecting on a decrease in the dialogue and the beginning of an increase in the distancing between these societies.

In the *História* anything that is controversial or could depict the missionaries in a bad light is avoided or minimised; the Jesuits' errors are usually blamed on their enemies. The theme of diabolism is closely analysed, and it is concluded that it serves rhetorically to exonerate the missionaries' failings and as a reflection of a true conviction in the sixteenth century of the Devil's presence among pagans.

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Introduction

One aspect of the remarkable overseas expansion of the monarchies of Portugal and Spain during the sixteenth century was the global spread of Christianity. From 1455, the papal bull *Romanus pontifex* entitled the Portuguese kings to be in charge of the administration of ecclesiastical affairs of the new lands, the *padroado real* (royal patronage).¹ The task of evangelisation fell mainly to religious orders, such as the mendicant friars whose organisation, unlike the monastic orders, allowed them to mobilise their members following in the footsteps of traders and sailors that departed from Lisbon.² A renewed impetus to convert other cultures by the Portuguese crown in the 1540s coincided with the formation of the Society of Jesus.³ The Jesuits had barely been approved as a religious order when one of its founders, the Navarrese Francis Xavier (1506-52), departed for India in 1541 as papal nuncio in the East.⁴ That year Japan had not yet been confirmed to have been reached by a known European, and he would be the first Catholic clergyman to reach its shores in 1549.⁵ With more Jesuits arriving to the *Estado da Índia*, a body of letters from these so-called proto-anthropologists or proto-ethnographers began to reach Europe, describing their cross-cultural encounters, many to then be published for an avid readership.⁶ This body of

¹ Granted by Pope Nicholas V to King Afonso V of Portugal in 1455, see Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, 'Ecclesiastical Structures and Religious Actions' in *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion, 1400-1800*, ed. by Francisco Bethencourt and Diogo Ramada Curto (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 257.

² Secular priests also travelled to the newly discovered lands but were few in number.

³ It is worth to highlight that the Jesuits used 'Company of Jesus' which emphasised, as mentioned by Hugh Cagle, 'the centralization of the order, bureaucratic character, clear stratification, and direct lines of communication' see Hugh Cagle, *Assembling the Tropics: Science and Medicine in Portugal's Empire, 1450-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), p. 23. On the origins of the Society of Jesus see John W. O'Malley S.J., *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge MA: Cambridge University, 1993). See also James Brodrick, S.J., *The Origin of the Jesuits* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1997); James Brodrick, S.J., *St Ignatius of Loyola: The Pilgrim Years 1491-1538* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1998); *The Cambridge Companion to the Jesuits* ed. by Thomas Worcester, S.J. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

⁴ By the bull of Pope Paul III *Regimi militantis* (1540). As a papal nuncio Xavier represented the Holy See as an ecclesiastical diplomat in the *Estado da Índia*. Xavier left Lisbon on 7 April 1541, after spending seven months in Mozambique he arrived in Goa on 6 May 1542.

⁵ Together with the Spaniards Cosme de Torres and Juan Fernandes.

⁶ See Joan-Pau Rubiés, 'Ethnography and Cultural Translation in the Early Modern Missions', in *Studies in Church History*, 53 (2017), 272-310. On European encounters with the 'other' see Joan-Pau Rubiés, 'Futility in the New World: Narrative of Travel in Sixteenth-Century America', in *Voyages and Visions: Towards a Cultural History of Travel*, eds. by Jas Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 1999); Mary

literature was written for informative and edifying purposes, but the epistles often written in haste, gave ambiguous accounts and usually managed to perpetuate misconceptions; taken together they could be confusing when several authors wrote contradictory accounts.⁷ As early as 1552, the Portuguese Jesuit Luís Fróis (1532-97) received the order from the vice-provincial of India to write a letter summarising the current state of the mission.⁸ This missive has been considered the first annual letter of the missions, and this style of writing annual summaries by a single editor would be followed later in Japan.⁹

Luís Fróis, however, is best known as the author of his *magnum opus* the *História de Japam* (1549-93), the first of the histories of the Jesuit mission in the archipelago by authors who took part in the Christian evangelisation of this region.¹⁰ Of the other two histories, the first, Alessandro Valignano's (1539-1606) *Principio y Progreso de la Religión Christiana en Japón* was conceived to relate the period from Francis Xavier's arrival in Portugal up to the beginning of the seventeenth century.¹¹ However, Valignano only managed to cover up to the year 1570.¹² João Rodriguez Tçuzu's (c.1562–1634) *Historia da Igreja do Japão* was

B. Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing 400-1600* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988). Also, Luke Clossey has warned against treating the missionaries as modern anthropologists without their firm intentions on salvation, see Luke Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 7.

⁷ See Ines G. Županov, *Disputed Mission: Jesuit Experiments and Brahmanical Knowledge in Seventeenth-century India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 6-9.

⁸ Gaspar Barzeus (1515-53) see Luís Fróis, *História de Japam*, 5 vols., ed. by Josef Wicki, S.J. (Lisbon: Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, 1976-1984), I, Intro, p. 4, henceforth referred to as *História*.

⁹ 'Prima epistola annua' see also Luís Fróis to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Goa, 1 December 1552) in *Documenta Indica*, ed. by Josef Wicki, Monumenta Missionum, Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, 18 vols. (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1948-88), II, pp. 445-91, henceforth referred to as *Documenta Indica*.

¹⁰ On authorship see Michel Foucault, *The Foucault Reader*, ed. by Paul Rabinow (New York: Vintage Books, 2010), pp. 101-20; *The Death and Resurrection of the Author*, ed. by William Irwin (London and Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002). Seán Burke, *The Death and Return of the Author: Criticism and Subjectivity in Barthes, Foucault and Derrida*, 2nd edn. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004); Ed White, 'The Death of the Author', in *How to Read Barthes' Image-Music-Text* (London: Pluto Press, 2012), pp. 111-22.

¹¹ The original title in Spanish is: *Del principio y progreso de la religión christiana en Japón y de la especial providencia de que Nuestro Señor usa con aquella nueva Iglesia*, see M. Antoni J. Üçerler, S.J., 'Valignano come storico della Missione: La sua ultima parola nel *Principio y Progreso* (1601-1603)' in Tamburello, Adolfo, M. Antoni J. Üçerler, S.J., and Marisa di Russo, eds., *Alessandro Valignano S.J. Uomo del Rinascimento: ponte tra Oriente e Occidente* (Roma: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2009), vol. 65, p. 262.

¹² On Alessandro Valignano see M. Antoni J. Üçerler, S.J., 'Alessandro Valignano: Man, Missionary, and Writer,' in *Asian Travel in the Renaissance*, ed. by Daniel Carey (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), pp. 12-41; J. F.

the most ambitious project of the three as it was intended to narrate events up to 1634, although only the period between 1549 and 1552 is extant.¹³ Fróis's *História* is the most comprehensive and detailed extant chronicle of the Japanese mission as it spans more than its first four decades during the second half of the sixteenth century.¹⁴

Fróis's version of events is mainly based on Jesuit letters that he or his fellow Jesuits wrote to India and Europe. However, as will be shown below, he was selective in the manner in which he deleted, avoided, or added facts, or simply created narratives purposefully composing an edifying account in the context of *historia sacra*, and every step is imbued with ideology, strategy, and tactics.

In the last decades scholars have increasingly emphasised a global perspective, and have begun to ask questions about global dynamics and connections, and the relationship of connections and border crossing with special attention on space.¹⁵ Provoking questions about commensurability and increase and decrease of cross-cultural dialogue in the sixteenth century have been put forward.¹⁶ Japan provides a unique case, where the initial commonalities observed with the Japanese culture by the Europeans, begun to turn into antithesis. This is clearly evident in Luís Fróis's missives but more patent with an increase on the rhetoric, in his *História*. This allow us not only to see a justification, based on their

Moran, *The Japanese and the Jesuits: Alessandro Valignano in Sixteenth-Century Japan* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993).

¹³ Both histories had been thoroughly studied by M. Antoni J. Üçerler, 'Sacred historiography and its rhetoric in sixteenth-century Japan: An intertextual study and partial critical edition of *Principio y progreso de la religión christiana en Jappón* (--) (1601-1603) by Alessandro Valignano' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1998), 2 v.; and Michael Cooper, 'João Rodrigues, S.J. and his Description of Japan' (doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1969), 2 v., respectively. On João Rodrigues see *João Rodrigues's Account of Sixteenth-Century Japan*, ed. by Michael Cooper (London: The Hakluyt Society, 2001).

¹⁴ M. Antoni J. Üçerler, S.J., 'The Jesuit Enterprise in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Japan', in Thomas Worcester, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Jesuits* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 157.

¹⁵ Barney Warf and Santa Arias, eds., *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009).

¹⁶ See Zoltán Biedermann, *(Dis)connected Empires: Imperial Portugal, Sri Lankan Diplomacy, and the Making of a Habsburg Conquest in Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

mutual understanding between these cultures, for the Society of Jesus accommodative methods applied in the archipelago; but also, Fróis describes the beginning of a divorce, a separation, a realisation of the incommensurable cultures and a belief of two fundamentally different civilizations.

Historian Michael Cooper argued that the Japanese mission was the first to break from traditional missionary methods, he calls it ‘the halfway mark in the development of missiological thought and practice.’¹⁷ In the Japanese mission the Jesuits deployed cultural and social adaptation methods and incorporated tested and novel approaches. The Jesuit’s letters written from Japan occasionally revealed the new methods and procedures employed in the mission, some which damage the image of the Society of Jesus as it mentioned issues that were not in line with the Constitutions of the order.¹⁸ Fróis based his manuscript on the missives written by himself and his fellow missionaries, many which were already published. But he not only copied them or paraphrased them, instead he is very mindful to add, erase, or exclude events and facts that would have left the mission and the missionaries having a negative impression. As such, I argue that Fróis should be considered not only the first historian of the mission but also the first editor of the history of the Japanese mission by writers who took part in the Christian evangelisation of this country, as he took it upon himself to revise the letters published and circulated in India and Europe and carefully changed the rhetoric in his *História*.

¹⁷ Michael Cooper, ‘A Mission Interrupted: Japan’, in *A Companion to the Reformation World*, ed. by R. Po-chia Hsia (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), p. 393.

¹⁸ The Jesuits were not the only ones who struggled to behave according to their constitutions in Japan. In 1604, in a letter from Fray Francisco Morales O.P. to his Provincial in Manila shows also the Dominicans’ predicament: ‘Aqui procuramos guardar las constituciones de la Orden [...] pero en casos, con las circunstancias que a quí dire, sujetandolas a la censura de Vs. Reverencias’, see C.R. Boxer and J.S. Cummins, ‘The Dominican Mission in Japan (1602-1622) and Lope de Vega’ in *Jesuit and Friar in the Spanish Expansion to the East*, ed. by J. S. Cummins (Aldershot: Variourum, 1997), II, p. 86.

Fróis's *História*, written four decades after the mission had started, shows a decline in the high hopes described in the early correspondence. The initial commensurable analogies between Europe and Japan, had turned into constant antipodal descriptions between the two cultures, partly to justify the necessity to employ novel methods in the archipelago and also revealing the difficulties that the mission presented, which signal a process of disconnection, and the distancing from the initial marvel to a degree of disenchantment. As such, the study of the *História*, must bear in mind the contemporary circumstances of the mission which at the time was unique in the accommodative method.¹⁹

The aim of this thesis is to fill a gap in the historiography of the Japanese mission. Most historians of the so-called 'Christian century in Japan' have used Fróis's letters and his *História* as sources. In fact, he is one of the most cited authors of the second half of the sixteenth century to write about this mission. However, a critical analysis of the *História* in its literary and historical context has eluded close scrutiny. This neglect is due in part to the assumption that by virtue of Fróis being an eyewitness of events and of his account of a given specific event sometimes being the only available source, his work has generally been taken at face value. This thesis reconstructs how Fróis believed the history of the mission should be narrated, revealing his objectives and strategies. What he considered needed to be narrated in his chronicle had changed greatly since the early Jesuits reports from Japan. The early sources provided superficial observations along with mistakes and ambiguities. I reflect upon Fróis's attempts to rectify previous 'errors' made by earlier Jesuit epistolary accounts, and argue that his real strategy goes beyond attempting to diminish these over-enthusiastic reports and presenting a more accurate and complete picture of the Japanese mission. I argue that he wrote with a clear agenda, deliberately altering information, and

¹⁹ The Chinese mission properly began when Matteo Ricci obtained permission into mainland China (1583), see Nicolas Standaert, 'Jesuits in China', in *Companion to the Jesuits*, ed. by Worcester, p. 169.

creating a narrative that suggested a more coherent and sequential enterprise than existed in reality. Second, I examine how by narrating the actions of the early missionaries and presenting the Jesuits in a very positive light, his *História* intends to offer guidance to future Jesuits. It is clearly intended that, through the recounting of the deeds of their predecessors, the text would allow would-be missionaries to Japan to negotiate future difficulties, thus providing help and inspiration.²⁰ Fróis employed rhetorical devices to emphasise his points as well as to alter the tone of the narrative. More than just transmitting information by copying letters, he enhanced the accounts by adding to the structure and form of the previous letters' content. All of this was done with the aim of conveying the message more effectively and of course more persuasively.

Luís Fróis joined the Society of Jesus in 1548, at 16 years of age, and almost immediately left for India. It became obvious to his superiors that he had a natural inclination for writing and languages. His teacher Francisco Cabral (c.1533-1609) considered him to be a good writer and potentially a good preacher.²¹ In 1554, when he was chosen to accompany the vice-provincial Melchior Nunes Barreto (c.1520-71) to Japan, the latter wrote to the General and founder of the order Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) that he had selected those with the ability to learn the Japanese language.²² Nunes Barreto considered leaving the young Fróis in Macau to learn Chinese; however he changed his mind and Fróis was left behind in Malacca instead, to look after the Jesuit house and to liaise with missionaries that stopped

²⁰ The deeds of the missionaries served as an exemplum, which is a story or anecdote for the purpose of illustrating a specific point. On the use of exempla in the *ars predicandi* see Fritz Kemmler, *Exempla in Context: A Historical and Critical Study of Robert Mannyng of Brunne's 'Handlyng Synne'* (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 1984), pp. 61-89. On the use of historical exempla see Henriette van der Blom, *Cicero's Role Models: The Political Strategy of a Newcomer* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 61-148.

²¹ 'Habil para dar bom expediente a quasquier negocios de papeis [...] e parece virá a ser bom pregador, porque naturalmente tem copia de palavras' see *História*, I, prolog., p. 8.

²² 'Escolhemos aqueles, que assim na virtude como na habilidade para aprender a língua do Japão pareciam mais idóneos' see Nunes Barreto to Loyola (Between Goa and Cochin, May 1554) in *Cartas de Fernão Mendes Pinto e Outros Documentos*, ed. by Rebecca Catz (Lisbon: Editorial Presença, 1983), p. 27.

in this port.²³ He would return to India, where he would continue his studies and missionary work, and was ordained in 1561.²⁴ Fróis would not reach Japanese shores until 1563. Once in Japan he proved correct the assessments of both his superiors by learning the language and becoming a recognised letter-writer of the Japanese mission.

By the time he arrived in Japan 14 years had passed since the first arrival of the Jesuits and the land he encountered was in political turmoil between warring feudatories.²⁵ The mission had made some progress even though there were present only two priests and seven brothers at the time.²⁶ From his arrival in Japan until he received the commission to compose the *História* he wrote no fewer than 60 letters, some of which were printed in Europe.²⁷ By 1579, the Jesuit historian Giovanni Pietro Maffei (1533–1603) was aware of Fróis's reputation as a writer while searching for sources in Portugal for his own history of the East Indies, and he suggested to the General Everard Mercurian (1514-80) that the Portuguese missionary should write a 'comentário' regarding Japan and the mission.²⁸

Upon receiving the request in 1584 to write an account of the Japanese mission from the General Claudio Acquaviva (1543-1615) Fróis began, he wrote, by carefully considering and pondering the best way to proceed.²⁹ He planned to write his *História* from 1549 'até o fim da hera de 1589' as he considered this an important religious cycle, because in this year 'se consuma e perfeiçoa o numero dos 40 que há que o sagrado Evangelho entrou em

²³ *História*, I, ch. 15, p. 94. Fróis to the Jesuits in Goa (Malacca, 1 December 1555) in *Documenta Indica*, III, p. 314.

²⁴ See *Documenta Indica*, V, pp. 258-9.

²⁵ On the arrival of the Jesuits during a period of Japanese political upheaval see Jurgis Elisonas, 'Christianity and the Daimyo', in *The Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 4, *Early Modern Japan*, ed. by John Whitney Hall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 301-372.

²⁶ Fathers Torres and Vilela. There were only seven European missionaries in the whole of Japan when Fróis arrived.

²⁷ On the location of Fróis's extant letters see *História*, I, Intro., pp. 36-41.

²⁸ See Maffei to General Everard Mercurian (Coimbra, 6 November 1579) in *História*, I, app. 1, p. 397. See also *História*, I, Intro., p. 11.

²⁹ 'Fazendo largo discurso, e ponderando no modo', see *História*, I, prol., p. 1.

Japão.³⁰ This statement sheds light on what he thought of those first four decades of the mission. The duration of time of 40 days or years represents a period of probation and chastisement in the Bible.³¹ This symbolic time frame coincided with a period of trial and probation among idolaters. One must also consider this symbolism regarding his description of the opposition which the Japanese mission had constantly encountered, opposition by enemies who were considered to be working for the Devil. The missionaries were doing God's work and the opposition which they faced was considered a battle between good and evil.³² This theme of diabolism in the *História* is closely analysed in this dissertation. It serves rhetorically to exonerate the missionaries' failings and as a reflection of a true conviction of the Devil's presence. In the *História* there are constant foreboding remarks. This consistent sense of impending evil or misfortune throughout the manuscript is one way in which Fróis is rhetorically constructing a past with the benefit of hindsight. To this effect the Devil is used as a rhetorical means of explaining the majority of the reversals. Wicki argued that '(Fróis) vê muitas vezes o influxo dos diabos.'³³ The author of the *História* uses high-inference language such as *demônio*, *diabo*, *Satanaz*, or *Lucifer*, these words having strong connotations which invoke an emotional response, as well as being contentious and loaded terms carrying a myriad of meanings.³⁴ Since Fróis was aware of all the setbacks to the mission that had previously occurred, he was able to construct a narrative that pointed at the influence of the Devil.

According to John Bossy, in Europe there existed the belief that 'baptism had health-giving powers' given that demonic possession involved illness and physical harm.³⁵ *Baptismo*

³⁰ *História*, I, prol., p. 5.

³¹ See Psalm 95. 10; Acts 13. 18; Deuteronomy 8. 2; Exodus 24. 18; and Ezekiel 4. 6.

³² Matthew 28. 19-20.

³³ *História*, I, p. 26.

³⁴ On emotivism see the seminal work by C.L. Stevenson, *Ethics and Language* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944).

³⁵ See John Bossy, *Christianity in the West: 1400-1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 14.

functioned as a kind of exorcism; it is described in the *História* as freeing the convert not only of the influence of the Devil but also of corporeal diseases.³⁶ This supposed dual benefit of this rite is repeatedly portrayed by the missionaries and must have been taught from the very beginning of the Japanese mission. We see this across other Jesuit missions and may be also the reason why the word *demonio* appears so often in Fróis's manuscript.

The objective of the present dissertation is to undertake a critical analysis of the *História* in order to better understand the aims and methods of its author, an undeniably important protagonist of the Japanese mission. Not only is this chronicle different from everything previously written about Japan, it also provides a more complete picture than any prior written source. This thesis reconstructs Fróis's reasoning as to how the history of the mission should be narrated, revealing his objectives and strategies such as the use of sources both written and oral that he deemed worthy of inclusion. In particular, I concentrate on Fróis's statements of intent explicitly expressed in the prologues or 'paratexts' of his work.³⁷ The literary concept that serves as an aid to the analysis of this text is *transtextuality* with special focus on the subtypes *intertextuality* and *paratextuality*.³⁸ Transtextuality is 'all that sets the text in relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts' and that 'covers all aspects of a particular text.'³⁹ For Gérard Genette hypertextuality involves 'any relationship uniting a text B (which I should call the hypertext) to an earlier text A (I shall, of course, call it the hypotext), upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of a commentary.'⁴⁰ In this way the *História* is the hypertext, as designated by Genette: 'literary texts which

³⁶ See *História*, I, ch. 8, p. 62. On baptism see Bossy, *Christianity in the West*, pp. 14-9; Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c.1400–c.1580* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), pp. 280-1.

³⁷ See the first prologue in *História*, I, pp.1-9, and the second prologue in III, pp. 1-2.

³⁸ 'All that sets the text in relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts' and that 'covers all aspects of a particular text', see Gérard Genette, *Paralimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, trans. by Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), p. 1.

³⁹ Gérard Genette, *The Architext: An Introduction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), pp. 83-4;

⁴⁰ Genette, *Paralimpsests*, p. 5.

allude, derive or relate to an earlier work or hypotext.⁴¹ As such, Fróis' letters and those of his confreres can be considered as hypotexts.⁴² The importance of these sources or hypotexts to the *História* is paramount, first because Fróis copied, paraphrased or allude to them. Secondly, he used the epistles as formats for the chapters and he usually incorporates one or more letters into one chapter. As hypotexts most times the chapters of the *História* derive from them. He clearly not only copied the letters, but he carefully reads them and adds or excludes information in his manuscript, or he incorporates rhetorical figures, such as synonymia, to be more persuasive. As such any analysis of the *História* must go hand in hand with the extant letters.

According to Genette, the paratext is a threshold that mediates the book to the reader.⁴³ This area includes titles and subtitles, forewords, epigraphs, prefaces (prologues), constituting in total a zone between text and off-text, a place of dialogue with, and influence on, the public, a zone which requires careful analysis.⁴⁴ Pausing on these *thresholds* or paratexts first, I consider Fróis's statements indicating that he would attempt to rectify previous 'errors' made within earlier Jesuit epistolary accounts, and argue that his strategies go beyond attempting to diminish inaccurate reports and presenting a complete picture of the Japanese mission.

I argue that Fróis wrote with a clear agenda, deliberately altering information and quite often creating a narrative for edifying purposes. The significance of this is that since he is sometimes the only available source his versions have been accepted by scholars. A

⁴¹ Bronwen Martin and Felizitas Ringham, *Key terms in Semiotics* (New York: Continuum, 2006), p. 99.

⁴² On hypertextuality see Graham Allen, *Intertextuality: The New Critical Idiom*, 2nd edn. (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 104-10.

⁴³ Gérard Genette, *Paratext: Thresholds of interpretation*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. xviii (originally published as *Seuils*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1987), henceforth referred to as Genette, *Paratext*. See also Philippe Lejeune, *Le Pacte autobiographique* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1975), p. 45; Julia Kristeva, 'Word, Dialogue, and Novel', *The Kristeva Reader*, ed. by Toril Moi (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986; repr. 1995), pp. 34-61.

⁴⁴ Genette, *Paratext*, p. 2.

comparative analysis between the published letters and the *História* sheds light on his methods. For example, I have found no external evidence that Cosme de Torres (c.1510-70), pioneer of the Japanese mission, was made superior when Xavier left Japan, yet historians have followed Fróis's account - he stated in his manuscript that when Xavier departed from Japan the latter nominated Torres as superior.⁴⁵ This is not backed up by any contemporary letters either by Xavier or by other missionaries. I believe that this addendum is used by the author to tie up loose ends. What may appear to be an inconsequential insertion in fact gives a more positive impression of the organisation of the mission. This is an example of the strategy followed by Fróis which was not just to provide more detailed and accurate information as he states in his prologue. It also included censorship and insertions when convenient.

Second, I examine how by narrating the actions of the early missionaries and presenting the Jesuits in a very positive light, Fróis understood the *História* as a guide to future Jesuits. It is clearly intended that, through the reading of the deeds of their predecessors, would-be missionaries to Japan would be aided in negotiating future difficulties, the text thus providing help and inspiration. Valignano also stated that one of the reasons for his *Historia* was that 'los vivos exemplos de los passados mueven mucho á los que después suceden.'⁴⁶

In the *História* Fróis often reminds the reader how very different the Japanese culture is in relation to its European counterpart. In fact, the Japanese customs are usually portrayed as opposite to the missionaries' culture. Wicki believed that Fróis was personally drawn to the

⁴⁵ See Alcáçova to the Jesuits in Portugal (Goa, 1554) in *Cartas que los Padres y hermanos de la Compañía de Jesús, que andan en los reynos de Japón escribieron a los de la misma Compañía, desde el año de mil y quinientos y quarenta y nueve, hasta el de mil y quinientos y setenta y uno* (Alcalá: House of Juan Iniguez de Lequerica, 1575), p. 54r, henceforth referred to as Alcalá *Cartas*. See also *História*, I, ch. 9, p. 64.

⁴⁶ Alessandro Valignano, *Historia del Principio y Progreso de la Compañía de Jesús en las Indias Orientales* (1542-64), ed. by Josef Wicki S.J. (Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I., 1944), I, p. 2.

idea of cultural antithesis, especially to help new missionaries to adapt to the customs and modes of the archipelago.

One subtle undercurrent theme that emerges from Fróis's constant mention of the opposite cultures is the justification of the Jesuits' 'way of proceeding', especially their method of adaptation to the Japanese culture. These accommodations that took place as a result of contact with a very dissimilar culture are constantly mentioned in an attempt to impress upon the reader that because this is such an alien culture, missionaries had to learn about and adapt to this new environment.⁴⁷ I argue that Fróis often writes about this 'antipodal' civilisation in the *História* while utilising a rhetoric that aims to justify the Jesuits' methodology in Japan.

Often Fróis highlights the striking differences between the European/Christian and Japanese cultures and then in order to give more weight to his argument uses hyperbole, an exaggeration as a rhetorical device, to proclaim that more opposite cultures cannot exist. This style of writing was also used by the Visitor Alessandro Valignano who was a staunch supporter of the method of accommodation in Japan and China. The policy of accommodation meant learning the local language; acknowledging and respecting the native culture; and the Jesuits dressing and following the etiquette of Buddhist monks or the Confucian elite of the literati. Valignano often points to the differing customs of the Japanese and then defends his policy of adaptation of the Jesuits to the local culture based on such differences. More importantly, Fróis's work must be read taking into consideration his real

⁴⁷ On *accommodatio* in Madurai see Županov, *Disputed Mission*. On China see Nicolas Standaert, 'Christianity shaped by the Chinese' in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Reform and Expansion 1500-1660*, ed. by R. Po-Chia Hsia (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 558-76. See also Liam Matthew Brockey, *Journey to the East, the Jesuit mission to China, 1579-1724* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), pp. 25-56. On Japan see Josef Franz Schütte S.J., *Valignano's Mission Principles for Japan* (St Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1985), I, pp. 108-10; George Elison, *Deus Destroyed: The Images of Christianity in Early Modern Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), pp. 54-84.

objectives and understanding it within the context of *historia sacra*. Some of the sources of ecclesiastical history are based upon the statements of witnesses, whether oral, in the form of narratives and legends, or written. Following the traditional form of *historia sacra*, he felt that the correct decorum was to allow other voices to speak in his work.⁴⁸

I shall examine the methodology that had evolved in Japan and the approach Fróis deemed most appropriate after many years of trial and error, and his and other Jesuits' views on the Japanese people, both non-Christians and neophytes. It is through meticulous readings of his rhetorical strategies that one uncovers his aims and his views. Consequently, the themes in the *História* regarding the evangelisation of the Japanese archipelago are closely followed, taking into consideration what Fróis was trying to achieve, and the literary methods and rhetorical devices he employed to attain his goals.

The *História*'s influence

Fróis's *História de Japam* was not initially very influential as it remained as a manuscript in Macau in 1595 when he returned to Japan.⁴⁹ However, one of his own critics, the Visitor Alessandro Valignano, who had voiced his disapproval of Fróis's work considering it too diffuse and lacking historical rigour, pays him the ultimate compliment by plagiarising his work in his own *Principio y progreso de la religión christiana en Japón* (--) (1601-3).⁵⁰ Subsequently, there is a vague knowledge of his work in Europe and it is uncertain where

⁴⁸ For more information on *historia sacra* see Simon Ditchfield, 'What Was Sacred History? (Mostly Roman) Catholic Uses of the Christian Past after Trent' in *Sacred History: Uses of the Christian Past in the Renaissance World*, ed. by Katherine Van Liere, Simon Ditchfield, and Howard Louthan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp.73-96. See John W. O'Malley, *Religious Culture in the Sixteenth Century: Preaching, Rhetoric, Spirituality, and Reform* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1993), VII, pp. 1-29.

⁴⁹ On the location of the manuscripts see *História*, I, Intro., pp. 20-4.

⁵⁰ See Üçerler, 'Sacred historiography', II, p. LII. Also quoted in *João Rodrigues's Account*, ed. by Cooper, p. xxiv.

the manuscript remained. It is not until 1744, when José Montanha, S.J., was sent by the Academia Real da História Portuguesa (1720-76) to copy and send back documents from Macau, that one or two volumes of the manuscript were sent to Europe.⁵¹ In 1894, L.J.M. Cross, S.J., discovered the copy of the first part of the *História* in the Biblioteca Real da Ajuda. Cross published some parts of the copy of the manuscript in his book about Francis Xavier in 1900. The second part of the *História* was discovered around 1906 under the title *Apparatos para a Historia do Bispado de Macao* (1583-1593).⁵² Meanwhile, the discovery of other parts of Fróis's works by eminent historians of the Jesuit missions had intensified his relevance as an important source. In 1925, in the magazine *Stimmen der Zeit*, Georg Schurhammer, S.J., (1882-1971) noted his finding in the Biblioteca da Ajuda of a part of Fróis's *História de Japam* for the period 1549 to 1578. In the 1930s, Dorotheus Schilling, O.F.M. (1886-1950), who considered Fróis's *História de Japam* as 'sem dúvida a mais extensa e a mais importante obra que no século XVI foi escrita por mão europeia sobre Japão,' found the second part of Fróis's manuscript in Toulouse and Lisbon.⁵³ In particular, he found two volumes in Toulouse, owned by Paul Sarda, under the titles of *Apparatos para a História Ecclesiástica do Bispado do Japão*, and *Apparatos para a História Ecclesiástica do Bispado de Macau*, corresponding to the later part of the *História*, while in the Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino of Lisbon he found a volume under the title *Apparatos para a História Ecclesiástica do Bispado de Macau*, corresponding to the period between 1578 and 1582 of the *História*, copied by José Montanha and mistakenly attributed to his authorship.

Finally, while working at the Jesuit Historical Institute, Schütte found the *Tratado em que se contem muito susinta e abreviadamente algumas contradições e diferenças de costumes*

⁵¹ Academia Real da História Portuguesa was a cultural institution funded with the aim of writing the history of Portugal from its overseas territories.

⁵² See *História*, I, Intro., pp. 16-7.

⁵³ *História*, I, Intro, p. 30.

antre a gente de Europa e esta provincia de Japão (1585), and he attributed its authorship to Fróis. Anthropologist Daniel T. Reff argues that Fróis wrote the *Tratado* based on Part I of the *História*, or *vice versa*.⁵⁴ My analysis is that while it is likely that the *Tratado* was written by Fróis, a definitive assessment remains to be written.

From the very beginning Fróis's letters were considered important in the description of the missions in Asia. It was precisely Fróis's popularity as a writer of the annual letters that induced Maffei to request from the General Mercurian that the Portuguese missionary should write a 'commentario' of the Japanese mission.⁵⁵ Lacking Valignano's permission, Fróis's *História* was not sent to Europe because, according to Francisco Pasio 'tinha muito que emendar.'⁵⁶ Valignano did not approve of Fróis's manuscript and instead sent his own *Historia*. The different nationalities, and perhaps also the clash of characters, between Valignano and Fróis could have played a part in their disagreements.⁵⁷

From the start of the twentieth century scholars had begun to recognise Fróis as a significant writer of the mission and his accounts were constantly consulted.⁵⁸ Fróis spent more than 30

⁵⁴ *The First European Description of Japan*, eds. by Danford, et al., p. 12. In 1557, one of the earliest accounts that offered a historical and ethnographic picture of the Tupinamba of Brazil, was published in German by Hans Staden (c.1525 - c.1576). See the English translation *Hans Staden's True History: An Account of Cannibal Captivity in Brazil*, ed. and trans. by Neil L. Whitehead and Michael Harbsmeier (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2008). Eve M. Duffy and Alida C. Metcalf, *The Return of Hans Staden: A Go-Between in the Atlantic World* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013). Twenty-one years later the Frenchman Jean de Léry (1534-1613) would publish his own account of his experience in Brazil, see *Jean de Léry, History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil, otherwise called America*, trans. and intro. by Janet Whatley (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992); Antony Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 42-51.

⁵⁵ See Maffei to Mercurian (Coimbra, 6 November 1579) in *História*, I, app. 1, p. 397.

⁵⁶ See Francisco Pasio to João Alvares, Assistant to General Acquaviva (Nagasaki, 5 December 1602) in *História*, I, app. 14, p. 412.

⁵⁷ As occurred between the cosmographers Vigliarolo and Samorano, an Italian and a Spaniard respectively, between 1581-1596. See Alison D. Sandman, 'Spanish Nautical Cartography in the Renaissance' in *History of Cartography, Volume 3: Cartography in the European Renaissance*, ed. by David Woodward (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007), pp. 1134-37. For a more detailed discussion see Alison Deborah Sandman, *Cosmographers vs. Pilots: Navigation, Cosmography, and the State in Early Modern Spain* (Doctoral thesis, University of Wisconsin, 2001), pp. 92-159.

⁵⁸ One of the first to use Fróis's correspondence as primary source was the Scottish scholar James Murdoch in his work, see James Murdoch, *A History of Japan: During the Century of Early Foreign Intercourse, 1542-1651* (Kobe: The Chronicle, 1903), in this work he spelled the author as Froez.

years in Japan and was often an eyewitness as well as a protagonist of the events about which he wrote in his extensive letters and in the *História*. Perhaps it is mainly this fact that has greatly predisposed most scholars to assume that his detailed accounts are the most knowledgeable and trustworthy, especially when sometimes he is the only known source, and his work has remained without much scrutiny or analysis. Donald F. Lach argued that the Jesuit letters from Japan were of superior quality to those from other areas in Asia mainly because most of them were written by Fróis.⁵⁹ Hubert Cieslik S.J., proposed that Fróis deserves a place ‘among the world’s Men of Letters.’⁶⁰ The Spanish Japanologist José Luis Álvarez-Taladriz, well known for editing Valignano’s works, used Fróis’s writings extensively in his research because he considered Fróis ‘un testigo presencial tan fidedigno.’⁶¹ The eminent historian Josef Franz Schütte S.J. appears to have taken at face value some of his accounts, as for example he thought Fróis to be the most reliable source of the first meeting between Nobunaga and Valignano ‘as he [Fróis] took part in this audience.’⁶² Josef Wicki S.J. called the *História* the ‘most complete and authoritative [history] of the Japanese mission.’⁶³ Wicki also considered Fróis’s account of Hideyoshi’s expulsion edict of ‘exceptional value’ because he was present with the vice-provincial Coelho.⁶⁴ George A. Sioris, who goes as far as to suggest that every historian of the Japanese

⁵⁹ Donald F. Lach, *Asia in the Making of Europe, volume I: The Century of Discovery* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1965), ed. 1994, Book 2, p. 321.

⁶⁰ Hubert Cieslik, *Father Louis Frois: Historian of the Mission, Early Missionaries in Japan*: p. 10.

⁶¹ Alejandro Valignano, S.J., *Sumario de las cosas de Japón* (1583) *Adiciones del Sumario de Japón* (1592), ed. by José Luis Álvarez-Taladriz (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1954), p. 51*, henceforth referred to as *Sumario*. Three distinguished Spanish missiologists, Juan Ruiz de Medina, S.J. (1927-2000), Jesús Lopez Gay, S.J. (1941-2017), and Diego Pacheco, S.J. (Yūki Ryōgo, 1922-2008), also used Fróis’s *História* in their respective works.

⁶² Schütte, *Valignano’s Mission Principles*, p. 119. Schütte is full of praise for Fróis; regarding the uncomfortable situation in which Organtino found himself between Nobunaga and Araki Murashige, he wrote: ‘Fróis described those dramatic days in masterly fashion,’ p. 114.

⁶³ See *História*, I, Intro., p. 14.

⁶⁴ *História*, IV, ch. 53, p. 406.

mission draws extensively from Fróis, argues that ‘everyone seems to accept him as a most reliable source.’⁶⁵

In his book *Nobunaga und das Christentum* (1950), Johannes Laures S.J. made extensive use of Fróis’s correspondence and the *História* as sources, especially since he is the only known source of Nobunaga’s self-deification account.⁶⁶ Charles R. Boxer (1904-2000), in his seminal work *The Christian Century in Japan* (1951), used the first part of the *História de Japam* from *Die Geschichte Japans, 1549-1578*, translated from the Portuguese into German by G. Schurhammer and E.A. Voretzsch (1926), as well as the partial second part of this manuscript in the *Segunda Parte da Historia de Japam (1578-1582)* ed. by J.A. Abranches Pinto and Y. Okamoto (1938).

The relevance of the *História* was also appreciated by Japanese historians of this period such as Anesaki Masaharu (1873-1949), and Okamoto Yoshitomo (1900-72); and from the 1970s Matsuda Kiichi (1921-97), who together with other Japanese scholars translated it into Japanese, as well as other Jesuit letters. Among the latter translations were the *Cartas que os Padres e irmãos da Companhia de Jesus, que andão nos Reynos de Iapão ascreuerão aos da mesma Companhia da India, & Europa des do anno de 1549 até o de 1580*, 2 vols. (Évora: Manoel de Lyra, 1598), an important letter volume wherein Fróis is one of the main contributors.⁶⁷ Diego Pacheco, S.J., (Yūki Ryōgo, 1922-2008) considered Fróis’s account of the 1597 martyrdom essential for his account of *The Twenty-Six Martyrs of Nagasaki* (1998).⁶⁸ Recently, Mayu Fujiwara pointed out that the scholarly community would benefit

⁶⁵ George A. Sioris, ‘Chronicler and Interpreter of Japan, a Jesuit Between Two Countries’ in *Luis Fróis: Proceedings of the International Conference United Nations University, Tokyo September 24-26, 1997*, ed. by Hans van Ginkel (Tokyo: Embassy of Portugal in Tokyo, 1997), p. 13.

⁶⁶ See Johannes Laures, S.J., *Nobunaga und das Christentum* (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1950).

⁶⁷ Henceforth referred to as *Évora Cartas*.

⁶⁸ See *Los 26 Martyres de Nagasaki, 15 de Marzo 1597*, ed. by Romulo Galdos, S.J. (Rome, 1935). Diego Yuuki, S.J., *The Twenty-Six Martyrs of Nagasaki* (Tokyo: Enderle Book Co, 1998), p. 26. See also Diego Pacheco, S.J., *El Hombre que Forjó a Nagasaki: Vida del P. Cosme de Torres, S.J.* (Madrid: Editorial Apostolado de la Prensa, S. A., 1973).

from the availability of original texts translated and available in English, especially Fróis's *História de Japam*.⁶⁹

Finally, Fróis's *História* appeared in a complete publication of its extant parts, that is what the author considered part two (1549-77) and part three (1578-93), in Portuguese in five volumes between 1976-84, edited by the eminent historian Josef Wicki. Although many scholars have used Fróis's *História* as a source, the latter's aims and methods have not yet been fully analysed or completely understood. In particular, I focus on a few significant themes that enable us to visualise a general picture of the Japanese mission and the manner in which he was attempting to portray it.

Despite Fróis's narrative being very extensive and descriptive, at the same time there are occasions when he could have provided far more important detail, especially regarding events of which he was an eyewitness and a protagonist, or when he could gather first-hand information from those involved. Two examples of when the manuscript lacks crucial information are further developed through the thesis, and should serve to illustrate that Fróis's work must be read with caution. The first is the report of the meeting of Valignano and Fróis, as his interpreter, with *daimyo* Oda Nobunaga (織田 信長, 1534-82) in Kyoto in 1581. Fróis portrays the hegemon giving a feast but in the context of a Christian narrative.⁷⁰ Later in Azuchi, Nobunaga's fortress is compared to the magnificent palaces of Europe and the narrative focuses on its beauty without revealing the content of the meetings. The above style of writing is echoed in the recounting of another important event, the crucial meeting in 1586 between the vice-provincial Gaspar Coelho (1529-90) and senior members of the

⁶⁹ The German translation of the *História* by Schurhammer and Voretzsch included only the section dated 1549–78, see Mayu Fujiwara 'Studies on the Jesuit Japan Mission', in: *Jesuits Historiography Online*. Consulted online on 30 January 2019 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2468-7723_jho_COM_196472>

⁷⁰ *História*, III, ch. 31. See Esther 1. 3-4.

Japanese mission, which included Fróis as interpreter, and Toyotomi Hideyoshi (豊臣 秀, 1537-98), lord of the *Tenka* in his Osaka castle.⁷¹ Hideyoshi was sympathetic to the missionaries, and the narrative focuses on how welcoming he was toward the *Padres*, and on the scenic beauty of the castle.⁷² This consists of a series of sentences arranged in order to gradually increase the importance of what would occur a year later, the volte-face of *Kampaku* as the climax.⁷³

The vivid descriptions of Nobunaga's and Hideyoshi's precincts, in Azuchi and Osaka respectively, were not just intended to transport the readers directly to the scene but also to shift attention to the beautiful surroundings. Fróis offers the reader very little regarding the dialogue and the important issues of the meetings, and instead expands on the irrelevant. He does this when he is aware that to expand on what was discussed or on specific facts could be unedifying. Therefore, a careful analysis of Fróis's account should bear in mind that what he omits is as significant as what he writes.

When Fróis uses the literary device of exposition, as in this case to inform the reader, it is not just done to familiarise the audience with the background information to what he is telling or to what he will tell later. In fact, the exposition takes the largest part of the narrative and the main subject is highly minimised. This highlights that any readings of Fróis's *História* must consider the author's use of figures of speech and other compositional techniques. This thesis demonstrates that he adds words for more impact. In a rhetorical appeal, for example, he uses synonymia to evoke an emotional response from the readers

⁷¹ Toyotomi Hideyoshi was originally called Hiyoshi, changing to Hideyoshi in 1562. In 1574, he received the title of *Chikuzen-no-Kami*, later adopted the name Hashiba, and from 1586 added the surname of Toyotomi receiving the honorific dignity of *Kampaku*, and later Taikô. In the *História* he is called *Faxiba*, *Hashiba*, *Chicugendono*, *Quambacu*, *Kambacudono*, *Taikosama* and in the end just as *tirano* (tyrant). 'Quambaco [...] senhor da Tenca, que hé a monarquia de Japão' see *História*, V, ch. 70, p. 538.

⁷² *História*, IV, ch. 31, p. 229.

⁷³ *Kampaku* (関白, Quambacu) was from 882 A.D. to 1868 the highest dignity in the imperial court after the Emperor.

and to engage them more proactively.⁷⁴ When he repeats a theme constantly it is usually with a specific reason, as we find in the theme of the opposite customs of the Japanese in comparison to Europe which he intends to use to justify their different ways of proceeding in Japan.

Structure

This thesis is comprised of four chapters and a conclusion. Chapter I explores how Fróis had to contend with what had been written before he began to compose his manuscript around 1584. This included Xavier's views who located Japan on a par with Europe with regards to the people and culture, to the extent that back in Europe, Japan could have been considered to be a very similar civilisation. In the *História* there is a clear break from Xavier's first impressions and approach, and the emphasis is on the incommensurability between the cultures of Japan and Europe.

Even though Fróis constantly references his confreres' letters, he makes little use of material from Xavier and especially from his famous statements in his Kagoshima letter wherein he states that the Japanese people were 'la mejor que hasta agora está descubierta.'⁷⁵ Certainly, the above statement does not appear in Fróis's manuscript. This is significant when one considers that he was in an enviable position to write extensively about the future saint and especially when in Europe material about the so-called 'Apostle of the Indies' was in high demand.

⁷⁴ See Sylvia Adamson, 'Synonymia: or, in other words', in *Renaissance Figures of Speech*, eds. by Sylvia Adamson, Gavin Alexander, and Katrin Ettenhuber (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 17-36.

⁷⁵ Xavier to (Kagoshima, 5 November 1549), in *Cartas y Escritos de San Francisco Javier*, ed. by Felix Zubillaga, S.J., 3rd ed. (Madrid: La Editorial Catholica S.A., 1979), p. 354, henceforth referred to as *X. Cartas*.

While Fróis's *História* still draws from Jesuit written sources, the author realised that the importance of his work was also founded mainly upon his and his confreres' eyewitness accounts. The fact that his *História* was a request from Rome, rather than a personal endeavour, highlights the point that his superiors wished for accounts set down *in situ*. The value of Fróis's work is his first-hand experience, a typical feature of the authority of the eyewitness' writing of the time with its relation to travel accounts.⁷⁶ In this way Fróis gathered written and oral information and intertwined it with his own experience.

It is the contention of chapter II that Fróis considered that his *História* would be a comprehensive chronicle written for edifying reasons. Ana Fernandes Dias argues that the *Historia's* 'main purpose was to let the world know the activities of the Society' in Japan.⁷⁷ When Fróis began to write his manuscript, there had been a considerable number of published letters from Japan in different countries and in different European languages, including some of his own missives. While most Jesuit accounts were written with instructive and edifying purposes, I maintain that Fróis is very mindful when he adds, erases, or omits events and facts that would have left the mission and the missionaries giving a negative impression. Indeed, I argue that he wrote his manuscript with a plan to create a narrative describing a mission with fewer errors that existed in reality, sometimes even deliberately altering information. Historians have debated about the veracity of Fróis's account of Nobunaga's self-deification, such as Asao Naohiro and Herman Ooms who put forward the reliability of his account. While W.J. Boot and Jeroen P. Lamers find the Jesuit's source wanting, especially given the lack of any Japanese sources on this subject. Other times, when Fróis is the only source to have haunted historians, such as the disputations

⁷⁶ See Rolena Adorno, 'The Discursive Encounter of Spain and America: The Authority of Eyewitness Testimony in the Writing of History', in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 49/2 (1992), 210-228.

⁷⁷ Ana Fernandes Dias, 'Oda Nobunaga in the Scriptures of Luís Fróis: A Political Image' in *Luís Fróis*, ed. by van Ginkel, p. 27.

between Xavier and Ninjit, with Helmut Feldmann concluding that it is a complete invention. I argue that any study of the *História* should keep in mind that Fróis constantly constructs a narrative that fits within the Christian past, and *historia sacra* predominates over historical accuracy.

This is important because any study of the *História de Japam* must take into consideration that Fróis is either very economical with his descriptions or he is very copious, but in both cases, he writes with rhetorical purposes and this still plays a significant role in the grand historical narrative. This is a role that the reader should take into consideration.

The inclusion of graphic scenes and detailed descriptions aims to provide an exemplary model of the resolve and determination of the Jesuits and the Christians during hard times, making the audience feel present and emotionally engaged. As well as this, I examine how by narrating the deeds of their predecessors and presenting the Jesuits in a positive light, the *História* is intended to offer didactic methods to future Jesuits. This was a typical aspect of *historia sacra* when the narrative aims to portray the pioneers of missions as figures worthy of being followed. ‘Sacred history’ was used to label biblical history or the history of the Church since biblical times.⁷⁸ The past was used as a model for writing about the present during this period. Ditchfield argued that Church historians ‘sought to learn about and present Christian history in order to repeat it.’⁷⁹ The *História* was composed with edifying objectives for future missionaries who would work in the Japanese mission, and who would perhaps face situations similar to those experienced by the first missionaries and to aid them to negotiate future difficulties, thus providing help and inspiration. This pedagogical and inspirational aim could be extended to those missionaries already living in Japan. Fróis told

⁷⁸ See Simon Ditchfield, ‘What Was Sacred History?’ in *Sacred History*, eds. by Van Liere, et al., pp. 75-6.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

Valignano that the *História* ‘podia fazer bem aos Padres e Irmãos do Japão, mostrando-lhes o que os primeiros Padres, seus antecessores, haviam passado para lançarem os fundamentos daquela cristandade.’⁸⁰

Chapter III delves into Fróis's representation and discussion of the mission, conversion, and the Japanese society in three main sections; first, it focuses on the methods of evangelisation in Japan, the manner in which the process of conversion and converts are portrayed in the *História*, and how these are described and understood through language. Different methods were tested and trialled in Japan; European customs that may have impacted negatively on the process of conversion were abandoned while the missionaries centered their efforts on methods they considered the most effective for the success of the Japanese mission.

Secondly, it considers the challenges of conversion, such as the often-mentioned ‘opposite customs’ of the Japanese in this manuscript, which points to the undercurrent theme that the Jesuits had adapted to the local culture because Japan was so different and that to behave in any other way would have caused the rejection of the Gospel. The members of the Society of Jesus gradually implemented a process of adaptation in Japan but they were aware that their behaviour was not always according to the Constitutions of the order, and this caused uneasiness which can be appreciated indirectly through the pages of the *História*. Through an analysis of his book, attention is drawn to Fróis’s attempts to justify the presence of the Jesuit mission and their way of proceeding in Japan. His emphasis on the opposite customs of Japan in contrast to Europe justified the implementation of methods of adaptation. However, these methods divided the opinion of the *Padres* and exposed the Jesuits in the archipelago to heavy criticism. Fróis’s description of the methods used by the Jesuits for conversion is examined, such as the methodical and careful nurturing of a Japanese elite

⁸⁰ *História*, I, Intro., p. 13.

including the educated monks and the political and military leaders exemplified by the “fidalgos” and the *daimyo*.

A third focus is on Fróis’s representation of Japanese Christians and non-Christians, and how he constructed a narrative that fits within the Christian past even when historical accuracy is neglected, which also points towards the fact that *historia sacra* predominates in the manuscript.

Chapter IV focuses on the manner in which Fróis uses the Devil rhetorically to explain the reasons for the setbacks to the mission. In this work, there are constant foreboding remarks from other Jesuits, from Fróis himself, and even from neophytes, thus also a sense of impending evil or misfortune. More importantly, in this chapter, I argue that Fróis is rhetorically constructing a past with the benefit of hindsight. The persons that had intervened against the mission are demonised or considered as ‘instruments of the Devil.’ Since Fróis was aware of all the setbacks to the mission that had previously occurred, he was able to construct a narrative that pointed at the Devil as the main factor behind the majority of the reversals.

In conclusion, I hope I have succeeded in presenting a series of glimpses that are representative of Fróis’s general aims and methods regarding the way in which he writes. This should shed light on the understanding of the rhetorical narratives written not only by Fróis but also by other Jesuit writers. One must remember, as one approaches his manuscript, how the Jesuits understood the use of rhetoric and how Fróis uses his text to persuade his readers.

Chapter I - Luís Fróis: the author and his work

This chapter endeavours to locate the author and his text the *História de Japam* in their literary and textual context. First, it introduces a brief biographical background of Luís Fróis and his role as missionary and writer of the Japanese mission. It highlights Fróis's roles not only as missionary, but as Superior of Kyoto and Bungo, as interpreter, *socius* or companion, and adviser to the Superior of the mission, and as writer of the *cartas annuas*. It analyses the historical background of the *História* beginning with the origins of the Japanese mission and how it came to be located as the ideal mission field, as a result of the influential accounts of Francis Xavier, who after travelling through different areas in Asia such as West India, Malacca and Molucas looking for the ideal missionary field; finally, he considered the Japanese to be in religious terms the 'best people yet discovered,' and how almost 40 years later Fróis chose to describe it.⁸¹

Secondly, Chapter 1 aims to place the *História de Japam* in its textual context, and demonstrates how it differs from what had previously been written. It focuses on the genre in which Fróis is writing and how it correlates with sixteenth-century ideas of *historia sacra*, as well on his written style, his use of rhetoric such as his tendency to write extensively, which was viewed simultaneously as positive and negative by his superiors. This is followed by an analysis of the sources and the types of Jesuit epistolary correspondence and treaties written before the *História*, which covered everything from their first impressions of Japan

⁸¹ Xavier to the Jesuits in Goa (Kagoshima, 5 November 1549) in *X. Cartas*, p. 354. In Brazil, there was also an initial enthusiasm about the prospects of converting the Tupinikin people. In a letter dated 1500 Pedro Vaz de Caminha wrote to King Manuel that these people were of such innocence that 'there can easily be stamped upon them whatever belief we wish to give them' see Kenneth Mills, William B. Taylor and Sandra Lauderdale Graham, ed., *Colonial Latin America: A Document History* (Oxford: SR Books, 2002), pp. 43-58; Cagle, *Assembling the Tropics*.

and how the pioneers painted in their letters a scenario of positive future results, to comparisons with the primitive church as an appeal to *pathos*.

I.1.1 Luís Fróis: the man and missionary

Luís Fróis was born in Lisbon around 1532, and very little is known of his childhood except that he must have received a humanist education and must have worked in the Royal Chancery.⁸² According to Juan Ruiz-de-Medina, Fróis was ‘hijo de hidalgos.’⁸³ In a report to the General of the Society of Jesus, the Jesuit Bishop Belchior Carneiro (1516-83), wrote of Fróis: ‘es humano en la conversación, porque ha sido hombre de palacio, de que aún agora tiene algunas hezes.’⁸⁴ Being an *hombre de palacio* must be understood in the context of the preoccupation during this period with hierarchy, decorum, and courtesy.⁸⁵ Carneiro stressed Fróis’s ability in oration and spoken rethoric. This can also be appreciated in Torres’s praise of the Japanese: ‘tienen buena conversacion, y usan grandes cumplimentos unos con otros, que parecen hombres criados en palacio.’⁸⁶

In 1548 at the age of approximately 16 years old, Fróis joined the Jesuit order as a novice and almost immediately departed for India on 17 March that same year in the ship *Galega*. He arrived in Goa on 9 October 1548, together with ‘sinco Padres e seis Irmãos.’⁸⁷ Among

⁸² ‘[Fróis] Acabó su formación humanística muy joven,’ see *Documentos del Japón 1558-1562*, ed. by Juan Ruiz-de-Medina, S.J. (Rome: Instituto Histórico de la Compañía de Jesus, 1995), vol. 48, p. 53. On Fróis’s biography see Luís Fróis, *História*, I, Intro. pp. 3*-10*. On different aspects of Fróis’s life, especially his time in Macau see Antonio Rodrigues Baptista, ‘Luís Fróis in Macau’ in *Luís Fróis*, ed. by van Ginkel, pp. 40-59. A brief description of his life is provided in *The First European Description of Japan*, eds. by Danford, et al., pp. 6-12.

⁸³ *Documentos del Japón 1558-1562*, p. 53.

⁸⁴ *História*, I, Intro, p. 8. Melchior Carneiro to General Diego Lainez (Goa, 20 November 1559) in *Documenta Indica*, IV, p. 424. ‘[Fróis] Trabajó un tiempo en la Secretaría Real,’ see *Documentos del Japón 1558-1562*, p. 53.

⁸⁵ There was a proliferation of books on manners during the sixteenth century. The large number of such books that were published emphasises the importance of this genre of prescriptive courtesy book, especially regarding social protocols at princely and royal courts, such as *The Book of the Courtier* by the Italian humanist Baldassare Castiglione (1528). See Keith Thomas, *In Pursuit of Civility: Manners and Civilization in Early Modern England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018).

⁸⁶ Torres to the Jesuits in India (Amaguchi, 29 September 1551) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 48v.

⁸⁷ *História*, I, ch. 1, p. 20.

them was the future pioneer of the Japanese mission Juan Fernandes (c.1526-67).⁸⁸ In Goa, he would meet Francis Xavier (1506-52), Cosme de Torres, and the Japanese Anjirō.⁸⁹ He would remain in Goa studying for the next two years until the end of 1550, when he was sent to the north of India, where he would work in Baçaim, Chaul, and adjacent areas.⁹⁰ In November 1551, he returned to Goa where he remained until 1554. In 1552, he received the order from the vice-provincial Gaspar Barzeus (1515-53), rector of the Saint Paul college of Goa, to write ‘as novas de cá.’ On 1 December 1552 Fróis completed what Josef Wicki called the first annual of the missions.⁹¹

In 1554, he was chosen to accompany the vice-provincial Nunes Barreto to Japan together with other brothers; the group included Fernão Mendes Pinto (c.1510-83), who had joined the Jesuits as a lay brother and was partially financing the expedition.⁹² En route Fróis would be left behind in Malacca. The *História*’s version of this event differs considerably from the author’s own letter written in 1555:

⁸⁸ Juan Fernandes de Oviedo was born in Cordova, Spain. He was a pioneer of the Japanese mission together with Francis Xavier and Cosme de Torres. He was the first missionary to learn the Japanese language and he often acted as interpreter. He died in Hirado 26 June 1567.

⁸⁹ Cosme de Torres was born in Valencia, Spain. He travelled to Mexico where he stayed for nearly four years, the Philippines, and the Molucas. In 1546, in the island of Tidore he met Xavier, and became a Jesuit in 1548. The Japanese Anjirō was originally from the Satsuma area; in 1546 he left Japan, having committed murder, on board the Portuguese ship of Captain Jorge Álvares, who took him to Malacca to see Xavier. Eventually, Anjirō meet Xavier in December 1547. Xavier was impressed by Anjirō and his two Japanese companions. He was baptised as Paulo de Santa Fé. He returned to Japan as interpreter for the missionaries in 1549.

⁹⁰ Thāna and the island of Elephanta, see Georg Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier, His Life, His Times*, trans. by M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J., 4 vols. (Rome: The Jesuit Historical Institute, 1973), IV, p. 484.

⁹¹ *História*, I, Intro, p. 4. ‘Prima epistola annua’ see also Luís Fróis to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Goa, 1 December 1552) in *Documenta Indica*, II, pp. 445-91.

⁹² Nunes Barreto wrote: ‘[Mendes Pinto] creo que quatro mil [ducados] ho más dió luego deputados para esta nuestra ida do Japão así para piasas y presentes que avemos de oferecer àquellos reies [...] como también para edeficarnos un templo en huna ciudad principal de Japão’ see Barreto to Loyola (Between Goa and Cochin, May 1554) in *Documenta Indica*, III, p. 84. On the departure of Mendes Pinto with Nunes Barreto to Japan see Aires Brandão to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Goa, 23 December 1554) in *Documenta Indica*, III, p. 178-3. Mendes Pinto travelled also as an ambassador for the Viceroy Afonso de Noronha (1510-?) see Lúcio de Sousa, *The Portuguese Slave Trade in Early Modern Japan: Merchants, Jesuits and Japanese, Chinese, and Korean Slaves* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2019), p. 336.

Fróis's *Letter* (1555)

Se partiram daqui [...] primeiro dia d'Abril de 1555. Eu como cosa inutil e cheo de muitos pecados e iniquidades [...] fiquei neste collegio pera varrer estas casas e oulhar por ellas até vir Padre ou Irmão desse colegio [...] sabendo quam pouco necessario eu era pera onde tanta firmeza e perfeiçam de vertudes se requerião.⁹³

História

O primeiro de Abril 1555 partirão de Malaca, deixando o P.e Mestre Belchior alli o Irmão Luiz Froiz, para ter cuidado daquella caza da companhia athé vir algum Padre da India.⁹⁴

In this case, unlike in most of his *História*, where Fróis tends to expand on his sources, this event is characterised by its brevity in comparison to his own missive written 30 years earlier. Additionally, all of the self-deprecating remarks are absent in the *História*.⁹⁵

Brockey argues, regarding the Chinese mission, that in an age where social status dictated one's profession, one of the Jesuits' teachings for its novices most relevant to evangelisation was its most mundane, that is, to instill a sense of humility and discipline in the novices, by obliging them to perform domestic chores, such as assisting in the kitchen, sweeping and cleaning.⁹⁶ In his letter, 23-year-old Fróis displays a sense of disappointment in not having reached Japan, and Malacca is not described as an ideal destination but rather as a punishment, where he must perform menial tasks for his spiritual shortcomings. This is very different, for example, from the portrayal that the Jesuit Fernão de Queiroz (617-88) gave of his co-religionist Pedro Machado de Basto (1570-1645) who took great pleasure in performing the humblest tasks.⁹⁷

⁹³ Fróis to the Jesuits in Goa (Malacca, 1 December 1555) in *Documenta Indica*, III, pp. 314-5.

⁹⁴ *História*, I, ch. 15, p. 94.

⁹⁵ See Fernão de Queiros, *Historia da vida do veneravel irmaõ Pedro de Basto coadjutor temporal da Companhia de Jesus, e da variedade de sucessos que Deos lhe manifestou* (Lisbon: Miguel Deslandes, 1689).

⁹⁶ See Brockey, *Journey to the East*, pp. 220-22.

⁹⁷ Cited in Zoltán Biedermann, "Was it a Vision, or a Waking Dream?": Exploring the Oneiric World of a Seventeenth-Century Jesuit Visionary in Portuguese India', in *From the Supernatural to the Uncanny*, eds. by Stephen M. Hart and Zoltán Biedermann (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017), p. 46.

On his return from Japan in 1557, Nunes Barreto stopped in Malacca, taking Fróis back to Goa. From 1557 to 1558 Fróis studied under the instruction of the humanist Marcos Nunes, who taught him rhetoric. On 24 October 1558 Fróis began his study of scholastic philosophy under the tutelage of Fathers Manuel Teixeira and António de Quadros, who taught him logic. In January 1560, he undertook the study of Aristotle's *De physica* and *De generatione et corruptione* under the guidance of Fathers Francisco Cabral and Teixeira. He continued studying theology under Cabral and the rector Francisco Rodrigues, mainly focusing on St Thomas Aquinas. In 1561, Fróis was ordained.

In April 1562, he left for Japan with the Italian Father Giovanni Battista de Monte (1528-87). Fróis finally reached Japanese shores on 6 July 1563 at the port of Yokoseura, in Ōmura, at about 31 years of age. He wrote that at the time the two surviving pioneers, Cosme de Torres and Juan Fernandes, were still working but were afflicted by sickness and fatigue. Historians, such as Josef Wicki, Diego Pacheco, and Carmelo L. Tolosana, have generally agreed that Torres was born around 1510, however, from the description given by Fróis and his fellow Jesuits at the time, it appears that Torres may have been born much earlier.⁹⁸ In 1555, Balthasar Gago (c.1520-83), described Torres as 'muy viejo y flaco, siendo de antes hombre grueso.'⁹⁹ In 1556, when Gaspar Vilela (c. 1526-72) first met Torres he also called him 'ya viejo.'¹⁰⁰ That same year, Melchior Nunes Barreto (1520-71) also referred to Torres as 'el buen viejo.'¹⁰¹ If Torres had been born in 1510 or thereabouts, he would have been only about 46 years old, while Gago and Barreto would have been 10 years younger, and Vilela about 30 years old. Barreto travelled to Japan with Fernão Mendes Pinto, who

⁹⁸ On Torres's entry into the Society of Jesus see his letter to Loyola (Goa, 25 January 1549) in *Documenta Indica*, I, pp. 468-81. Alfredo Verdoy, *San Francisco Javier: El Molinero de Dios* (Bilbao: Editorial Desclée de Brouwer, 2006), p. 136.

⁹⁹ Gago to the Jesuits in India and Portugal (Hirado, 23 September 1555) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 70r.

¹⁰⁰ See Vilela to the Jesuits in India and Europe (Hirado, 29 October 1557) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 82v.

¹⁰¹ Barreto to the Jesuits in Portugal (Cochin, 10 January 1558) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 76v.

according to Rebecca Catz was born around 1510, and as such the same age as Torres, but Mendes Pinto was never described as old by the Jesuits.¹⁰² Fróis describes Torres as ‘mui velho’ in 1563, when he would have been 53 years old if he had been born in 1510.¹⁰³ Fróis, who writes about the death of Gaspar Coelho at the age of 62, does not describe the latter as very old.¹⁰⁴

Brother Juan Fernandes is described as being so consumed with work that he looked as if he had just expired.¹⁰⁵ In 1563, when Fróis arrived in Japan this country was at the periphery of the Christian world. There were only two Jesuit priests – Torres and Vilela – and five European brothers in the whole of Japan.¹⁰⁶ From Yokoseura he went to Takushima and Hirado, where he found brother Juan Fernandes, with whom he would spend a year learning the language and gaining experience on the Japanese mission. Loyola prescribed in the Constitutions that in distant missions, the Jesuits should work in pairs to complement each other as much as possible.¹⁰⁷ In Japan, with the relatively small numbers of fathers present at the beginning of the mission, this proved quite difficult to implement. At the end of 1564, Fróis was sent to Kyoto to work with Father Vilela, and he resided in Kyoto or Sakai from 1565 to 1576. During these years he would work with Vilela, then alone and finally with Organtino. He called himself the superior of this area.

¹⁰² *The Travels of Mendes Pinto*, ed. and trans. by Rebecca Catz (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989), p. xv. Nunes Barreto describes Mendes Pinto as friend of Xavier, rich, and humble but never as old, see Barreto to Loyola (Between Goa and Cochin, May 1554) in *Documenta Indica*, III, pp. 83-5.

¹⁰³ On Torres’s date of birth see *História*, I, ch. I, p. 18; see also Pacheco, *El Hombre que Forjó Nagasaki*, p. 9; Carmelo Lisón Tolosana, *La Fascinación de la Diferencia: La Adaptación de los Jesuitas al Japón de los Samuráis, 1549-1592* (Madrid: Ediciones Akal, 2005), p. 35; *História*, I, ch. 47, p. 326.

¹⁰⁴ *História*, V, ch. 28, p. 217.

¹⁰⁵ *História*, I, ch. 47, p. 325.

¹⁰⁶ Fróis reiterates the lack of fathers when he arrived to Japan ‘naquelles primeiros principios em cultivar as novas plantas de sua Igreja [...] que não havia mais, em todos os nove reinos do Ximo, que o P. Cosme de Torres, e o Gaspar Vilela no Miaco’, see *História*, I, ch. 50, p. 361.

¹⁰⁷ *Saint Ignatius of Loyola: The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, trans. by George E. Ganss, S.J. (St Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1970), p. 277.

When Cabral visited Kyoto in 1572 and 1574, Fróis accompanied him and served him as interpreter. From 1577 to 1581 he was superior of Bungo, where he actively worked on the conversion of Ōtomo Yoshimune. In 1581, he was companion and interpreter of Visitor Alessandro Valignano.¹⁰⁸ In February 1582, he was companion of the vice-provincial Gaspar Coelho, and in 1586 they travelled to Kyoto and met with Hideyoshi in Osaka. During Hideyoshi's decree against the missionaries on 24 July 1587, Fróis was present with Coelho. Consequently, he retired to the island of Takushima. He was secretary of the congregations of the Japanese Vice-Province in February and July 1592.

In October 1592, Fróis accompanied Valignano to Macau where he worked as his secretary for two years.¹⁰⁹ Complaining about his stay in Macau he returned to Japan in July 1595 and died in Nagasaki 8 July 1597.

Fróis was not inclined to preach in his chronicle, as for example Xavier is in his letters, nor does he portray himself or other missionaries as being gifted with extraordinary powers capable of converting the whole of Japan with little effort.¹¹⁰ From Fróis's statements in his *História* it becomes clear that he was not expecting such miracles to happen in Japan; this is in contrast to what he himself had written in Malacca in 1556 about the news that came from Japan, 'a voz de todos os homes que de la vem (Japan), he que faz nosso Snor por este home, e por otros muitos, que acha dinos instrumentos, cudentisimos milagres, como na primitiva igreja.'¹¹¹ Not even Saint Francis Xavier received such treatment. Instead, they are

¹⁰⁸ The *Visitador* was a personal delegate. For a detailed account on Valignano see Moran, *The Japanese and the Jesuits*. Schütte, *Valignano's Mission Principles for Japan*, trans. by John J. Coyne, 2 vols. (St Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1980-85); Üçerler, 'Alessando Valignano', ed. by Carey, pp. 12-41.

¹⁰⁹ On Fróis's second time in Macau see Baptista 'Luís Fróis in Macau', in *Luís Fróis*, ed. by van Ginkel, pp. 40-59.

¹¹⁰ As Acosta pointed 'otra causa hay de que no podamos poner por obra la predicación apostolica al modo de los apostoles, y es que nos falta la facultad de hacer milagros' see José de Acosta, *Obras del Padre José de Acosta*, ed. by Francisco Mateos, S.J. (Madrid: Ediciones Atlas, 1954), Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, vol. 73, p. 443.

¹¹¹ Letter of Fróis (Malacca, 7 January 1556) in Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 37v.

mere labourers in this new vineyard who must have patience and respect God's will, 'a mim me foi necessario ter paciencia e conformer-me com vontade divina, porque tão claros contrastes bem entendia que para algum fim grande os permitia.'¹¹² As has happened in the histories written in the aftermath of the conquest of Peru compared to those written more than a half-century later, the passage of time played an important role in the tone of detachment; in the *História* one can detect a sense of erosion of the initial, missionary optimism.¹¹³ Contrasting opinions and approaches by different members of the same mission can be appreciated in Županov's analysis in Madurai, on 'demotic descriptions' with 'aristocratic analogies' in the seventeenth-century, between the Italian Jesuit Roberto de Nobili (1577-1656) with that of his fellow, and rival, Portuguese Jesuit Gonçalo Fernandes Trancoso (1541-1621).¹¹⁴ To an extent the views of the noblemen Xavier and Nobili were similar, in that both communicated their dreams of saintliness and their search for religious utopias.¹¹⁵ Fernandes, as did Fróis although for different reasons, focused on the differences between the pagans of Madurai and Europeans. Francisco Cabral, *hombre criado del Rei, fidalgo y muy fidalgo*, distrusted the Japanese and wished them to adapt to European ways.¹¹⁶ All were in agreement, however, that the the local religion was of great import to the success of their evangelising efforts. Nobili and Fernandes regarded the Brahmans as the crucial

¹¹² *História*, II, ch. 70, p. 134.

¹¹³ Such as for example Pedro Cieza de León's (c. 1518-54) *Crónicas del Perú* (1553) and the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega's (1539-1616) *Comentarios Reales de los Incas* (1609), see Sabine MacCormack, *On the Wings of Time: Rome, the Incas, Spain, and Peru* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007), p. 261.

¹¹⁴ See Ines G. Županov, *Disputed Mission: Jesuit Experiments and Brahmanical Knowledge in Seventeenth-century India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 103-45. On the principle of attachment see Pagden, *European Encounters*, pp. 17-49.

¹¹⁵ The Italian Jesuit Marcello Mastrilli (1603-37), apparently dreamed about Xavier, who foretold him about his martyrdom in Japan. On the life and martyrdom of Mastrilli, son of the Marquis of San Marzano, see Ines G. Županov, 'Passage to India: Jesuit Spiritual Economy between Martyrdom and Profit in the Seventeenth Century', in *Journal of Early Modern History*, 16 (2012), 1-39. See also Brockey, *Journey to the East*, p. 227. On utopia see Fatima Vieira, 'The Concept of Utopia' in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, ed. by Gregory Claeys (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 3-27; *Utopian Moments: Reading Utopian Texts*, eds. by Miguel A. Ramiro Aviles and J. C. Davis (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2012); Thomas More: *Utopia*, trans. and intro. by Paul Turner (London: Penguin Classics, 2003); *Three Early Modern Utopias: Utopia, New Atlantis, and The Isle of Pines*, ed. by Susan Bruce (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

¹¹⁶ Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, p. 15.

group to comprehend Indian society. Xavier and Fróis considered the monks (bonzes) as key to the success of the mission. In India, Barreto and Županov argued that, while the Jesuits were occupying themselves in learning the native religious beliefs, at the same time they were actively involved in their eradication.¹¹⁷ Once the Jesuit Henrique Henriques began to learn Malabar he wished to write against the Indian religious ‘fables.’¹¹⁸ Fróis too, devoted a year, in 1574, to learning the eight books of the *Hokke-kyo* (Lotus Sutra), the sacred book of the *Hokke* sect under the tutelage of a former monk: ‘porque importava muito ter noticia das seitas de Japão para melhor entender suas cavilações e enganos, e mais facilmente confundir em disputa aos bonzos com o texto de sua mesma escriptura.’ Fróis wanted to learn ‘Buddhism’ in order to undermine it, arguing that 25 years had passed without any knowledge: ‘athé então os nossos não sabião nada.’¹¹⁹ This sounds a bit extreme considering that many Jesuits had learned the language by then and had consistently engaged in disputations with the monks.¹²⁰

It seems as if Fróis came to the realisation that the conversion of Japan was going to be a much lengthier process than he had previously thought. When he began to write his *História*, it was near the end of the first 40 years of the mission, as in biblical terms he associated this period with one of travail but one that should be followed by a more fruitful and pleasant time; such was not the case in Japan.

¹¹⁷ Ângela Xavier Barreto and Ines G. Županov, *Catholic Orientalism: Portuguese Empire, Indian Knowledge (16th -18th Centuries)* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 119.

¹¹⁸ Henrique Henriques to Loyola and the Jesuits in Europe (Vembar, 31 October 1548) in *Documenta Indica*, I, p. 287.

¹¹⁹ *História*, II, ch. 102, pp. 408-9.

¹²⁰ The former monk was a nobleman and a nephew of a *Kuge*, who according to Fróis was not bothered that his teaching was giving ‘luz e armas aos christãos e à Igreja para mais facilmente poder confutar as couzas de Xaca [Shaka], cuja seita elle professava’ (*História*, II, ch. 102, p. 409). See also Schütte, *Valignano's Mission Principles*, I, p. 109.

I.1.2 Historical background

The arrival of the Jesuits in Japan marked the beginning of the so called ‘Christian century’ (1549-1639).¹²¹ The Europeans found a country that was in political chaos and undergoing radical changes. This period is characterised by constant wars between competing *daimyo* (feudal lords), called the *Sengoku jidai* (戦国時代, ‘Warring States era’, 1467-1600). It began with a civil war, Ōnin war, in 1467. The Emperor of Japan was nominally the official ruler but exercised little power; he delegated power to the Shogun whose political influence was weakened by the increasing power of semi-independent warlords. This power vacuum was seen as an opportunity by the *daimyo* to increase their political and financial power by annexing neighbouring fiefdoms. This situation was aggravated by the involvement of militant Buddhist sects.¹²² The internal conflicts affected the economy and agricultural production suffered. The Jesuits’ accounts point at the scarcity of food, expressing the poverty of the archipelago. From the very beginning Xavier realised that the survival of the Japanese mission was financially closely connected to other areas in Asia: ‘para los que están en Japón mande Su Alteza una provision [...] de Malaca les lleven lo necesario por cuanto la tierra de Japón es muy pobre.’¹²³

This state of affairs was at once detrimental to and favourable for the missionaries. Wars meant that the Jesuits were constantly on the move which made difficult the spreading of the Gospel; on the other hand, the *daimyo* viewed the *Padres* as useful mediators whose

¹²¹ Charles R. Boxer coined the term ‘Christian Century’ and used it in the title of his book *The Christian Century in Japan, 1549–1650* (1951). The term refers to the years from the arrival of Francis Xavier to the Tokugawa government’s banning of trade relations with Catholic Europe.

¹²² Andrew C. Ross, *A Vision Betrayed: The Jesuits in Japan and China, 1542-1742* (New York: Orbis Books, 1994), pp. 3-6. In the fifteenth and sixteenth-centuries the Ikkō-ikki were groups of rebellious farmers, monks, and lesser nobility backed up by the power of the Jōdo Shinshū sect of Buddhism, see Neil McMullin, *Buddhism and the State in Sixteenth-Century Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

¹²³ Quoted in *Sumario*, p. 41*. ‘La tierra de Japón es muy pobre’ see Xavier to Barzeus (Cochín, 24 April 1552) in *X. Cartas*, p. 484.

presence secured the commerce which the Portuguese brought to the archipelago, which in turn ensured financial profits.

This section will focus on how the initial high expectations for the Japanese mission expressed in Xavier's view of the commensurable cultures between Europe and Japan, show signs of erosion almost four decades later in the *História*. The historiography of the Japanese mission highlights the effect that the pioneering spirit of Xavier extended to his brethren, by inflating the hopes held for the results of this mission.¹²⁴ If Columbus, as argued by Joan-Pau Rubiés, set the tone for what was to follow in the nature of the accounts that were written about the conquest of America, then Xavier's impressions in his letters about the Japanese mission did the same for the latter.¹²⁵ In 1555, while stationed in Malacca, Fróis wrote to the Jesuits in Goa, telling them that what he had achieved in this area was not worth mentioning and it was 'milhor calalo.'¹²⁶ But in the same letter he depicts the coveted Japanese mission as 'thesoro escondido de Japão.'¹²⁷ It is not surprising that Fróis described

¹²⁴ Manuel Teixeira was the first biographer of Francis Xavier in his book *Vida del Bienaventurado padre Francisco Javier religioso de la Compañía de Jesús*. Among the first biographies see also Orazio Torsellino S.J., *Vida del P. Francisco Xavier de la Compañía de Jesus*, trans. into Spanish by Pedro de Guzmán 1560-1620 (1620?) in 1594; followed by João de Lucena, S.J., *História da Vida do Padre Francisco de Xavier*, facsimile edition with a foreword by Alvaro J. da Costa Pimpão, 2 vols. (Lisboa: Agência Geral do Ultramar, 1952), in 1600. Other biographies used here include *The Life of St. Francis Xavier Apostle of the Indies and Japan*, from the Italian of Daniello Bartoli and G. P. Maffei, ed. by Rev. F. W. Faber (London: Thomas Jones, 1858); James Brodrick, S.J., *Saint Francis Xavier, 1506-1552* (London: Burns & Oates, 1952); Georg Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier, His Life, His Times*, trans. by M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J., 4 vols. (Rome: The Jesuit Historical Institute, 1973); Miguel Corrêa Monteiro, *Saint Francis Xavier, A Man for all others* (CCCt Correios de Portugal, 2006); Verdoy, *San Francisco Javier*. This is by no means a complete list of primary and secondary sources about Francis Xavier; there are many works that touch upon his apostolic work in Asia such as Tolosana, *La Fascinación de la Diferencia*, pp. 9-34; Fernando García Gutiérrez, 'Europa descubre el extremo Oriente: Los Viajes de Francisco Xavier (1506-1552)' in *Jesuitas Exploradores, Pioneros y Geógrafos*, ed. by Juan Plazaola (Bilbao: Ediciones Mensajero, 2006), pp. 19-35.

¹²⁵ Rubiés, 'Futility in the New World', eds. by Elsner and Rubiés, p. 74. As D'Ortia points out that the figure of Francis Xavier 'towers over the whole enterprise', see Linda Zampol D'Ortia, *The Cape of the Devil: Salvation in the Japanese Jesuit Mission Under Francisco Cabral (1570-1579)* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Otago, 2016), p. 23. The influence of a group of letters or a book is illustrated by the impact of Sir John de Mandeville, a fourteenth-century writer, whose book was very influential in the age of discoveries, especially on Christopher Columbus and Vasco da Gama. See Hughes Didier, 'Bento de Góis: Un Jesuita entre los Musulmanes del Asia Central', in *Jesuitas Exploradores*, ed. by Plazaola, p. 40; see also Campbell *The Witness and the Other World*, pp.122-61. According to Álvarez-Taladriz Xavier's letters inspired Valignano to travel to Asia, see *Sumario*, p. 63*.

¹²⁶ Fróis to the Jesuits in Goa (Malacca, 1 December 1555) in *Documenta Indica*, III, p. 315.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 319.

the Japanese mission in such a manner. According to George Elison, Xavier thought he had come upon a ‘veritable mission El dorado’ and his oft-quoted letter from Kagoshima greatly influenced the Jesuits in Portuguese India.¹²⁸ Xavier, as well as many other missionaries of the period, modelled himself and his actions on the deeds of St Paul.¹²⁹ St Paul extended to all the call to conversion to Christianity.¹³⁰ However, unlike the apostle, Xavier considered the qualities of the gentiles *before* they had converted. If the call to conversion to Christianity was extended to all, Xavier separated those who were more capable of being evangelised from the rest. In 1552, Henrique Henriques’s (1520-1600) metaphor perhaps best embodies the Jesuit’s search for the ideal people to receive Christianity: ‘Assi como os capitães buscam pera as guerras os melhores cavaleyros, andamos nós buscando os melhores christãos pera esta guerra e combate que trazemos entre as mãos.’¹³¹ Xavier comments regarding Japan could be summarised as a description of a mission field that would, in contrast to his previous experience in Asia, be extremely rewarding for the expansion of Christianity. Xavier’s letters and his stories about Japan at the St Paul college of Goa had deeply motivated and influenced the minds of his fellow Jesuits. In 1552, as Xavier was selecting the second Jesuit group destined for Japan, 20-year-old Fróis wrote how the Jesuit brothers in Goa prayed to be chosen:

¹²⁸ Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, pp. 14-5. In 1566, Pope Pius V (1504-72) asked the Patriarch of Ethiopia to abandon Africa for the more fruitful field of Japan, see Lach, *Asia in the Making of Europe*, I/1, p. 294. Years later the Visitor Alessandro Valignano admitted that the Jesuits would rather work in Japan than elsewhere, since they could easily harvest from their proselytising efforts, see C.R. Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan: 1549-1650* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), p. 80.

¹²⁹ See O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, pp. 107-10. See also John O’Malley, ‘How the First Jesuits Became Involved in Education’ in *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum, 400th Anniversary Perspectives*, ed. Vincent J. Duminuco (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), p. 60. Among Paul’s epistles, the Jesuits, like Luther, preferred the Epistle to the Romans.

¹³⁰ ‘There is no distinction between Jew and Greek, between circumcised and uncircumcised. There are no strangers, barbarians, slave and free, but Christ is all and is in all’ see Colossians 3. 11.

¹³¹ Henrique Henriques to Loyola (Cochin, 27 January 1552) in *Documenta Indica*, II, p. 301. In rhetoric, a metaphor treats something as something else. Metaphor is thus a version of a basic way of knowing: we know something by seeing it *as* something. Metaphor has been treated as basic to language and the imagination by theorists, because it is cognitively respectable, see Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 73.

Os Yrmãos (Fróis was one) mui asezos no deseyo de o acompanhar, pedimdo com muita eficacia a Nosso Senhor os contase no numero daquelles de quem o Padre (Xavier) detriminava fazer a eleixaão sancta.¹³²

The allure of the archipelago, as noted by Charles R. Boxer, would continue and meant there was no lack of apostolic ardour or want of willing recruits for Japan.¹³³

European encounters with the *other*, as argued by Sanjay Subrahmanyam, took part between ‘particular subcultures or segments of societies’ and not between entire societies or cultural systems. This took place in a context where Europeans recognised political and social similarities with other societies and these were considered commensurable.¹³⁴ This could also be appreciated in the missionaries’ reports. As noted by Joan-Pau Rubiés many missionaries were humanist-educated.¹³⁵ As such, Xavier wanted to engage in debates in Japanese ‘universities’ as was done in Europe.¹³⁶ Valignano noted that China has ‘mucha semejanza con Europa.’¹³⁷ A half-century after Xavier’s founding of the Japanese mission, Roberto de Nobili (1577-1656) too, considered heathen Madurai ‘analogous’ to the European past.¹³⁸ These European noblemen standing at the threshold of new cultures found in these missions their ideal fields because they thought these cultures shared similarities

¹³² Luís Fróis to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Goa, 1 December 1552) in *Documenta Indica*, II, p. 453.

¹³³ Boxer, *The Christian Century*, p. 80.

¹³⁴ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Courtly Encounters: Translating Courtliness and Violence in Early Modern Eurasia* (Cambridge MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2012), pp. xiv and 209-15.

¹³⁵ See Joan-Pau Rubiés, ‘Real and imaginary dialogues in the Jesuit mission of Sixteenth-Century Japan’, in *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 55/2-3 (2012), 447-94 (448).

¹³⁶ Xavier wrote: ‘No será mucho que [...] os escriba para que vengáis a residir en alguna de estas grandes universidades (in Japan), donde, por ventura, viviréis más consolado, y haréis más fruto de lo que en la India hacéis’ see Xavier to Antonio Gomes (Kagoshima, 5 November 1549) in *X. Cartas*, p. 377.

¹³⁷ See *Sumario*, p. 35*. According to Standaert China had some similarities with Europe, in that both had the printing system, and China enjoyed a well-established educational system which made it nearly impossible for the Jesuits to establish new schools. See Nicolas Standaert, *The Interweaving of Rituals: Funerals in the Cultural Exchange between China and Europe* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2008), pp. 6-7.

¹³⁸ Županov, *Disputed Mission*, pp. 103-45. On Nobili see Vincent Cronin, *A Pearl to India: The Life Roberto de Nobili* (Frome and London: Butler and Tanner Ltd, 1959); A. Saulière, ed. by Savarimuthu Rajamanickam, *His Star in the East* (Madras: De Nobili Research Institute, 1995). On Nobili’s treatises see *Preaching Wisdom to the Wise: Three Treatises by Roberto de Nobili, S.J. Missionary, Scholar and Saint in 17th Century India*, trans. and intro. by Anand Amaladass, S.J., and Francis X. Clooney, S.J. (Chennai: Satya Nilayam Publications, 2005).

with their own.¹³⁹ As one analyses Xavier's missives, one can appreciate something that becomes clearer in his famous *Magna carta* which reflects on a close relationship between conversion and specific existing temporal conditions, such as the qualities that the neophytes needed to have for the success of the mission.¹⁴⁰ The spiritual conversion of the gentiles was, at least for Xavier, associated with and facilitated by a variety of issues. Showcasing his Iberian background, he enthusiastically wrote from Cochin about the high prospects of the conversion of 'Japón, que es una isla' where there are no 'moros ni judíos.'¹⁴¹ Japan is considered more apt to receive the Gospel on account of being free of the influence of other known religions, to qualities inherent to certain cultures, such as *fidalgua*, honour, and reason, qualities which he considered positive for the expansion of Christianity in Japan.¹⁴² At the same time, Xavier's first impressions, born of false analogies, had filled with optimism the minds of the Jesuits in Goa, including a young Luís Fróis.¹⁴³ Further, I have found that this nobleman of the Renaissance used for the first time the word *fidalgo* when describing non-Europeans.¹⁴⁴ It is worth considering this point, that to my knowledge has never before

¹³⁹ Valignano compared the Japanese mission to the primitive church, especially to its Greek and Roman beginnings. This was also the case for Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) in China, who looked for similarities with his own culture and aligned himself with the Confusian elite literati.

¹⁴⁰ This letter was written in Kagoshima on 5 November 1549.

¹⁴¹ See Xavier to Loyola (Cochin, 12 January 1549) in *X. Cartas*, p. 281. From Lisbon, Xavier displayed a similar feeling already regarding the conversion of Ceylon (Sri Lanka), see Xavier to Loyola and Juan Coduri (Lisbon, 18 March 1541) in *X. Cartas*, pp. 75-6. The Iberian Peninsula had experienced a long period of struggle, called the *Reconquista*, between Christians and Muslims by the sixteenth century. On Portugal see Stephen Lay, *The Reconquest Kings of Portugal: Political and Cultural Reorientation on the Medieval Frontier* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); on Spain see Angus Mackay, *Spain in the Middle Ages: From Frontier to Empire, 1000-1500* (Basingstoke and London: The Macmillan Press, 1977), and Richard Fletcher, *Moorish Spain* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006). On the Judaism in Spain and its expulsion see Joseph Pérez, *The Expulsion of the Jews from Spain*, trans. by Lysa Hochroth (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007).

¹⁴² Xavier promised he will call more Jesuits to the Japanese mission: 'no sera mucho que antes de dos años os escriba para que muchos de vosotros vengan a Japón' see Xavier to the Jesuits in Goa (Kagoshima, 5 November 1549) in *X. Cartas*, p. 373.

¹⁴³ See Joan-Pau Rubiés, 'Comparing Cultures in the Early Modern World: Hierarchies, Genealogies and the Idea of European Modernity' in *Regimes of Comparatism: Frameworks of Comparison in History, Religion and Anthropology*, eds. by Renaud Gadné, Simon Goldjill, and Geoffrey E. R. Lloyd (Leiden: Brill, 2019), pp. 116-76.

¹⁴⁴ Xavier to the Jesuits in Goa (Kagoshima, 5 November 1549), p. XXIIIv, in Coimbra *Cartas*. Xavier to the Jesuits in Goa (Kagoshima, 5 November 1549), p. 39v, in Alcalá *Cartas*. It is worth noting that three of the first Generals of the Society of Jesus were nobles, see John Patrick Donnelly, S.J., 'New Religious Orders for

been mentioned, namely that until Xavier had reached Japan there is no mention of *fidalgua* in his letters when referring to other Asian peoples.¹⁴⁵ When mentioning local societies, he never used *fidalgua* or *fidalgo* in the 76 extant letters written after his arrival in Goa. It is only in Japan that Xavier incorporated the local society into the European framework by naming a Japanese ‘noble’ such as a *bushi* or samurai as a *fidalgo* or *caballero*, although Japanese society had no exact equivalent. As a result of this, he was interpreting this new environment according to his European background, often comparing one to the other.

Fróis does not appear to have been opposed to the policy of inculturation delineated by Valignano in Japan. In fact he voted in favour of its complete adaptation at the Japan consultation, although he displayed his astonishment when Valignano requested a total process of *accommodatio* or adaptation, so drastic that Fróis wrote: ‘era necessario em os nossos huma total transmutação da natureza quanto ao comer e costumes e modo de viver, por ser tudo oppozito e mui diferente de como se procede em Europa.’¹⁴⁶ Fróis underlined the differences between both cultures, *tudo oppozito*, in the *História*. He pointed to the incommensurability or opposite polarity of both cultures, but he used this for didactic purposes, that is, to highlight the need for the Jesuits to adapt to the Japanese culture in order for them to do a total self-transformation, as will be discussed later in chapter III. This is dissimilar from his earlier letter, where he described Japan as ‘the hidden treasure’.

Men’ in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Reform and Expansion 1500-1660*, ed. by R. Po-Chia Hsia (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 163.

¹⁴⁵ On *hidalguía* see I.A.A. Thompson, ‘The Nobility in Spain, 1600-1800’ in *The European Nobilities*, ed. H.M. Scott (Harlow: Longman, 1995), I, pp. 174-235; on *hijodalgo* or *fijodalgo* see Américo Castro, *España en su História: Cristianos, Moros y Judíos* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1948), pp. 71-8. Not only was Xavier the first to place the Japanese on socially equal terms with Europeans, but a close analysis of all his extant letters reveals that Japan is the first culture to which he makes this comparison. Xavier had been in Asia since 1542 and had dealings with different cultures such as those of India, Malacca and the Moluccas. In describing these societies Xavier used the term ‘king’, ‘prince’, and ‘principal’ when referring to the upper level members of a social hierarchy.

¹⁴⁶ *História*, III, ch. 18, p. 130.

In the *História* Fróis distanced his narrative from the initial level of excitement shown in Xavier's shallow analysis of the Japanese culture. Fróis, who four decades later had gone deeper into the fabric of Japanese society, presented the erosion of that initial optimism, to the point that the ups and downs of the mission were considered common: 'se converteo toda a alegria em tristeza e tribulaçoens, couza corrente em Japão.'¹⁴⁷ This would be echoed by Valignano in 1601, who pointed at the fickle nature of Japan as the reason for delaying writing his own history: 'ser las cosas de Japón tan inscontantes y variables de su natural que apenas se puede escribir de él cosa del todo firme y cierta.'¹⁴⁸

It is remarkable that Fróis made use of very little material from Xavier, especially from his famous statements in his Kagoshima letter.¹⁴⁹ More importantly, it appears as if Fróis aimed at distancing his work from the early descriptions of the mission, and he dedicated only the first six chapters to the pioneer Xavier and only two of the pioneer's missives.¹⁵⁰ Although Županov pointed out that what 'all histories written about the *Estado da Índia* had in common, even when their titles indicated that they were history of the Society of Jesus, is that the first part was usually in fact a biography of Xavier.'¹⁵¹ However, this is not the case in Fróis's extant *História*, and since the titles of the first part are extant it appears that the *História* is an exception.

This is significant when one considers that he was in an enviable position to write extensively about the future saint, especially when in Europe material about the Apostle of

¹⁴⁷ *História*, III, ch. 49, p. 360. 'Neste tempo as cousas da Christiandade, & dos padres em parte hiao mui prosperas & em parte padecião tormenta' see Évora *Cartas*, II, p.188r and 190v.

¹⁴⁸ See *Sumario*, p. 66*.

¹⁴⁹ Xavier to the Jesuits in Goa (Kagoshima, 5 November 1549) in *X. Cartas*, p. 354.

¹⁵⁰ See Appendix - Fróis's sources for the *História de Japam*, p. 277.

¹⁵¹ See Ines G. Županov, 'The Historiography of the Jesuit Missions in India (1500-1800)' in *Jesuit Historiography Online*. Consulted online on 21 February 2020 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2468-7723_jho_COM_192579. However, this is not the case in Fróis's extant *História*, and since the titles of the first part are extant it appears that the *História* is an exception.

the Indies was in high demand.¹⁵² According to Donald F. Lach, when in 1556 King John III requested the viceroy of India to collect all eyewitness accounts of the deeds of Xavier in Asia, this was done with the aim of starting the process of Xavier's canonisation.¹⁵³ Fernão Mendes Pinto in his profane account the *Peregrinação* dedicated no fewer than 15 chapters to his friend, and Xavier was one of the main protagonists of his work.¹⁵⁴ Mendes Pinto's account of Xavier was used by Maffei in his *Historiarum Indicarum Libri XVI* (1588), and by Xavier's biographers.¹⁵⁵

Xavier described the Japanese people as 'la mejor que hasta agora está descubierta.'¹⁵⁶ This impression was written after only three months since his arrival in Japan. This observation was not directed to the converts but extended to all the Japanese people. When Fróis wrote his text he avoided this statement, and he referred to the *japões* (*gentios*) as follows: 'Prudentes e de vivo engenho';¹⁵⁷ 'os japões são soberbos';¹⁵⁸ 'em couza de segredo ordinariamente são os japões rotos.'¹⁵⁹

¹⁵² Fróis met Xavier in Goa in 1549 and in 1552, besides this, Fróis had access to Xavier's deeds in Asia through the memories of Jesuit colleagues who had worked with him, such as Torres and Fernandes in Japan, therefore he had access to enough material to write a biographical account on Xavier.

¹⁵³ Lach, *Asia in the Making of Europe*, p. 327. On the cult of saints in this period see Peter Burke, 'How to Become a Counter-Reformation Saint' in Peter Burke, *The Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy: Essays on Perception and Communication* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 48-62. See also Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981). Simon Ditchfield, 'Tridentine Worship and the Cult of Saints' in *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, ed. by Po-Chia Hsia, pp. 201-24.

¹⁵⁴ See Fernão Mendes Pinto, *Peregrinação*, facsimile edition of the 1614 edition (Maia: Castoliva editora, 1995), ch. CCIII-CCV, and ch. CCVII-CCXVIII. On Fernão Mendes Pinto's biography see Francisco de Leite de Faria, *As muitas edições da "Peregrinação" de Fernão Mendes Pinto* (Lisbon: Academia Portuguesa da História, 1992), pp. 153-81; *The Travels of Mendes Pinto*, ed. and trans. by Catz, pp. xxxvi-xxxix.

¹⁵⁵ Such as in Orazio Tursellini, S.J. (1545-99) *De Vita Francisci Xaverii: Qui primus è Societate Iesv in Indiam & Iaponiam Euangelium inuexit, Libri Sex* (1596), and in Lucena, *História da Vida do Padre Francisco de Xavier*.

¹⁵⁶ Xavier to the Jesuits in Goa (Kagoshima, 5 November 1549) in *X. Cartas*, p. 354.

¹⁵⁷ See *História*, I, ch. 26, p. 165. See also *História*, I, ch. 36, p. 242, 'universalmente mui engenhozos'; II, ch. 104, p. 425, 'os japões são de vivo engenho'.

¹⁵⁸ *História* I, ch. 36, p. 243. See also *História*, II, ch. 57, p. 13, 'Os japões ordinariamente não estimão as pessoas estrangeiras'; II, ch. 73, p. 157, 'Entre os japões hé mui grande injuria por sua grande soberba'; II, ch. 79, p. 21, 'soberba e vã estimação dos japões'.

¹⁵⁹ *História*, I, ch. 29, p. 196; IV, ch. 8, p. 54, 'serem os japões naturalmente algum tanto roto[s] no silencio'.

Fróis was more cautious to freely extend virtues to all the Japanese, on the other hand the Christians are depicted in a very positive way: ‘os christãos [...] procedem com devoção e gosto nas cousas da fé.’¹⁶⁰

Apart from Xavier in his letters, other early Jesuits of the Japanese mission would continue to depict the Japanese people, and especially the neophytes, in a positive light. Cosme de Torres for example wrote: ‘estes Iapoes sam mais aparelhados para que em elles se prante nossa santa fe, que todas as gentes do mundo.’¹⁶¹ Almeida stated that since he was born, neither he nor the other Jesuits in Japan had seen such devotion in neophytes ‘nem ainda em religiosos tomando o Señor.’¹⁶² These accounts were very important to the writing of the *História*, as they had created a very specific picture of the Japanese reality and it influenced the manner in which Fróis decided to write his manuscript. After his first visit to Japan, Alessandro Valignano was desperate to return to Europe to explain, not only to the General but also to the Roman Curia what he thought was difficult to convey through letters about the reality of the Japanese mission: ‘avia mucho que dezir y cosas estrañas y tan nuevas, mal se pueden dar a entender por cartas.’¹⁶³ The early missionaries’ letters had given an incomplete picture in Valignano’s view. For Fróis it perpetuated an erroneous image, nonetheless he would use many of the written correspondences, sometimes copying them, sometimes avoiding certain among them, and often he would paraphrase these letters, usually with silent changes or additions to achieve his own goal.

¹⁶⁰ *História*, I, ch. 19, p. 121; ‘Pelo Natal vierão ouvir missa os christãos de oito e dez legoas, e erão tantos, que não cabião na igreja’ *História*, I, ch. 17, p. 110; ‘os christãos [have] devoção e gosto das couzas de Deos’ I, ch. 19, p. 123; ‘os christãos [...] não deixava de prevalecer o vigor da immaculada ley divina’ I, ch. 26, p. 168.

¹⁶¹ Torres to the Brothers in India (29 September 1551) in Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 17v; Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 48v.

¹⁶² Almeida to Mestre Belchior (1 November 1557) in Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 53v.

¹⁶³ See Alessandro Valignano to the General Acquaviva (Cochin, 28 October 1583) in *Documenta Indica*, XII, p. 830. In the end Valignano wrote his *Sumario de las cosas de Japón* (1583) a treaty of 30 chapters to better explain the Japanese mission.

I.2.1 Textual context

The *História* was born on the background of the Jesuit letters published and widely known in Europe. Fróis was aware of the letters' popularity and their wider readership and decided to base his work chronographically following his own and his co-religionists' letters. He was also conscious that the letters were written by a wide range of Jesuits missionaries with differing levels of knowledge of the Japanese reality. Fróis knew about the commission at the end of 1584 or thereabouts, and finished writing up to 1594. In a letter to Acquaviva, Macau, 18 January 1593, Fróis announced 'La Istoría de Japón tenemos con la gratia del Señor acabado, en que gastamos sinco o seis anos.'¹⁶⁴ Although there were gap periods, as in 1593, Fróis told the General 'Dende el año 89 hasta agora estaa la Istoría ansi suspensa sin en ella se hazer nada ni proseguir.'¹⁶⁵ In the same year he noted:

Parque a calidade da Historia e o pezo della requiere ser muy exactamente limada, e metida na força da diligente examinação, fica [...] Valignano encarregado pera tomar o assumpto desta revista.¹⁶⁶

A general view of Fróis's *História de Japam* leaves us with the impression of a detailed and lengthy narrative of the accounts of the first four decades of the evangelisation of Japan, even, to some extent, overly thorough descriptions of events. Fróis wrote that Valignano asked him to shorten the *História* in order to be sent to Rome: 'era necessario abreviarla y resumirla en hun conpendio mas breve.' This much shorter and revised version was to be 'hun volume poco maior que una annua de las que vien en impresas de Roma.' However, Fróis was determined that his work should remain as it was. This differs for example with João Rodrigues, who in the preface of his *Arte da Lingoa de Iapam* acknowledges the criticism made by fellow Jesuits for being too diffuse and promises to provide a shorter

¹⁶⁴ *História*, I, app. 8, p. 405.

¹⁶⁵ Fróis to Acquaviva (Macau, 12 November 1593) in *História*, I, app. 10, p. 408

¹⁶⁶ Fróis to the Fathers and brothers of Coimbra and Évora (Macau, 1593) in *História*, I, app. 11, p. 410.

version for beginners.¹⁶⁷ Although Fróis acknowledged that his manuscript needed to be polished (*limar*), he completely disagreed with Valignano in the former matter, and almost asked the General Acquaviva to override the Visitor's decision:

no se me ofrece que se pueda *decenter* abreviar tanto que quede en tan pequena cantidad sin falta notable, porque huna Istoría como la de Japón, en que de necessidade se an de apuntar por orden en las más de las cosas essenciaes, que se hallan recitadas en las cartas que de acá se an inbiado y andan en Europa estanpadas, no veo como tan larga materia (salten de las cosas principales) se pueda abreviar tanto que se inclua en tan coartado compendio [...] Por lo que yo deseava mucho que se inbiase la Istoría a V.P. así como estaa.¹⁶⁸

He even continued, in support of his stance, arguing that 'algunos Padres doctos y que tienen buena inteligencia de las cosas de Japón la an visto y me an afirmado que en grande manera se avía V.P. de alegrar si le fuere ter a las manos.'¹⁶⁹ Desperate for his manuscript to be sent to Rome, perhaps Fróis thought that it would be for the Jesuits in Rome to ultimately edit his work. This was the case of José de Acosta's famous book *De procuranda*. In 1582, General Acquaviva sent a letter with Acosta's book to the provincial of the Jesuit mission in Peru Gil Gonzalez, saying 'me ha contentado mucho [...] V.R. le haga allá rever de nuevo a quien le pareciere' but he warns that the section about the cruelty of the *conquistadores* or any other content that could cause offence should be removed.¹⁷⁰

Fróis challenged the Visitor's instructions; this is remarkable when one considers that up until 1596 there was no Bishop in Japan, and Valignano enjoyed 'virtually complete control of the activities of the Church.'¹⁷¹ Josef F. Moran has suggested that Fróis does not directly

¹⁶⁷ João Rodrigues's, ed. by Cooper (London: The Hakluyt Society, 2001), p. xxi.

¹⁶⁸ Fróis to Claudio Acquaviva (Macau, 12 November 1593) in *Jap.-Sin.*, 12/ I, 112r-113v; *História*, I, app. 10, p. 408.

¹⁶⁹ *História*, I, app. 10, pp. 408-9.

¹⁷⁰ *De Procuranda Indorum Salute*, see General Claudio Acquaviva to the Provincial of Peru Gil Gonzalez, S.J. (Rome, 8 November 1582) in *Monumenta Peruana*, III, ed. by Antonio de Egaña, S.J. (Rome: Apud, Monumenta Historica Soc. Iesu, 1561), pp. 195-6, henceforth referred to as *Monumenta Peruana*.

¹⁷¹ See M. Antoni J. Üçerler, S.J., 'Alessandro Valignano: Man, Missionary, and Writer', in *Renaissance Studies*, 17/3 (2003), 337-366 (341).

criticise Valignano, but this shows that he was indeed saying that the Visitor's opinion was erroneous and that he was right, and with the full support of some 'Padres doctos.'¹⁷²

It is clear from the above that Fróis had intended for his work to be extensive, to expand upon the letters that had been written from Japan since 1549, in a coherent work and with an overall plan that followed a chronological thread.¹⁷³ In 1588, in a letter to the General, Valignano criticises Fróis's annual letter, focusing on the latter's rigour (or lack thereof) regarding his sources: '(Fróis) no tiene tanto miramiento ni en inquirir si es verdad o no todo lo que se diz.'¹⁷⁴

Much has been written about Valignano's opinion of Fróis's lack of veracity and rigour in his *História*. Josef Wicki asserts that in Valignano's *História del Principio y Progreso de la Compañía de Jesús en las Indias Orientales* (1542-64) 'Não se lhe nota dependência directa de Fróis.'¹⁷⁵ However, Üçerler has demonstrated that when he wrote his own *História*, Valignano plainly did not 'hesitate to plagiarise Fróis's account.'¹⁷⁶ If Valignano doubted the fidelity of Fróis's text, then why copy it? In addition to this, Valignano took Fróis as his secretary to Macau (October 1592- July 1595); if he had little regard for the first historian of the Japanese mission and doubted his qualities as a writer, why enlist him as his personal secretary? Since the twentieth century, scholars have spoken highly of Fróis's text; Schurhammer notes Fróis's talent for description of facts.¹⁷⁷ J.F. Schütte describes the *História* as having great historical fidelity.¹⁷⁸ James Murdoch argued that Fróis 'not infrequently writes with the insight and breadth of view of a statesman, while he exhibits

¹⁷² See Moran, *The Japanese and the Jesuits*, p. 40.

¹⁷³ Three times Fróis was explicitly concerned with keeping the thread, *fi*, of his work, see *História*, II, ch. 61, p. 56; III, ch. 11, p. 79; ch. 22, p. 166.

¹⁷⁴ Valignano to Acquaviva (Macau, 30 October 1588) in *História*, I, app. 5, p. 402.

¹⁷⁵ *História*, III, prol. second part, p. 14*.

¹⁷⁶ See Üçerler, 'Sacred historiography', I, p. LII.

¹⁷⁷ See Luís Fróis S. J., 'ein Missionshistoriker des 16. Jahrhunderts in Indien und Japan', vol. 109, pp. 453-469, cited in *História*, I, Intro, p. 29*.

¹⁷⁸ Schütte, *Valignano's Mission Principles*, I, pp. 15-8.

rare ability in his mastery over details.¹⁷⁹ And M. Cooper is right when he states that ‘for graphic and minute detail it is always hard to beat Fróis.’¹⁸⁰ In my opinion, while the *História* was in need of revision, the main reason for Valignano’s disapproval of Fróis’s *História* is that the latter had partially focused on writing a very long account with pedagogical purposes, to educate and aid future missionaries destined for the Japanese mission. The historiography of the Japanese mission has emphasised Valignano’s constant concern over its dire economic situation. Antoni Üçerler argued that when Valignano wrote his own *História* he saw it as an opportunity to persuade European authorities ‘this was the ‘right’ interpretation of the present religious and political turmoil in the East,’ and in the process a chance to convince Roman and European elites to fund the mission.¹⁸¹ According to José Luis Álvarez-Taladriz everytime Valignano wrote about Japan he mentioned the deficient financial situation of the mission.¹⁸² Michael Cooper went further, suggesting everytime Valignano wrote to Rome he showed ‘signs of desperation’ regarding the financial crisis of the Japanese mission, believing that if the mission was better publicised in Europe, funding would be possible.¹⁸³ This is evident in an impassioned letter that Valignano wrote to the General in 1583, in which he says he would be willing to sell even the chalices to pay the debts of the St Paul College and to help alleviate the scarcity of funds for the Japanese mission.¹⁸⁴ In contrast, the pressing economic situation of the mission does not figure in

¹⁷⁹ Murdoch, *A History of Japan*, p. 78. See also Michael Cooper, ed., *They came to Japan: An Anthology of European Reports of Japan, 1543-1640* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1965), p. 409.

¹⁸⁰ Michael Cooper, ‘The Early Jesuits in Japan and Buddhism’, in *Portuguese Voyages to Asia and Japan in the Renaissance Period: Proceedings of the International Conference Sophia University, Tokyo September 24-26, 1993*, ed. Peter Milward (Tokyo: Embassy of Portugal in Tokyo, 1994), p. 153.

¹⁸¹ See Üçerler, ‘Sacred historiography’, I, p. 5. On Jesuit finances see Dauril Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise: The Society of Jesus in Portugal, Its Empire, and Beyond, 1540-1750* (California: Stanford University Press, 1996). Schütte, *Valignano's Mission Principles*, II, pp. 35-8.

¹⁸² See *Sumario*, p. 63*.

¹⁸³ Michael Cooper, *The Japanese Mission to Europe 1582-1590: The Journey of Four Samurai Boys through Portugal, Spain and Italy* (Kent: Global Oriental, 2005), p. 8.

¹⁸⁴ ‘Aguora que yo estoy aqui se an de pagar (the college’s debts) aunque se vendan los cálices, porque sé como está y lo que importa Japón’ see Alessandro Valignano to General Acquaviva (Cochin, 28 October 1583) in *Documenta Indica*, XII, p. 852.

Fróis's text and Valignano may have considered it as a missed opportunity, especially given that Fróis's chronicle was commissioned from Rome.

From the early stages of his book, Fróis knew who was going to be an important protagonist of this narrative and the specific facts on which he was to focus. This becomes very clear, as there are no fewer than 32 instances when Fróis promises that he will expand on a subject at a later time 'se dirá' on its place.¹⁸⁵ Fróis was a fecund writer and endowed with a rich vocabulary. He possessed the capacity of vividly describing events with detailed descriptions while maintaining and following an elaborate plan.

The internal tensions present among the Jesuits in Japan are not to be found in the *História*, but the issues raised due to the different nationalities of the missionaries were clearly a problem.¹⁸⁶ From 1580 the Iberian Union brought the whole Iberian Peninsula and their overseas territories under the Spanish Habsburg kings. Problems of nationalities reached the Japanese mission. According to a Spanish captain the Jesuits did not pray for King Philip of Spain 'in the memento for the living.'¹⁸⁷

In 1559, Fróis wrote a letter full of praise for the work of the Franciscans and Dominicans friars for their 'solicita charidade e santo zelo' which they showed in spreading the Gospel in Goa.¹⁸⁸ But relations between the friars and the Jesuits only worsened, and by 1596 Fróis

¹⁸⁵ *História*, I, ch. 8, p. 60; ch. 29, p. 197; ch. 38, p. 253, 260; II, ch. 63, p. 70; ch. 65, p. 92; ch. 75, p. 170; ch. 95, p. 359; ch. 112, p. 477; ch. 114, p. 493; III, ch. 9, p. 69; ch. 11, p. 81; ch. 13, p. 97; ch. 16, p. 117; ch. 26, p. 201; ch. 27, p. 228, 229; ch. 34, p. 285; ch. 36, p. 306; ch. 40, p. 334, 337; IV, ch. 1, p. 4,10; ch. 22, p. 171; ch. 25, p. 193; ch. 43, p. 317; ch. 48, p. 360; ch. 58, p. 449; V, ch. 30, p. 234; ch. 33, p. 252; ch. 51, p. 382; ch. 58, p. 439.

¹⁸⁶ Valignano had already caused opposition in Lisbon when he brought with him 42 missionaries destined for Asia, the majority of them Spaniards (24). The Portuguese authorities were displeased given that only ten or eleven were considered to be needed, see *Sumario*, I, pp. 12-3*.

¹⁸⁷ Quoted in Boxer and Cummins, 'The Dominican Mission', in *Jesuit and Friar*, ed. by J.S. Cummins, II, p. 32. According to Cummins the converts began to refer to themselves as 'friar-Christians' or as 'Jesuit-Christians', this distinction was further appreciated by the Spanish and Portuguese names given to the converts, see *ibid.*, p. 33. Although the vast majority of Jesuits in Asia were Portuguese, there were many other members from different nationalities and this clearly caused problems, as it can be appreciated by a group of French Jesuits who arrived in China in 1687. See Brockey, *Journey to the East*, pp. 158-61.

¹⁸⁸ Luís Fróis to the Jesuits in Portugal (Goa, 14 December 1559) in *Documenta Indica*, IV, p. 334.

wrote a private letter from Japan to his previous teacher of Aristotle's *Physics* in Goa in 1560, and ex-Superior in Japan, Francisco Cabral, explaining the problems engendered by the arrival not only of Spanish friars, but also of Spanish Jesuits to Japan. Fróis preferred fellow Portuguese Jesuits, and asked Cabral: 'Lo que pido a vuestra reverencia, por amor de Dios, es que escribiendo al Padre General, quiera en seguida quemar esta carta para que no sea vista por nadie.'¹⁸⁹ The letter was never burned, as Fróis wished, and it highlights the internal problems between Spanish and Portuguese Jesuits in Japan, which mirrored the wider religious and political strife between other religious orders in East Asia.¹⁹⁰ These opinions never appear in his *História* and his brethren are never criticised. Fróis does however briefly mention some problems caused by the arrival of Spanish traders en route to New Spain or the Philippines.¹⁹¹

A close look at this work reveals that there is much more than just an edifying book. His own interpretation is constant, one that is usually subtly displayed throughout the *História*.

¹⁸⁹ *Dos Cartas del Padre Luís Fróis, S.J. sobre la Desavenencia Hispano-portuguesa en la Compania de Jesus* (1596), ed. by J.L. Álvarez-Taladriz (Osaka: Estudios Hispánicos, 1973), vol. 3, p. 17. Others raised concerns to the Society at large, such as Mariana (1536–1624) who in his *Discurso de las Cosas de la Compañía*, frankly explained in a generic way the defects of the newly born Society of Jesus: 'nadie se puede maravillar confesemos que hay yerros y faltas en nuestro gobierno', see Mariana, *Obras*, vol. 31, p. 595. On other internal problems within the Society of the time see also William V. Bangert, S.J., *Jerome Nadal, S.J.: Tracking the First Generation of Jesuits* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1992), pp. 173-92.

¹⁹⁰ This letter could be considered as an 'higuera' a kind of appendix where the missionary could write more personal things and sometimes not edifying: 'tengan advertencia de no mostrar las letras á quien dañen, especialmente lo que viene en hijuelas, pero tambien en las principales de las nuevas que de acá se envían, agora sea extractos, agora cartas copiadas de los hermanos; que no es todo para todos' see Juan Polanco to the Jesuits (Rome: 27 July 1547) in *Monumenta Ignaciana, Epistolae et instructions*, 12 vols. (Rome: Matriti, 1903-11), I, p. 543.

¹⁹¹ See *História*, V, ch. 48; and ch. 55. The religious orders not only differed in their appearance. In the Philippines the proselytising methods of Dominicans, Augustinians, and Jesuits caused much debate. In order to avoid confusing the natives on 27 April 1594 their doctrines were unified for the entire colony, see Birgit Tremml-Werner, *Spain, China, and Japan in Manila, 1571-1644* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015), p. 112.

I.2.2 Rhetoric

Taking the title of the manuscript as a paratext, here Fróis considered his account as a ‘history’ and named it as such. But, we must also consider that during the Renaissance history was often thought of as a branch of rhetoric, therefore I believe that it is necessary to review what rhetoric meant in the Renaissance and the manner in which Fróis wrote his manuscript in order to better understand the *História*. Rhetoric is the art of persuasive speaking or writing, or the training in writing and delivering speeches, by using figures of speech and other compositional techniques.¹⁹²

Josef Wicki noted that when Fróis lacks material he adds events, sometimes not very strictly chronologically, as well as ‘lançando mão de discursos nem sempre isentos de retórica.’¹⁹³

I argue that a close reading of his *História* reveals that, in fact, rhetoric is constantly utilised often in a very subtle manner, and every step is imbued with ideology, strategy, and tactics. It is therefore crucial to better understand this chronicle that this be taken into consideration.

Rhetoric education in the Renaissance focused on reading classical texts. Students were taught manuals of tropes and figures as well as letter-writing styles which was a central feature in education, starting by imitating Cicero’s letters.¹⁹⁴ A rhetorical figure is generally defined as an alteration of or swerve from ‘ordinary’ usage.¹⁹⁵ In the Jesuit schools (*colégios*), it was recommended for the teaching staff to read ‘letras humanas, latinas y

¹⁹² See Peter Mack, *A History of Renaissance Rhetoric 1380-1620* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). On rhetoric in the Renaissance see Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought and the Arts* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1964, 1980, expanded ed., pp. 228-246.

¹⁹³ *História*, I, p. 26*.

¹⁹⁴ Thomas M. Colney, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 2nd ed. (1990), pp. 109-150. See also Brian Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989). The *Epistolae ad Familiares* was discussed by Fróis’s contemporary Michel de Montaigne (1533-92) in his *On the Greatness of Rome* essay. Overall, there is a great deal of influence of Cicero, Quintilian, and Aristotle in Montaigne’s essays.

¹⁹⁵ Culler, *Literary Theory*, p. 72.

griegas y retórica.¹⁹⁶ The rules of teaching in Jesuit schools suggested that in the fourth year ‘se leeran los principios de copia y de arte de screvir epístolas [...] y screvir latín con elegancia y copia’; in the fifth year ‘se leerá la arte de rethórica con oraciones de Tulio (Cicero) y Demósthene.¹⁹⁷ The study of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* highlighted the provoking of emotions as an element in rhetorical training.¹⁹⁸

In the universities logic and rhetoric were an important part of the syllabus. Works such as Cicero's *De Inventione*, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, and *De Oratore* and Quintilian's *Institutes* had a profound influence on Renaissance education. The *Monumenta Paedagogica S.J.* recommended:

In classe rhetorices *primo loco erit utile, si aliquod compendium eius artis perstringatur; deinde enarrabitur plena ars ex Cicerone, vel ex autore ad Herennium, ex partitionibus, ex libris de oratore. Legetur etiam aliquis liber ex Quintiliano.*¹⁹⁹

Quintilian pointed out that history was one of the three kinds of *narratio* in which is contained a relation of facts.²⁰⁰ But although factual, he argues ‘it ought not to be dry and insipid’ while also not indulging in ‘erratic, and wantonly adorned with far-fetched descriptions.’²⁰¹ As will be demonstrated, Fróis made use of many rhetorical devices and techniques in his manuscript to achieve his goals.

¹⁹⁶ *Monumenta Paedagogica Societatis Jesu* 1586, eds. by Cecilio Gómez Rodeles, et al. (Madrid: Augusto Avrial, 1901), p. 50.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 663. See Cicero, *Defence Speeches*, trans. by D. H. Berry (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

¹⁹⁸ Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric*, trans. by Robin Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

²⁰⁰ The other two are the *fable* and the *argumentum*, see Quintilian: *On the Teaching of Speaking and Writing, Translations from Books One, Two and Ten of the Institutio Oratoria*, ed. by James J. Murphy & Cleve Wiese (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2016), 2nd ed., book II, p. 98.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 98-9.

Sixteenth-century works, such as Erasmus's *De Utraque Verborum ac Rerum Copia* (1512), became an important pedagogical element on style.²⁰² In the studies of humanities and rhetoric for the Jesuit college of Coimbra it was advised that the students: ‘hagasse una epítome en prosa de *utraque copia*, á imitación de la de Erasmo.’²⁰³ Fróis writes that the *curso das artes* in the college of Saint Paul in Goa taught the brothers of the Society of Jesus on Virgil, Sallust, Horace, Cicero’s *De Officiis* and *Epistolae ad Familiares*, the works of the Spanish humanist Juan Luis Vives (1492-1540) and Greek language.²⁰⁴ Wicki believed that Fróis shows his humanist education in Goa when he compares Tacanobu’s swift war manoeuvres with Sallust’s *The Jugurthine War* in ‘a diligencia do Jugurta’, and the ‘solicitude e prompto animo de Julio Cessar.’²⁰⁵ But more than just showing his humanist education, Fróis uses classical protagonists with high inference meaning to emphasise his point. As taught by Erasmus in his method of varying amplification, when in order to be more effective one uses instead the appropriate word a stronger one, such as brigand instead of dishonest; lifeless to one afflicted by grief; or Atreus for a cruel person; Sardanapalus for an effeminate one. A similar example can be seen in the Viceroyalty of Peru in a letter by the Jesuit Miguel Muñoz who complained that his superior put him for eleven months in a jail, a place, according to him, where most people considered that to spend a night there was similar to ten years in hell: ‘fui tratado con tanta tirannía que fue pintada la de Mazenzio y Phalaris.’²⁰⁶

²⁰² On Erasmus’s influence see O’Malley, *Religious Culture*, VIII, pp. 81-98.

²⁰³ *Monumenta Paedagogica*, ed. by Rodeles and others, p. 668.

²⁰⁴ Luís Fróis to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Goa, 1 December 1552) in *Documenta Indica*, II, p. 464. On the influence of Greek in Renaissance rhetoric see Colney, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition*, pp. 115-20. In France, in the Jesuit schools the fifth and final class was called ‘la rhétorique couronnait la formation littéraire’ see Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric*, p. 257.

²⁰⁵ *História*, IV, ch. 8, pp. 53-4. On Jesuit formation see Michael Cooper, *Rodrigues the Interpreter: An early Jesuit in Japan and China* (New York: Weatherhill, 1974), pp. 52-69.

²⁰⁶ Maxentius (c. 278-312 AD) was a Roman Emperor vilified as a cruel tyrant who was defeated by Constantine and drowned in the Tiber river. And Phalaris (died c. 554 BC) was a tyrant of Agrigento, Sicily, believed to have roasted his enemies in a bronze bull, and he met his end also burned in his own bronze bull;

Considering all the emphasis and coaching that Jesuit students received on rhetorical treatise, it is fair to say that his confreres were well versed on the use of rhetoric, not only on the *ars praedicandi* (instructions in the composition of sermons) but also on the *ars dictandi* (instructions in the composition of documents). As an edifying and pedagogically oriented work, Fróis's manuscript must be interpreted in the light of the audience the writer had in mind.

By the time Fróis began work on his *História* he was considered by his fellow Jesuits to be an accomplished letter writer and was the editor of the *cartas annuas*. We can observe a series of rhetorical devices and methods used in the *História* which this dissertation aims at scrutinising with the purpose of shedding light on his strategy. As such we appreciate that he wished to state that he was using *decorum*, a central rhetorical principle, the use of a style appropriate to the subject of *historia sacra* as a rhetorical appeal.²⁰⁷ Upon receiving the request in 1584, Fróis began 'pondering the best way to proceed' and this led him to establish the period that his work would encompass, that is the first 40 years of the mission, following the biblical significance of this number.²⁰⁸ He planned to write his *História* from 1549 'athé o fim da hera de 1589' as he considered this an important religious cycle. This statement sheds light on what Fróis, and perhaps his confreres, thought of the first four decades of the mission. In Deuteronomy 8. 2, God humbled and tested the people of Israel for 40 years as they wandered in the wilderness.²⁰⁹ Due to its significance, Fróis chose this symbolical time

for more impact Muñoz compares the cruel treatment to that of these tyrants, see Miguel Muñoz to General Acquaviva (Potosí, 9 March 1592) in *Monumenta Peruana*, V, p. 19.

²⁰⁷ On *historia sacra* see Ditchfield, 'What Was Sacred History?' in *Sacred History*, eds. by Van Liere, et al., pp. 73-96.

²⁰⁸ 'Fazendo largo discurso, e ponderando no modo', see *História*, I, prol., p. 1.

²⁰⁹ See Psalm 95. 10; Acts 13. 18. On many occasions this period of time appears in the scriptures such as Jesus' temptation by the Devil for forty days (Matthew 4. 2). Moses was on the mount for forty days and forty nights (Exodus 24. 18); and for forty days Ezekiel lay on his right side for the house of Judah's transgression, Ezekiel 4. 6.

frame as he considered that the Japanese Church had endured a time of trial and probation ‘no meio daquela gentildade.’²¹⁰

Froís used the modes of persuasion of *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*. His appeal to *ethos* in order to convince his readership of his credibility as eyewitness and as the writer of the events can be seen throughout the *História* and will be further explored in the next pages.²¹¹ His appeal to the emotions of his readers can be highlighted by the choice of the words he employed; this is especially noticeable when he copied letters either of his own or from his confreres as an appeal to *pathos*. An example is his use of synonymia, or adding carefully chosen words such as *intrinseco*, to invoke or inspire sympathy. His appeal to *logos* is marked by a series of comparisons with facts from historical or biblical events, such as the analogies of Oda Nobunaga with king Nebuchadnezzar, or the enemies of the church such as Jezebel, or those who persecuted the church and who suffered a terrible death as written by the early Christian father Lactantius (c. 250-c. 325).²¹²

Valignano criticised Froís’s style of writing complaining that ‘[Froís] naturalmente es copioso y amplificativo.’²¹³ In the words of Erasmus *copia* or abundance of words could be a positive style trait: ‘there is nothing more admirable or more splendid than a speech with a rich *copia* of thoughts and words.’²¹⁴ At the same time if misused or used inadequately and ‘without discrimination, they alike obscure the subject and burden the ears of their

²¹⁰ Froís uses this phrase often in the *História*, see II, ch. 102, p. 407; ch. 102, p. 497; III, ch. 32, p. 267; ch. 34, p. 277; ch. 34, p. 279; IV, ch. 7, p. 48; ch. 44, p. 333; V, ch. 42, p. 322; ch. 43, p. 332.

²¹¹ Xavier wrote from Japan that he would only write about the things that he saw with his own eyes: ‘Agora ninguna cosa destas os la escribo por cierta hasta que yo la vea’, see Xavier to the Jesuits in Goa (Kagoshima, 5 November 1549) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 45v.

²¹² *De mortibus persecutorum* (On the Deaths of the Persecutors), Lactantius’s work aims at describing the deaths of the persecutors of Christians with a moral message.

²¹³ Valignano to Claudio Acquaviva (Macau, 30 October 1588) in *História*, I, app. 5, p. 402.

²¹⁴ Desiderius Erasmus, *On Copia of Words and Ideas* (De Utraque Verborum ac Rerum Copia), trans. and intro. by Donald B. King and H. David Rix (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Marquette University Press, 1999), 1st 1963, 2nd 1982, p. 11.

wretched hearers.²¹⁵ Amplification (*amplificatio*) is a central term in rhetoric; it deals with the expansion or development of a statement. Fróis's style was from the very beginning *copioso*. But writing extensively was not only for rhetorical reasons, it was also a way to communicate and to be kept informed about other mission areas. In fact, in his first extant letter, and what is considered the first *annua*, 20-year-old Fróis urged his confreres from different missions: 'escrevê, charissimos, muitas e mui abundantes e copiosas cartas.'²¹⁶ That same year Xavier had requested from the Jesuits in Goa: 'Quando me escribiereis a Malaca, escribidme muy largo, porque mucho holgaré en leer vuestras cartas.'²¹⁷

By calling his text the *História de Japam* (a very generic title), he clearly aimed at more than just the history of the conversion of the country by the Jesuits or *historia sacra* alone.²¹⁸ This should not be interpreted to mean that Fróis was writing a profane history but rather a *historia sacra* that also considered wider and profane issues. He draws on several aspects of the classical and sacred tradition, and his rhetorical strategies must be taken into consideration when reading his *História*. As it will be seen below his work is full of tropes, figures of speech, modes of persuasion; he minimises or omits passages on purpose and is *copioso* in other aspects. None of the Jesuits accounts from Japan have been written on this scale before. While the Jesuits' letters had aimed at edification and concealed anything that was not inspirational, Fróis is methodical in his approach to the *História* as he aspired to persuasion through written means.

²¹⁵ Ibid., p. 11.

²¹⁶ Luís Fróis to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Goa, 1 December 1552) in *Documenta Indica*, II, p. 489.

²¹⁷ Xavier to Barzeus (Cochin, 24 April 1552) in *X. Cartas*, p. 485. In the winter of 1549-50, Xavier wrote that he and the other pioneers would dedicate themselves to write 'alguna declaración sobre los artículos dela fé, en Congua (lengua) de Iapon, algo copiosa' see Xavier to the Fathers and Brothers of the Society of Jesus (Kagoshima, 5 November 1549) in *Alcalá Cartas*, p. 46r.

²¹⁸ Peter Burke, *The Renaissance Sense of the Past* (London: Edward Arnold, 1969), p. 105.

I.2.3 Self-presentation - *ethos*

Here I will examine how Fróis presents himself as a writer and what he says about the sources to which he had access. This is of particular interest, as we learn that Fróis considered himself the ideal candidate to undertake this task, with no one better placed than him to access all available sources. This sheds light on Fróis's priorities in the selection of his sources and is indicative of his beliefs as to how the history of the evangelisation of Japan should be narrated.

Fróis's letters began to be translated in Europe into Spanish, Italian, Latin, French and German from 1557 onwards. They enjoyed great popularity and were published in more than 60 editions during the life of the author.²¹⁹ These letters attracted the attention of the Jesuit historian Giovanni Pietro Maffei. In Coimbra 1579, Maffei sent a letter suggesting to the General Everard Mercurian that Fróis should write about the progress of the Christian faith in Japan:

Truovassi nel Giapone il P. Luigi Froes, antico in quelle parti et che scrive molto bene [...] fare un commentario del progresso della fede nel Giappone, et del sito della terra et di quei magistrati, et guerre che hanno impedito l'Evangelio et altre cose a proposito della historia.²²⁰

However, Mercurian died less than nine months later, and it would be his successor, General Claudio Acquaviva (1543-1615), who finally followed up the commission. It is not clear exactly when Fróis received the request to write his account. According to Wicki the commission came to Japan together with a letter from Acquaviva in 1584.²²¹ The vice-provincial of Japan, Gaspar Coelho (1537-90), then conveyed the order to Fróis.²²² In a letter

²¹⁹ *História*, I, p. 42.

²²⁰ See letter of Maffei to Mercurian (Coimbra, 6 November 1579) in *História*, I, app. 1, p. 397.

²²¹ See *História*, I, p. 11.

²²² *História*, I, app. 10, p. 407. Josef Wicki thought that the commission came to Japan in 1584 together with a letter from Acquaviva dated 19 February 1582, see *História*, IV, ch. 15, p. 107.

to Acquaviva (Macau, 12 November 1593), Fróis noted ‘después que el P. Gaspar Coelho, viceprovincial de Japón, me lo encargó por orden de V.P., que yo me puse mui de propósito a lo hazer.’²²³

By the time Fróis received the instructions to write the *História*, he had been working in Japan for 21 years, and it had been 35 years since the mission had started. He had mastered the Japanese language and absorbed the local culture. The Society of Jesus kept details of their members as required by the *Regulae Societatis Iesu*; therefore, Fróis was fully aware that he was one of the most experienced members in the Japanese mission.²²⁴ Fróis also began a list in Nagasaki in 1585 and up to his death, of the Jesuits and captains who sailed to Japan.²²⁵ By the time he began to write his manuscript the three pioneers of the mission had all died. Most of the Jesuits who had arrived there, or had joined the Society in Japan, between Xavier’s arrival in 1549 and Fróis’s in 1563, had either died in Japan or Goa, or had left the Society of Jesus, as in the case of Fernão Mendes Pinto, who left the Jesuits and returned to Portugal in 1558 and died there in 1583. In 1587, Fróis would have been well aware, when writing the prologue of the first part of his *História*, that aside from the very few surviving members, he could count himself as one of the oldest remaining Jesuits in the Japanese mission and therefore possessed of the greatest knowledge on the subject. He made this noticeably clear in a letter to Acquaviva in 1593:

de los antiguos de Japón ia no avía más que yo solo que tuviese noticia de lo que se avía passado, después que [...] Xavier [...] partió de Goa para Japón, adó yo me allé al tiempo de su partida: allende que yo me holgava también de se no perder esta ocazió, porque después de mi muerte (hablando con V. P. candida y sinceramente como su mínimo hijo en Christo), no avía quien de lo que tenía precedido tuviese *tan entera noticia, experientia larga y conocimiento de las cosas de Japón como yo,*

²²³ *História*, I, app. 10, p. 407.

²²⁴ Grant Boswell, ‘Letter Writing among the Jesuits: Antonio Possevino's Advice in the ‘Bibliotheca Selecta’ (1593)’, in *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 66, 3/4 (2003), 247-262 (252), www.jstor.org/stable/3818082; Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise*, pp. 242-3.

²²⁵ See Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier*, IV, app. 2, pp. 654-61.

por aver estado 29 anos en aquella tierra, y que naturalmente sentía de mi tener a esto más efficaz inclinación que todos.²²⁶

In this self-presentation, as he articulated his own *ethos*, Fróis managed to convey his superior qualifications for this undertaking. Comparing the above with another letter to the General, one could appreciate the literary devices to which he turns to make a point, such as irony in the following example:

consolo-me com entender [...] que não poderia eu dar tão sufficientes informaçõis a V. P. con tantos annos de Jappão, como creio lhas terá diffusa e muy distinctamente apontadas o Padre Alexandre Valegnano, bastando pera o assi fazer dous annos que esteve em Jappão.²²⁷

Irony as a literary device or trope is usually used to suggest the stark contrast of what is written, *aliter sentias ac loquere*.²²⁸ The true intentions of the writer are revealed in the context, and in this case even more so, when Fróis specifically points to the contrast in years of experience of both authors. Fróis employs irony because he believes that his audience, Acquaviva in this case, should be able to perceive his assertion of superiority in this matter.²²⁹ When Fróis wrote the above letter, he had lived in Japan for 22 years. J.F. Moran points out that ‘it is tempting, but probably a mistake, to look for a hint of irony between the lines.’²³⁰ However, taking into consideration the weight that Fróis constantly gives to the importance of years of experience, *experientia larga*, especially in a country such as Japan, where he emphasised that it takes a very long time to understand the culture, I believe there are very valid reasons to sense irony in Fróis’s letter. The sentence on the surface conveys

²²⁶ My own emphasis, see Fróis to Cláudio Acquaviva (Macau, 12 November 1593) in *História*, I, p. 407.

²²⁷ Fróis to Cláudio Acquaviva (Nagasaki, 25 October 1585) in *História*, I, p. 399; Moran, *The Japanese and the Jesuits*, p. 39.

²²⁸ ‘Saying one thing and meaning another’, see Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Oratore*, trans. by E.W. Sutton and H. Rackham (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952), 1, Book 2, LXVII, 272-73, p. 402.

²²⁹ Lawrence Wright, ‘Irony and Transcendence on the Renaissance Stage’, in *This Early Stage: World and Stage in Late Medieval and Early Modern England*, eds. by B Hirsch and C. Wortham (Turnhout: Brepol Publishers, 2010), p. 280.

²³⁰ See Moran, *The Japanese and the Jesuits*, p. 39.

that the speaker, Fróis, is unable to provide an adequate account, but actually what he meant is that Valignano is not an authority to write about Japan. First, there is an unmistakable self-deprecating irony in the overstated sense of inferiority and worthlessness evident in the phrase ‘não poderia eu dar tão sufficientes informações a V. P. *con tantos annos de Jappão*’.²³¹ By 1585, when he wrote the above letter, Fróis had been writing the annual letters for a long time, and he had already received the commission to write his *História* of Japan. Therefore, he was very aware of his reputation as an accomplished writer. And second, he used sarcasm as a literary device by stating that Valignano, who always used an interpreter during his visits to Japan, including Fróis, could write ‘diffusa e muy distinctamente apontadas’ in his lengthy *Sumario de las Cosas de Japón* (1583), after staying in Japan for only two years.²³² It was commonly believed it took many years living in Japan in order to understand the culture; for example Luís de Almeida argued against the arrival of a new Superior every three or four years explaining that the then Superior Francisco Cabral, who had lived two years in Japan, was just beginning to understand the land: ‘Porque agora comesa a emtemder a terra e a saber por omde á d’emtrar e sair, cousa que se não pode alcamsar em Japão em seis annos.’²³³

Fróis was uniquely placed to describe the beginning of the Japanese mission; he had met one of the three pioneers, Juan Fernandes, in Lisbon and departed with him for India in 1548. In Goa, he had met Xavier and Torres before they left for Japan. Given a different turn of

²³¹ Self-deprecation is very common in *historia sacra*, one sees over and over this kind of humbleness, for example the Jesuit Francisco Perez signed ‘asno’ after his name, see Francisco Perez to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Malacca, 4 December 1548) in *Documenta Malucensia*, I, p. 49.

²³² Published by José Luis Álvarez-Taladriz in Tokyo 1954. Valignano visited Japan three times in 1579-82, 1590-92, and 1598-1603.

²³³ Luís de Almeida to António de Quadros (Amakusa, 5 October 1572) in *Monumenta Historica Japoniae*, ed. by Josef Franz Schütte, Monumenta Missionum, Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, 3 vols. (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1975), I, pp. 90-1.

events, Fróis could have reached Japan together with the three pioneers;²³⁴ otherwise, he could have been sent with the second group, leaving with Xavier in 1552 and separating in Malacca towards China and Japan, as he recalls ‘os Yrmãos (he was one) mui asezos no deseyo de o acompanhar (Xavier), pedimdo com muita eficacia a Nosso Senhor os contase no numero daquelles de quem o Padre detriminava fazer a eleixaão sancta.’²³⁵ Similarly, he could have reached Japanese shores in 1556 with Belchior Nunes Barreto and Mendes Pinto, as he had been one of those bound for Japan, but had remained behind in Malacca. Finally, in 1563, he was reunited with Torres and Fernandes in Japan at around 31 years of age. In a panegyric chapter about the latter, Fróis wasted no time in pointing out that he had worked with the pioneer ‘[Fernandes] depois esteve com o Padre Luiz Froiz hum anno na ilha de Tacuxima.’²³⁶

A substantial part of the *História* is an ego-document.²³⁷ Early modern autobiographies tended to follow St Augustine’s *Confessions* pattern, that is, writing about themselves but heavily emphasising God’s will on people.²³⁸ For a long time ego-documents had been considered unreliable sources by historians; even literary scholars spurned autobiographies and dismissed them as one of the ‘simple literatures of fact,’ and were not even included in their manual of literature.²³⁹ This has prompted many to question whether historians could spend their time wisely studying subjective accounts,²⁴⁰ analysing a source that ‘adopts the

²³⁴ Fróis and Fernandes were in Goa from 9 October 1548, when Xavier was considering who to take with him to Japan. In January 1549 Cosme de Torres wrote ‘Ategora não está determinado quem mais há de ir,’ see Torres to Loyola (Goa, 25 January 1549) in *Documenta Indica*, I, p. 480.

²³⁵ Luís Fróis to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Goa, 1 December 1552) in *Documenta Indica*, II, p. 453.

²³⁶ *História*, II, ch. 80, p. 218.

²³⁷ Ego-documents are memoirs, diaries, autobiographies, and personal letters. The term was coined in the 1950s by the historian Jacques Presser who defined it as a written document in which the writer is continuously present.

²³⁸ The *Confessions* is considered as the origin of Western autobiography, see Linda Anderson, *Autobiography* (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 18.

²³⁹ Jeremy D. Popkin, *History, Historians, & Autobiography* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), p. 12.

²⁴⁰ March Bloch, *The Historian’s Craft* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), p. 4.

arbitrary time frame of the individual life,' or one that claims to tell the truth.²⁴¹ Claiming to tell the truth from the perspective of personal experience, especially of remote lands, is typical of the Renaissance; the narratives were validated by the authors arguing that they were witness of what they are describing. Partial autobiographies, such as the account of the Spanish conquistadors, claimed to tell the truth in their manuscripts.²⁴² According to Adorno, the authority of the eyewitness became a strong case to claim credibility. For example, the old conquistador of Mexico Bernál Díaz del Castillo claimed his account, the *Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España* (1568), was 'truthful' because he was an eyewitness of events rather than the more polished accounts of writers who had their information second hand.²⁴³ Equally the conquistador and chronicler Pedro de Cieza de León observed that his work may lack the smoothness of science, but at least was full of truths.²⁴⁴

Wicki argued that from 6 July 1563, the time Fróis arrived in Japan, to October 1592, everything written in the *História* is 'autobiography', because Fróis is a very important protagonist in his own text.²⁴⁵ And G.B. Sansom was correct when he states that 'Fróis was either an eyewitness of events that he describes or had knowledge of them from his colleagues in the mission field.'²⁴⁶

²⁴¹ Popkin, *History*, p. 11.

²⁴² Such as Alonso de Ercilla who argued of the veracity of his account 'dad orejas, Señor, a lo que digo, que soy de parte dello buen testigo', see Alonso de Ercilla, *La Araucana* (Madrid: Catedra, 2005), p. 79. Bernal Díaz wrote: 'I will describe quite plainly, as an honest eyewitness, without twisting the facts in any way', see Bernal Díaz, *The Conquest of New Spain* (London: Penguin Books, 1963), p. 14.

²⁴³ Rolena Adorno, 'The Discursive Encounter of Spain and America: The Authority of Eyewitness Testimony in the Writing of History', in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 49/2 (1992), 210-228. See also Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World*, p. 171.

²⁴⁴ See Walter D. Mignolo, 'El Metatexto Historiográfico y la Historiografía Indiana', in *MLN*, 96/2, Hispanic Issue (1981), 358-402 (383).

²⁴⁵ *História*, I, Introduction, p. 9.

²⁴⁶ G.B. Sansom, *The Western World and Japan: A Study in the Interaction of European and Asiatic Cultures* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1951), p. 115.

Fróis used the self-referential *I* or *We* and referred to himself in the third person as ‘o Padre’. From chapter one of his *História* he associated himself, even if only partially, with the beginning of the mission:

Naquelle ano de 1548, que *chegamos* de Portugal sinco Padres e seis Irmãos, achamos o P. Mestre Francisco em Goa, que se estava fazendo prestes para fazer esta nova empresa de Japão.²⁴⁷

In this way, as an appeal to *ethos*, he included himself as an eyewitness of the preparations of the pioneering expedition in Goa, and present from the very beginning of the Japanese mission.²⁴⁸ He was already using the first-person plural pronoun *we* and the ego-document account starts from 1548, at the beginning of the extant book.²⁴⁹ From November 1551 to 1554, Fróis was in Goa, and there he would spend time with Xavier again, as the latter made preparations to go to China, between February and April 1552. Fróis recalled that Xavier ‘fazia-nos às noites no coro praticas espirituais [...] que os coraçõis de todos eram inflamados e mudados em hum novo ser.’²⁵⁰ Ines Županov argues that Jesuit historiography is based on the historical processes and on the ‘lives and itineraries of the historical actors, most of whom participated - willingly and self-consciously - in writing their own history.’²⁵¹ Fróis was certainly conscious that his letters were popular in Europe and owned a copy of the letter-book printed in Alcalá in 1575 in which his own letters were to be found.

²⁴⁷ My own emphasis. See *História*, I, ch.1, p. 20. Fróis was one of the *Irmãos*.

²⁴⁸ Üçerler noted: ‘the story of the Jesuit mission in Japan cannot be told without reference to earlier events in India.’ See Üçerler, ‘The Jesuit enterprise’ in *Companion to the Jesuits*, ed. by Worcester, p. 153.

²⁴⁹ We still don’t know to what extent, if at all, he includes his own experiences in what should be the first volume, which is still missing. On the use of the first person see Mark McGinniss, *Contributions of Selected Rhetorical Devices to a Biblical Theology of the Song of Songs* (Eugene OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2011), pp. 14-77.

²⁵⁰ Fróis to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Goa, 1 December 1552) in *Documenta Indica*, II, p. 455.

²⁵¹ See Ines G. Županov ‘The Historiography of the Jesuit Missions in India (1500–1800)’ in Jesuit Historiography Online. Brill Reference Online Web. 2 Jan. 2019; Ines G. Županov, ‘Passage to India: Jesuit Spiritual Economy between Martyrdom and Profit in the Seventeenth Century’, in *Journal of Early Modern History*, 16 (2012), 1-39.

Again, he includes himself in chapter 15, in the year 1554, seven years prior to his arrival to Japan: '[Mestre Melchior Nunes] deixando no collegio [...] se partio em Mayo levando comsigo [...] quatro Irmãos, scilicet, Luiz Froiz.'²⁵² When Fróis refers to himself in the third person as 'o Padre Luiz Froiz', he subtly leaves us with no doubt that he was not just a witness, but as well an important protagonist of events.²⁵³ In this way he tells us about his occupations as a priest, as in the year 1567 in his *História*, volume II, chapter 76 with the title 'Dos exercicios em que o P.e Luiz Froiz se ocupava no Sacai', such as mass, confessions, burials, entertaining guests, learning more Japanese, translating Japanese books into Portuguese, translating ecclesiastical books and the lives of some saints into Japanese.²⁵⁴ Besides these, he also wrote that he began to put in order the first catechism made in Japan, and in his free time he began to delineate and write, together with the pioneer of the mission, brother Juan Fernandes,

huma traça da primera arte que se fez em Japão, ordenando suas conjugações e sintaxis, e hum pedaço de vocabulario [...] que depois podesse dar luz à Arte e vocabulario, que se fez dahi a perto de vinte annos.²⁵⁵

Fróis described himself as an important interpreter too, someone who is trusted with sensitive matters (III, ch. 22, p. 164, as Valignano's translator to the Japanese brothers; and in IV, ch. 31 p. 228, 229, and 231, interpreter of the vice-provincial Gaspar Coelho to Hideyoshi). More importantly, he is present at significant events not merely as an interpreter, but as a companion to the leading Jesuits in Japan such as the vice-provincials, superiors, and the Visitor (III, ch. 30, p. 245, *companheiro* of Valignano; IV, ch. 7, p. 51, *mandou lá o P. Vice-Provincial ao o P. Luis Froes, seo companheiro*; IV, ch. 52, p. 390, *o Padre Vice-*

²⁵² *História*, I, ch. 15, p. 93.

²⁵³ In the *História*, Fróis's name is also spelled as Froes and Froiz.

²⁵⁴ See *História*, II, ch. 76, p. 181; see also *História*, II, ch. 91, p. 323, baptism of Naitodono and more than 250 servants and *fidalgos* of his house; ch. 96, p. 369, 'teaching'; ch. 103, p. 414, comic baptism; ch. 114, p. 491, buried a Christian; III, ch. 16, p. 112, 118, burial and baptism.

²⁵⁵ *História*, I, ch. 50, p. 356. The Grammar was printed in 1594, and the Vocabulary in 1595.

Provincial e tres Irmãos, e o Padre Luiz Froes seo companheiro). But he is not just an interpreter and a companion, he also offered his counsel to the leading members of the mission, as for example when he called himself ‘seo companheiro e consultor’ of the vice-provincial (IV, ch. 49, p. 366). Fróis’s status resembled embasadorial duties with diplomatic roles. By 1578, we find *P. Frois, que era superior em Bungo*, very close to the Ōtomo *daimyo* family, to the point that he noted: ‘con o qual [Fróis] o principe tomou tanta familiaridade, que o tinha por pay e por mestre.’²⁵⁶

Fróis as well met with two of the most important and powerful lords of Japan of the *Sengoku jidai*, including Oda Nobunaga who restituted him to Kyoto (II, ch. 85, p. 259). In 1571, when Francisco Cabral ‘o Superior universal dos Padres de Japão’ decided to visit Kyoto, he takes with him ‘o Padre Luiz Frois superior naquellas partes do Miaco’, and when both visit Nobunaga, he tells that *Fróis* was ‘ja dantes [of Nobunaga] seo conhecido.’²⁵⁷ He also wrote that Toyotomi Hideyoshi recognised him from the years of Nobunaga while he was interpreting to the vice-provincial (IV, ch. 31, p. 228, 229, 231).²⁵⁸

Thus, the portrait that Fróis gives of himself is not one of an obscure priest, busying himself only in spreading the faith in remote areas. His work gave him the opportunity to favourably portray not only himself but also his confreres. All of the above points to the image which Fróis was hoping to project of *o Padre Luiz Frois*, which is one of an important and influential individual, accompanying and advising the leading Jesuits in Japan during the first decades of the mission.

²⁵⁶ *História*, III, ch. 6, p. 44. About Fróis describing himself as Superior of Bungo see also *História*, III, ch. 4, p. 30; and ch. 15, p. 109.

²⁵⁷ *História*, II, ch. 95, p. 360.

²⁵⁸ *História*, II, ch. 101, p. 398, *o Padre Luiz Frois* alone in Miaco and with Nobunaga.

A close look at the *História* reveals that this is much more than merely an edifying book. Although this was a work commissioned by the Jesuit hierarchy, Fróis shows that he felt that he enjoyed the freedom of someone who had been entrusted with such work. He displays his confidence as an eyewitness, a strategy to enhance his literary authority. In other words, he decided the volume of the work or *copia* and amplification, and the choice of his sources, to which I turn next.

I.2.4 Written sources

Special attention must be drawn to the fact that the *História de Japam* is to some extent a collective work, an epistolary compilation. This is a very important point that hitherto has not been adequately highlighted by historians; as seen in the Index there is a large number of known sources from other Jesuit writers used in his *História*.²⁵⁹ This does not include his own letters which form the majority of the manuscript. Furthermore, there is a need to read with discretion when quoting Fróis's chronicle, as he often copies or indeed paraphrases epistolary accounts that had already been published, or that would be published later.

Fróis's known main sources were the volumes of the *Cartas que los padres y hermanos de la Compañía de Jesús, que andan en los reynos de Japón escrivieron a los de la misma Compañía, desde el año de mil y quinientos y quarenta y nueve, hasta el de mil y quinientos y setenta y uno* (Alcalá: House of Juan Íñiguez de Lequerica, 1575),²⁶⁰ those that would be published in the *Cartas que os Padres e irmãos da Companhia de Iesus, que andão nos Reynos de Iapão ascreuerão aos da mesma Companhia da India, & Europa des do anno de 1549 até o de 1580*, 2 vols. (Évora: Manuel de Lyra, 1598), and the Annual letters. It should be understood that Fróis did tend to acknowledge the origins of his materials, and saw

²⁵⁹ At least 151 sources that we can trace are not from Fróis own letters.

²⁶⁰ See <http://digital-archives.sophia.ac.jp/laures-kirishitan-bunko/view/kirishitan_bunko/JL-1575-KB1-140-68 [accessed from 2011~present], referred to as Alcalá *Cartas*.

himself as a compiler of his fellow Jesuits' epistolary records since the beginning of the mission.

In the prologue, Fróis tells how he was pondering – *ponderando* – as to how he could best narrate the history of the conversion of Japan.²⁶¹ Here he is alluding to the first of the five tenets of rhetoric: *inventio*.²⁶² According to Cicero, invention 'is the discovery of valid or seemingly valid arguments to render one's cause plausible.'²⁶³ This is the process of prewriting, drafting ideas.²⁶⁴ After careful consideration, he wrote, two matters occurred to him, 'que a [his history] podião mais ilustrar e dar-lhe maior decoro.'²⁶⁵ Fróis wished to state that he was using a central rhetorical principal, *decorum*, the use of a style appropriate to the subject, thus demonstrating how carefully thought through and planned the writing of the *História* had been. Since the conversion of Japan was viewed as a major achievement by the Society of Jesus, Fróis was demonstrating that he was treating this theme appropriately by using a dignified and noble style, thus associating himself with classical histories. From 1552 to the end of the century, the Jesuit letters about Japan in the published collections would cover more space than those regarding any other country in Asia.²⁶⁶ Some of the sources of ecclesiastical history are based upon the statements of witnesses, whether oral, in the form of narrative and legends, or written.

First, Fróis begins his prologue by noting as a rhetorical appeal that his sources were trustworthy as they were derived from first-hand experiences of the early missionaries and he stressed this point: 'A primeira era as informações veras e genuinas, que os primeiros

²⁶¹ *História*, I, prol., p. 1.

²⁶² The other four are arrangement, style, memory, and delivery.

²⁶³ Cicero, *De Inventione; De Optimo Genere Oratorum; Topica*, trans. by H.M. Hubbell (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1949), p. 19. In the *Ad Herennium* Cicero noted 'Invention is the devising of matter, true or plausible, that would make the case convincing' see Cicero, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, p. 7.

²⁶⁴ Quintilian, *On the Teaching of Speaking and Writing*, p. 8.

²⁶⁵ *História*, I, prol., p. 1.

²⁶⁶ Lach, *Asia in the Making of Europe*, Book 2, p. 674.

exploradores desta terra e cultores desta nova vinha do Senhor poderião dar, como pessoas que em a cultivar levarão pondus diei et aestus.²⁶⁷ However, 38 years had passed since the beginning of the mission and many of the early workers of this vineyard (Matthew 20. 12), were by that point dead. By virtue of this, Fróis suggests that to an extent the *História* was being written rather late ‘algum tanto se hia começando tarde a escrever a historia.’²⁶⁸ To remedy this disadvantage, he proposes two sources that would aid his work. Initially, he would seek the help of those who were still alive:

o primeiro [...] Padres e Irmãos antigos e alguns christãos dos velhos daquelle tempo primitivo, podem, dos proutuarios de suas memorias, tirar e coligir muitas couzas dos trabalhos, penurias, difficuldades e perigos com que o sagrado Evangelho se começou a propagar em Japão.²⁶⁹

Fróis presents these surviving individuals as reliable and important to the overall structure of his work; as he wrote, he was intending to use the memories of eyewitnesses, living memory through the *proutuarios* or ‘book of reference’ or repository of their recollections. He was also pointing at memory, one of the five elements of rhetoric that deals with natural and artificial means of recall.²⁷⁰ He not only includes their letters but says that they were also involved in the reviewing process of his work. In a rhetorical appeal, in the above quote, Fróis uses synonymia to evoke an emotional response from the reader.²⁷¹ The synonyms employed here, *trabalhos*, *penurias*, *difficuldades*, are utilised to strongly emphasise that which he is trying to convey, in this case, with the clear intention to explain and magnify

²⁶⁷ *História*, I, prol., p. 1.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

²⁷⁰ Quintilian, *On the Teaching of Speaking and Writing*, p. 8. See also Cicero, *De Inventione*, trans. by H.M. Hubbell, p. 21.

²⁷¹ See Erasmus, *On Copia of Words and Ideas*, pp. 19-20.

the difficulty of the mission. Fróis uses this technique many times in other parts in the *História* in an attempt to draw his readers' attention and to engage them more proactively.²⁷²

But memory itself is fallible and memories are inevitably biased, and he needed to take into account the written sources for guidance.²⁷³ And the second factor he identifies is all the written sources available to him:

O segundo, que o que faltasse para sua perfeição e sahir a historia melhor limada já que nam hé possível poderem ocorrer por ordem o sucesso das couzas assim como passarão em trinta e oito annos se podia suprir, e ajudar-nos do livro que anda impresso das cartas annuas, que, segundo a ordem e discurso do tempo, se forão de cá sempre invia[n]do.²⁷⁴

In an attempt to claim gravity and authority, Fróis alludes to the slow and laborious process of polishing his work, 'a historia melhor *limada*', using a word familiar from Horace's *Ars Poetica*, 'poetarum limae labor et mora' (the time-consuming labor of the file, *Ars* 290-1).²⁷⁵ By referring to this, he was alluding to the careful revision of one of his main sources for the years 1549-71, the famous compilation of letters, the Alcalá *Cartas* printed in 1575. These 89 letters from Asia published by the Jesuits - with 14 written by Fróis himself - relate their achievements and aim to inspire would-be missionaries.

The second matter which Fróis considered regarding his narration of the history of the Japanese mission was his argument that it was perhaps providential that the writing of the *História* has been delayed, 'com razão a retardava', because to write about the conversion of Japan,

²⁷² See Adamson, 'Synonymia', in *Renaissance Figures of Speech*, eds. by Sylvia Adamson, et al., pp. 17-36.

²⁷³ Richard Holmes 'Biography: Inventing the Truth', in *The Art of Literary Biography* ed. by John Batchelor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 18.

²⁷⁴ *História*, I, prol., p. 2.

²⁷⁵ See Ellen Oliensis, *Horace and the Rhetoric of Authority* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 209.

se requeria como de necessidade absoluta tratar-se primeiro do clima da terra, das qualidades, natureza e costumes dos japões, do culto e veneração de seus idolos, por serem suas couzas em tanta maneira oppozitas às nossas, e tão alheias e peregrinas dos costumes e modo de proceder de Europa.²⁷⁶

As a convention in historical writing he states that prior to focusing on the conversion of Japan, it was necessary to first describe the land and its people, just as José de Acosta and many others were thinking, at almost the same time, that to understand the American Indians one had to understand ‘su mundo’ – their physical and cultural environment.²⁷⁷

Fróis was particularly interested in gathering information regarding the early years of the mission, and places great importance upon this process of collection. In spite of the initial challenges, the mission had undergone dramatic changes over the 38 years, expanding from its origins of only three members with very little knowledge of the country to a sizeable community of priests leading many churches, schools, and seminaries which numbered over a hundred thousand converts, including members of the upper levels of Japanese society.²⁷⁸

In the *História* Fróis also points to the knowledge he possessed along with certain documents, even before the request to write this account reached him, ‘E posto que antes de me ter isto encarregado tinha já alguns papeis antigos a que me podia ajudar.’²⁷⁹ Although we cannot be entirely certain as to all of the *alguns papeis antigos* to which he was referring, throughout the manuscript he mentions having access to several documents, ‘conforme a huns papeis, que depois achamos do Irmão João Fernandes em Firando, em que tinha

²⁷⁶ *História*, I, prolog., p. 2.

²⁷⁷ See Luís Martin, ‘The Peruvian Indian Through Jesuit Eyes: The Case of José de Acosta and Pablo José de Arriaga’, in *The Jesuit Tradition in Education and Missions: A 450-Year Perspective*, ed. by Christopher Chapple (London & Toronto: Associate University Presses, 1993), p. 206.

²⁷⁸ There were approximately 150,000 converts by 1585, see Üçerler ‘The Jesuit enterprise’ in *Companion to the Jesuits*, ed. by Worcester, p. 164. Moran writes that in 1584 - when Fróis began his text - there were about 85 missionaries, including 29 Japanese Jesuits, see Moran, *The Japanese and the Jesuits*, p. 2.

²⁷⁹ *História*, I, prolog., p. 4.

notadas algumas couzas principaes de sua chegada a Japão.²⁸⁰ In the prologue of the second part of the *História*, Fróis again refers to these documents, ‘e parte tambem de todos os papeis de credito que para este effeito nos podião server.’²⁸¹ It must be appreciated that Fróis did not rely purely on other sources for the period 1549-1563, when he was not in Japan, but continued using and copying the letters of fellow Jesuits in his work.²⁸²

1.2.5 Oral sources

Fróis admits that oral sources played a significant part in the writing of his manuscript. This was not a novel occurrence: the Franciscan friar Bernardino de Sahagún (1499-1590), in his *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España* tells us that he made use of the careful interrogation and collation of selected witnesses.²⁸³ In the Bible, the apostle Luke stated that he had used oral transmission.²⁸⁴ While Fróis insists on the collection of written data, he also points to his methodical approach to gathering verbal testimony: ‘inquirindo e congregando a materia della, parte da experiencia que de 25 annos para cá temos tomada, parte da relação dos Padres e Irmãos amigos.’²⁸⁵ Fróis continues to assert his literary authority by claiming a considerable verbal gathering of information. He wrote in 1586, while accompanying the vice-provincial, that he had the opportunity to visit Jesuits and Christians and gather more information *daquelle tempo primitivo*,

foi nosso Senhor servido de se offerecer outro meio, que era o que mais importava, e foi que, por ser companheiro do P.e Vice-Provincial - que [...] vizitou todas as partes principaes [...] assim *dos Padres e Irmãos velhos*, como *dos christãos antigos*,

²⁸⁰ *História*, I, ch. 2, pp. 25-6. Wicki noted that then there was not an archive of the Society in Japan, but Fróis kept copies of the many letters sent to India and Europe in case the originals got lost in order to have another at hand, see *História*, I, prolog., see notes.

²⁸¹ *História*, III, prolog. second part, p. 1.

²⁸² Such as the letter from Organtino in 1587, see *História*, IV, ch. 59, p. 455.

²⁸³ See Pagden, *European Encounters*, p. 42. In ancient Greece, the historian Thucydides recognised that he made use of eye-witness accounts in writing about the Peloponesian War.

²⁸⁴ Luke 1. 1-3.

²⁸⁵ *História*, III, prolog. second part, p. 1.

fui de novo colhendo o restante das informações que delles boamente se podião collegir, isto em Arima, Amacusa, Nangazaqui (Nagasaki)[...].²⁸⁶

He is aiming to influence the reader's reception of this account. Fróis felt that even if a reasonable amount had been written about the early years of the mission, there was still much that had not been recorded. With few surviving Jesuits from the beginning of the Japanese mission, much of the material he talks about gathering here may have come from those he calls *christãos antigos* – early converts. Only three of Fróis's confreres who were in Japan before he arrived in 1563 were still alive and had not left the country by that time: Brother Guilherme Pereira (Portuguese), who was admitted to the Society in 1556; Brother Lorenço (Japanese), admitted the same year; and Father Aires Sanches (Portuguese), admitted in Japan as a brother in 1562. After these three surviving Jesuits, the next remaining oldest were Father Giovanni Battista de Monte (Italian), who arrived together with Fróis in 1563; and brother Damião (Japanese), admitted in 1563, and who died in 1586. If Fróis collected information from *Padres e Irmãos velhos* in all the areas that he mentioned, then these *christãos antigos* would have provided most of the first-hand information covering the majority of the period from 1549 to 1563, considering that only three of those Jesuits were still in Japan at the time of his writing. Thus, he would have had as complete a picture as it was possible to obtain of the entirety of the mission, and his information would have been the most accurate available, given that it was provided by those present at the time.

At various points in the *História*, Fróis indicates that he had benefitted from oral transmission of information; for instance in vol. 1, chapter 4 he mentions, 'Este capitulo foi tirado à letra de huns papeis que se acharão depois da morte do Irmão João Fernandes [...] e às mesmas couzas se tinha elle mesmo referido em pratica em Yocoxiura e nas ilhas de

²⁸⁶ My own emphasis, see *História*, prol., p. 4.

Firando.²⁸⁷ At the beginning of chapter 31 he states, ‘E para constar com mais evidencia o que nesta missão passou, recitarei o processo della, parte da carta do [...] Almeida, e parte do que me contou dahi a muitos annos o dogico, que o acompanhou na viagem e lhe servia de lingua.’²⁸⁸ In a similar vein he writes, ‘(Xavier) levando comsigo o Irmão João Fernandes para lhe servir de lingoa (que depois em Firando me recitou o que nesta peregrinação passarão).’²⁸⁹ These examples demonstrate that although Fróis had had the opportunity to meet and work with some of the early Jesuits as well as being himself an eyewitness in relatively early times, he also makes use of his own repository of memory: ‘pella comunicação que com elles tive, dos quais sabia muytas e muy raras cousas.’²⁹⁰ He clearly believed in the benefit of the oral accounts that he had received from the early Jesuits, having gained ‘very precious things’ through these conversations.

Fróis also includes oral information received from neophytes: ‘E foi o cazo desta maneira, segundo as informaçoens que nos derão os christaons que de lá (Goto islands) vem muitas vezes.’²⁹¹ Again referring to the *christãos* of Goto he mentions, ‘Tem [...] muita lembrança e fresca memoria dos primeiros Padres que os comessarão a cultivar, e sobre isto praticavão muitas vezes.’²⁹² These old Christians were depicted as very reliable sources; Fróis emphasised that they were credible, ‘christãos dignos de fê, e autoridade daquelles primeiros principios.’²⁹³ Other Jesuits had also relied on oral sources. Fróis quotes Cosme de Torres who acknowledged oral transmission ‘Hum christão me contou.’²⁹⁴

²⁸⁷ *História*, I, ch. 4, p. 38.

²⁸⁸ *História*, I, ch. 31, p. 210. *Dojico* from the Japanese *Dôjuku* (dôjiku) was a student, postulant or helper in a Buddhist temple or *varela*; the Jesuits used the word as having a meaning similar to acolyte, catechist, postulant to Brother, or student.

²⁸⁹ *História*, I, ch. 3, p. 29.

²⁹⁰ Fróis to the Fathers and Brothers of Coimbra and Évora (Macau, 1593) in *História*, I, p. 409.

²⁹¹ *História*, IV, ch. 60, p. 476.

²⁹² *História*, V, ch. 11, p. 96.

²⁹³ *História*, III, prol. second part, p. 2.

²⁹⁴ *História*, I, ch. 30, p. 199.

There are times when Fróis appears to use non-Christians as oral sources, not only directly but through his confreres or Christians as well, such as monks in this case:

Outro bonzo contou a hum christão antigo, [...] acerca daquelle mancebo, como lhe podera fazer tal pergunta e das respostas que dava, entenderão que não podia ser senão christão. E dizia este bonzo que ficarão os gentios espantados do saber dos christãos.²⁹⁵

The veracity of the above statement could be put into question. Perhaps Fróis pointed at this source from a non-Christian, in this case a Buddhist monk, to highlight that the knowledge imparted by the missionaries and acquired by the neophytes was significant enough for a monk to specify whether he was talking to a neophyte or a non-Christian. I believe it is important to point out the manner in which the Jesuits used the word *gentio*. This word is used to denote those who are not converts, specifically seculars, *seculares gentios*, as the clergy or Buddhist monks are generally called *bonzos*.²⁹⁶

Fróis used first-hand accounts from several types of sources, whether Jesuit eyewitnesses, interpreters, Christians, and, perhaps, non-converts, as well as from his own memory. The reliability as well as the impact of the information remained despite the differing sources from which it was gathered.

Fróis could have merely compiled a summary of the history of the conversion of Japan from the sources at his disposal and from his long experience in the country, which would have been quicker and less laborious to write. But in his work, he wanted to give a voice to the oral accounts of Japanese Christians. There is no doubt as to the importance that he confers upon his oral sources,

Podia acontecer que se passasse mais annos com silencio por ella e, acabada de se consumir o breve curso da vida destas pessoas antigas que ainda há em Japão, ficava

²⁹⁵ *História*, V, ch. 33, p. 256.

²⁹⁶ *História*, I, ch. 35, p. 233; ch. 45, p. 307.

sepultada nas trevas do esquecimento, e inhabilitando-se para depois não poder sahir à luz, senão com maiores dificuldades.²⁹⁷

Fróis considered the verbal transmissions that he gathered so vital to the writing of the *História* that he felt compelled to point out that if the order to record this account had been issued any later it would have rendered the task much more difficult. His project was more than just an ecclesiastical history as it deals with political, social, and cultural issues of the *sengoku jidai* in Japan. His *ars historica* went beyond the humanist tradition thanks to an expanding world opened by the Jesuit missions, which placed new demands on the historian. Fróis's sources are multiple and through his meticulous revision he was able to offer a more global vision of this enterprise, and it is that new vision that I will consider in the next sections.

I.2.6 Errors and problems in translation

One of the key intentions of the *História de Japam*, as stated by its author, was to attempt to correct some of the 'errors' that arose from the Jesuit epistolary correspondence in the past:

Huma das couzas, que me occorreo ser nesta Historia muito necessaria, foi, quanto fosse possivel, tirar algumas ambiguidades e equivocacões, que - por respeito das particulares que de cá se tem escrittas pelo discurso dos annos em as cartas dos nossos - fazem em Europa formar diverso conceito do que na realidade as couzas são em sy cá em Japão.²⁹⁸

Fróis draws attention to the 'Japanese reality' in general and not just to the Japanese mission, evidently believing that it was not just the mission that had been misunderstood. This is very important as he is stating that he set out to deal with issues beyond *historia sacra* in his text.

²⁹⁷ *História*, I, prolog., p. 3.

²⁹⁸ *História*, I, Prolog., p. 5.

Helmut Feldmann affirms that the title of Fróis's text shows that his attention is mainly orientated towards the 'história profana do Japão.'²⁹⁹ In my opinion, while the title is very generic, he clearly considered that due to the complex Japanese reality it was necessary to incorporate both narratives, profane and sacred, to aid the reader. This also refers to the debate of *res et verba*, that words should represent things, or that things should be expressible in words.³⁰⁰ *Res* represents the sense of a passage and *verba* the exact words and syntax.³⁰¹ I believe that while Fróis's manuscript is very much *historia sacra*, he felt he should extend his work to give a fuller picture of the Japanese reality by incorporating the socio-political landscape. Fróis is conscious of the difficulty of matching the words to the things, especially when writing about new things for which there are not yet precise words. This is a *locus classicus* of the Jesuit enterprise: in an attempt to understand remote civilisations, the Jesuits bring new words, concepts, and objects to Europe.

Fróis realises that the errors and misinterpretations disseminated by the *cartas* to European readers had created an impression of Japan which diverged significantly from reality. He revises and corrects the sources at his disposal, aware that many of the letters in circulation had been written in a hasty manner and were lacking accurate information. As we saw in the previous section, Fróis compiled new information taken from a variety of sources, which enabled him to provide a different account of various events in the history of the mission in Japan.

²⁹⁹ See Helmut Feldmann, 'As disputas de sao Francisco Xavier com bonzos e nobres do Japao relatadas por Luís Fróis S. J., e João Rodrigues S.J.', in *Portuguese Voyages*, ed. by Milward, p. 284.

³⁰⁰ Howell, A. C. "Res Et Verba: Words and Things." *ELH*, vol. 13, no. 2, 1946, pp. 131–142. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/2871594. See also P. Lampe, 'Theology and Rhetoric: Redefining the relationship between res and verba', *Acta theologica*, Bloemfontein, v. 33, n. 2, pp. 90-112, Jan. 2013. Available from <http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S101587582013000200007&lng=en&nrm=iso>. access on 03 Nov. 2017.

³⁰¹ F. A. Kretschmer, "The 'Res/Verba' Dichotomy and 'Copia' in Renaissance Translation", in *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance Et Réforme*, 11/1 (1975), 24–29. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/43464909. Accessed 11 Apr. 2020.

It is noteworthy that Fróis does in fact correct errors or fill in the gaps of previous Jesuits' letters, sometimes making the changes silently. But by pursuing a close reading of his sources, I contend that Fróis not only aims to do this deliberately, but that he tries to give a more coherent and homogeneous account of the Japanese mission than is found in the printed letters. Fróis was conscious that much of the narrative had to adapt to circumstances that had changed since the earlier time of Xavier's description of Japan.

At the beginning of the mission, there had been obstacles to the Jesuits' full understanding of the Japanese they encountered, thus impairing the clarity and efficacy of the Jesuits' Christian message to the people. Additionally, Fróis would have realised that the Jesuits had learned through trial and error as they became familiar with the local culture and tried to adapt, rather than through the employment of a deliberate strategy. Ignatius of Loyola made the request to the members of the Society to be, *omnibus omnia*.³⁰² This concept was at the centre of the Jesuit missionary strategy from its early stages. This is evident in a letter by the Jesuit Henrique Henriques (1520-1600) who wrote: 'porque aquel dicho de S. Pablo "omnibus omnia factus sum ut omnes lucrificerem" (que compete mucho a nuestra Compañia).'³⁰³ Their policy of adaptation, by taking into account the *other's* needs in regard to their culture and language - following the example of St Paul, who declared: 'I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some' - encouraged the Jesuits to be flexible and culturally aware of new environments.³⁰⁴ However, the theory proved quite difficult to put into practice. The Japanese mission shows how they struggled to live

³⁰² Boxer, *The Christian Century*, p. 211.

³⁰³ Henrique Henriques to Loyola and the Jesuits in Europe (Vembar, 31 October 1548) in *Documenta Indica*, I, p. 280.

³⁰⁴ I Corinthians 9. 22. Peter Burke, 'The Jesuits and the Art of Translation', in *The Jesuits II: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540-1773*, eds. by John W. O'Malley, et al. (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 2006), pp. 24-32.

up to this model of adaptation considering it took them a long time to accurately determine the local customs.

I.2.7 Amending the sources

In the *Proemio al Christiano lector* in the Alcalá *Cartas* 1575 is written ‘Em los Reynos de Iapo que son unas Islas Orientales, de gente blanca.’³⁰⁵ This indicates that the early missionaries’ observations have described Japan as using so many European parameters and preconceived notions that those who read, and wrote, reports about this country imagined it populated with Caucasians - *gente blanca*; *fidalgos* - nobles, and kings living in European-style castles; and students attending great universities such as those at Paris or Salamanca. Fróis argues that the principal reason for these misunderstandings was a lack of explanation by the authors of terms with ambiguous meaning:

E a cauza potissima donde tem procedida esta diversidade nos conseitos [...], quando se escrevem algumas palavras equivocadas, não se declarar logo nas cartas a ambiguidade dellas.³⁰⁶

As a way to avoid further confusion, Francisco Carrião wrote that Valignano had ordered in 1579 that only one ‘carta annua [...]’ pera que a multidão das cartas que se sohiaõ escrever de diversas partes, não cause maior confusaõ, como ás vezes soe acontecer, & as cousas de este Iapaõ se possaõ escrever mais claramente.³⁰⁷ From very early on the Jesuits began a process of editing and censoring their correspondence and carefully sifting what was to be

³⁰⁵ Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 4r.

³⁰⁶ *História*, I, prol., p. 5.

³⁰⁷ Francisco Carrião to General Acquaviva (Kuchinotsu, 10 December 1579) in Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 432r.

distributed for wider readership.³⁰⁸ Fróis was aware that the published letters presented an incoherent narrative and decided to revise and edit the sources in his *História*.

The Jesuit letters circulating in Europe and India came from a variety of writers with different degrees of knowledge of Japan and therefore created confusion. This issue was raised by Valignano, who stated: ‘la poca experiencia de las calidades y costumbres de Japón, porque como van alla nuevos y con los ojos acostumbrados a ver otro modo de proceder y otras costumbres, extrañan facilmente todo lo que hallan nuevo para ellos.’³⁰⁹ And even when the letters came from the same writer, a given author’s viewpoint on a particular event could change over time. From the outset, the Japanese mission was marred by misunderstandings on the part of both the missionaries and the Japanese. On one hand, the Japanese mapped these foreigners as ‘men of Inde’ or southern barbarians.³¹⁰ On the other, the Jesuits described Japan as having many similarities to Europe.

Many of the changes made by Fróis to the letters in his attempt to unify their narrative are minor. This is apparent in numerous parts of his work; for example, in the letter of Cosme de Torres in the Alcalá *Cartas*, the monks sect name is missing, however, in the *História* the monks belong to the ‘seita dos jexus’:

Alcalá *Cartas*

História

³⁰⁸ Stefania Pastore, ‘Mozas Criollas and New Government: Francis Borgia, Prophetism, and the Spiritual Exercises in Spain and Peru’, in *Visions, Prophecies And Divinations: Early Modern Messianism And Millenarianism In Iberian America, Spain And Portugal*, eds. by Ana Paula Torres Megiani and Luís Filipe Silvério Lima (Brill, 2016), p. 59.

³⁰⁹ See Valignano, p. 225.

³¹⁰ Ronald P. Toby, ‘The "Indianness" of Iberia and changing Japanese iconographies of Other’ in *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting and Reflecting on the Encounters between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era*, ed. by Stuart B. Schwartz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 327. See also, Olof G. Lidin, *Tanegashima: The Arrival of Europe in Japan* (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2002), p. 1.

Vinieron entre ellos algunos cavalleros: los cuales sin especial gracia de nuestro Señor no se pudieran convencer: porque como son hombres de grandes Meditaciones.³¹¹

Vierão entre elles alguns fidalgos, os quais sem especial graça de N. Senhor não se podião convencer; porque, como são da seita dos jexus [Zenshu] e muito dados a suas meditações.³¹²

In the *Cartas que os Padres e Irmãos da Companhia de Jesus, que andão nos Reynos de Japão escreverão aos da mesma Companhia da Índia, o Europa, des do anno de 1549. até o de 66. Nellas se conta o principio, socesso, e bondade da Christandade daquellas partes, e varios costumes, e idolatrias da gentildade* (Coimbra: House of Antonio de Mariis, 1570) Juan Fernandes, writing about the tribulations that he and Torres had suffered due to the political upheavals and the murder of the ‘king’ of Yamaguchi, forgets to give the name of the ruler.³¹³ The same omission appears in the *Alcalá Cartas*, but when in the *História* Fróis copies this letter he adds the name of the king, *Vochidono* (Ōuchi Yoshitaka, 1507-51):

Alcalá Cartas

Tambien fue el Señor servido de visitarnos com algunos trabajos por causa de uma guerra que se levanto: la cual por ser muerto el Rey, esta ya apaziguada.³¹⁴

História

Tambem foi o Senhor servido de nos vizitar com alguns trabalhos por cauza destas guerras que se alevantarão, em que alguns senhores por treições maquinadas matarão a el-rey Vochidonono.³¹⁵

In the *Alcalá* version, it is written that *sesenta cavalleros* were baptised and in the *História* they were *73 fidalgos*:

³¹¹ *Alcalá Cartas*, p. 50r.

³¹² *História*, I, ch. 7, p. 51. Here I have made use of the work of Josef Wicki, who meticulously compared Fróis’s *História* with other sources such as printed letter-books, stating some differences in his footnotes.

³¹³ Juan Fernandes to Xavier (Yamaguchi, 20 October 1551), pp. 56r-v., henceforth referred to as *Coimbra Cartas* in <http://digital-archives.sophia.ac.jp/laures-kirishitan_bunko/view/kirishitan_bunko/JL-1570-3-133-62> [accessed from 2010 to present].

³¹⁴ Fernandes to Xavier (Yamaguchi, 20 October 1551) in *Alcalá Cartas*, p. 53r.

³¹⁵ *História*, I, ch. 7, p. 58.

Alcalá Cartas

A una fortaleza de Mioxindono [...] Se baptizaron sessenta cavalleros.³¹⁶

História

De todo convencidos se rezolverão logo 73 fidalgos da corte de Miyoxindono a se fazerem christãos.³¹⁷

Fróis even corrected his own letter written in 1565, in which he recorded one hundred (ciento) *fidalgos*, whereas in the *História* he mentions only 60:

Alcalá Cartas

Entre doze mil soldados no sean mas que ciento los que pueden aqui outra vez estar ahora.³¹⁸

História

Com lhes ficar vivo o Padre se buscarião depois meios para ser restituído, e que elles todos 60 ficarião com o P.e Luiz Frois.³¹⁹

Fróis copies Alcáçova's (1523-79) letter from Goa in 1554, but makes a few changes in the *História*, such as the word 'boa' instead of 'sancta,' 'que aquella boa vontade que tinha (Ôtomo), de que se manifestasse em sua terra a ley de Deos, era muito *boa* e dada pelo mesmo Deos,' a term that seemed more appropriate since at that time the *daimyo* Ôtomo Sōrin had not yet converted.³²⁰ Some of these changes do not seem to be individually significant, yet they shed light on Fróis's character as a writer. He is careful to be precise in language, and language itself can be misleading. He is thus very conscious of the fact that he is producing a written account – and of what the potential dangers of this might be.

At other times the changes are quite noticeable. Regarding the *Obon* festival, a Japanese Buddhist custom to honour the spirits of their ancestors, Fróis was more explicit than Fernandes:

³¹⁶ Fernandes to Francisco Perez (Yamaguchi, 9 October 1564) in *Alcalá Cartas*, p. 169v.

³¹⁷ *História*, I, ch. 38, p. 258.

³¹⁸ Fróis to the Society of Jesus in Bungo (Kyoto, 19 June 1565) in *Alcalá Cartas*, p. 220v.

³¹⁹ *História*, II, ch. 66, p. 108.

³²⁰ My own emphasis. 'Sancta' in *Alcalá Cartas*, p. 53v, and 'boa' in *História*, I, ch. 9, p. 63. Wicki noticed this change of word.

Alcalá *Cartas*

las almas vienen cada siete dias a
comer.³²¹

História

vem as almas vizitar a seos
parentes a este mundo, e recrear-se
com elles.³²²

When Fróis copied Fernandes's letter regarding Cosme deTorres, the latter had already passed away and the former used every opportunity to describe him in a laudatory manner, as he would do with other exemplary figures of the mission:

Alcalá *Cartas*

a todos satisfizo o Padre Cosme de
Torres.³²³

História

a todos o Padre Cosme de Torres
satisfazia com sua muita caridade e
paciencia.³²⁴

In these examples, rather than simply adding information, he is also modifying the wording. The benefit of knowledge gained over the passing years allowed Fróis to flesh out these accounts through his own recollections and those of others, and he became only too aware that the early letters had provided an inaccurate and incomplete picture of the mission.

Fróis uses his knowledge to clarify certain Japanese terms and concepts. One finds, for example, Pedro de Alcáçova's deficient account in his letter. Alcáçova arrived in Japan in 1552 and only stayed for 14 months, and clearly knew very little Japanese. He wrote that after six months in Japan he was sent to Firando 'sin llevar interprete: y asi ni yo los entendia a ellos, ni ellos a mi, sino por señas.'³²⁵ Alcáçova's translation of *tenjikujin*, which was the word the Japanese used to describe the Portuguese, is not accurate and when Fróis used this term he translated it with more explanation:

³²¹ Fernandes to Xavier (Yamaguchi, 20 October 1551) in *Alcalá Cartas*, p. 52v

³²² *História*, I, ch. 7, p. 57.

³²³ Fernandes to Xavier (Yamaguchi, 20 October 1551) in *Alcalá Cartas*, p. 53r;

³²⁴ *História*, I, ch. 7, p. 58.

³²⁵ Pedro de Alcáçova to the Society of Jesus in Portugal (Goa, 1554) in *Alcalá Cartas*, p. 54v.

Alcalá *Cartas*

Nos llaman *chincico*, que quiere decir, coza venida de los cielos.³²⁶

História

«Tenchicugin! Tenchicugin!» que assim nos chamão alguns japões, que quer dizer: «homens de Sião, homens de Sião», que hé o reino donde, conforme a elles, forão naturais Xaca [Shaka] e Amida, e os mais fotoques que são seos falsos deozes.³²⁷

Beyond rectifying errors of interpretation in earlier texts, Fróis wanted to provide additional information using the new sources that he had collated. In 1593, in a letter he noted ‘e o que na Historia não menos lhe agradará, serão as cousas de que athé agora não tiverão noticia, por aver muytas que não forão referidas nas cartas que la forão enviadas.’³²⁸ Here he hints that previous epistolary accounts lacked depth, and that his work provided a more detailed picture, while it can also be read for pleasure. For example, according to Wicki, Fróis is the only source that mentions Xavier’s first stay in Hirado.³²⁹ Fróis wrote that after ten months in Kagoshima, Xavier, who was not one to stand still, decided to go to Hirado to look for letters from Europe and India from a Portuguese carrack. Xavier does not mention this first trip to Hirado in his letters and it is likely that this information came to Fróis from an oral source. Another interesting piece of information that came to Fróis from oral informants is the death of Yayirō (Anjirō, Paulo de Santa Fé, c.1512-?). In Fróis’s account he doubts whether he died as a good Christian. Paulo who was the ‘guia dos Padres da India para Japão’ is compared ‘como a estrela, que guiou bem aos Magos de Oriente, mas todavia não entrou com elles dentro no presepio de Betlem.’ Paulo died as a *wakō* pirate in China ‘aonde

³²⁶ Ibid., p. 55v.

³²⁷ *História*, I, ch. 22, pp. 138-9. Fróis also writes *tenchicujins*, see *História*, I, ch. 7, p. 52.

³²⁸ *História*, I, app., p. 410.

³²⁹ *História*, I, ch. 3, pp. 28-9. Fróis is also the first to give the name of the first convert in Yamaguchi ‘por nome Uchidadono’ who received the name of Thomé by Xavier, see *História*, I, ch. 5, p. 41. Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier*, IV, p. 152.

dizem que lá o matarão. Pode ser que tivesse antes da morte contrição de seos peccados e acabasse bem; mas isto não nos consta, nem sabemos outra couza de seo fim.³³⁰

I.3 Conclusion

When the Jesuit Luís Fróis began to write his *História de Japam* at about 52 years of age, he was a veteran missionary with 34 years of experience in Asia, 21 of those years in Japan. He had met the pioneers of the Japanese mission, and had learned the language and culture. Fróis was aware that his letters were popular in Europe and he presented himself as the ideal writer for this enterprise having occupied high-level positions in Kyoto and Bungo [Oita], as well as being companion, interpreter, and advisor to the leading members of the mission. The mission had experienced different phases since its inception. From almost *terra incognita*, to the very significant superlative and superficial impressions of Xavier which would have a lasting impact, such as his descriptions of the Japanese people as white, reasonable, *fidalgos* and honourable, almost replicating European culture. But Xavier's view of the commensurable cultures between Europe and Japan, are replaced by Fróis underlining the opposite polarity of both cultures in the *História*. Fróis had to contend with these accounts as he revised his sources and realising that many errors and ambiguities had caused the mission to be misinterpreted, he would make use of a series of rhetorical strategies to make changes. Fróis decided to base his manuscript on the Jesuits' missives as a form to go beyond his personal memories, and as an activity he clearly considered that it required rhetorical interventions to present the mission and the missionaries. This is analysed in the next chapter.

³³⁰ *História*, I, ch. 6, p. 46. Wako (Wo-kou) translates as 'Japanese pirates' or 'dwarf pirates', see C.R. Boxer, 'Piracy in the South China Sea', in *History Today*, 30/12 (1980), 40-4.

Chapter II - Revising the history of the mission

In the previous chapter mention was made of Luís Fróis's arrival in Japan and his work as a missionary, as superior of Miyako (Kyoto) and Bungo (Oita), and as interpreter and writer (compiler) of the annual letters, within the historical and literary context of the Japanese mission. This was considered in its wider religious and political context in Asia, but in this chapter, I concentrate in greater detail on the narrative of his *magnum opus* the *História de Japam*. I show the rhetorical intentions of the author in relation to the context and environment in which this text was written.³³¹ Earlier reports from his fellow Jesuits had painted the Japanese mission in a very positive light; these have helped to locate this enterprise as the most important in Asia, at a time when China remained indifferent to the missionaries' advances.³³²

According to Genette, the paratext is a threshold, or (as annotated by Lejeune) a fringe, 'comprising those liminal devices and conventions, both within the book (peritext) and outside it (epitext) that mediates the book to the reader.'³³³ This area includes titles and subtitles, forewords, epigraphs, prefaces (prologues), notes, epilogues and afterwords, constituting in total a zone between text and off-text, a place of dialogue with, and influence on, the public, a zone which requires careful analysis.³³⁴

³³¹ James A. Herrick, *The History and Theory of Rhetoric: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 6th edn.

³³² Ross called it 'numerically the most successful mission [...] that the church has witnessed since the first six centuries of the Christian era', see Andrew C. Ross, 'Alessandro Valignano: The Jesuits and Culture in the East', in *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts 1540-1773*, eds. by John W. O'Malley, S.J., et al. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), p. 337. In 1583, Valignano wrote: '[China] tiene [...] cerradas las puertas al Evangelio que parece humanamente imposible hallarse modo para se predicar' see *Sumario*, p. 39*.

³³³ Genette, *Paratext*, p. xviii. See also Lejeune, *Le Pacte*, p. 45. Kristeva, 'Word, Dialogue, and Novel', in *The Kristeva Reader*, ed. by Moi, pp. 34-61.

³³⁴ Genette, *Paratext*, p. 2.

Using close readings of Fróis's text, I will concentrate on his statements of intent explicitly expressed in the prologues or 'paratexts' of this work.³³⁵ Pausing on these *thresholds* first, I consider Fróis's attempt to rectify previous 'errors' made by earlier Jesuit epistolary accounts, and argue that his real intentions go beyond attempting to diminish these over-enthusiastic reports and presenting a more accurate and complete picture of the Japanese mission. I argue that he wrote with a clear agenda, deliberately altering information, and creating a narrative that suggested a more coherent and sequent enterprise than existed in reality. Second, I examine how by narrating the actions of the early missionaries and presenting the Jesuits in a very positive light, his *História* intends to offer guidance to future Jesuits. It is clearly intended that, through the reading of the deeds of their predecessors, the text would allow would-be missionaries to Japan to negotiate future difficulties, thus providing help and inspiration.

Fróis uses the paratexts to frame his narrative, creating the image which he wished to present. In the published form, as edited by Wicki in the twentieth century, the *História* is comprised of five volumes. But Fróis saw it as a tripartite account, with the first part focusing on the description of the land and its customs, the second beginning with the arrival of Francis Xavier in 1549 to 1578, and the last section covering the time from the conversion of Ōtomo Sōrin (King Francisco of Bungo), from 1578 to 1589, when the mission reached its fortieth anniversary, an important biblical period which was clearly present in Fróis's mind. Eventually his manuscript narrated events until the year 1593. Here we must stress that the first part of the *História* remains lost and only its titles remain as paratexts.³³⁶ Fróis

³³⁵ See the first prologue in *História*, I, pp.1-9, and the second prologue in III, pp. 1-2.

³³⁶ Gennette, *Paratext*, pp. 3-4.

mention his intentions for the now lost first part: ‘Trataremos com o divino favor, em a primeira parte, o que toca às qualidades e costumes desta terra, e a origem de seu culto.’³³⁷

His *ars historica* went beyond the humanist tradition thanks to an expanding world opened by the Jesuit missions, which placed new demands on the historian. Fróis’s sources are multiple and through his meticulous revision he was able to offer a more global vision of this enterprise. It is that new vision that I consider in the next sections.

II.1.1 To guide and to inspire

In writing the *História* Fróis was always mindful that it would serve to aid and guide future missionaries. In April 1549, in a letter to father Barzeo who was travelling to Ormuz, Xavier recommended, ‘las cartas que escribiereis al colegio, servirán para ir al reino; y en ellas escribiréis cosas de edificación y de mover a los que las vieren a servir a Dios.’³³⁸ Xavier was fully aware that these letters would become propaganda material back in Europe, therefore these letters needed to be instructive and enlightening, to inspire the hearts of men to join the Society of Jesus and to come to Asia. This was to become the norm in such communications; anything that was not edifying to be omitted from the written letters, bearing in mind that many would read them, including the general public.³³⁹

The dilemma faced by Fróis was that of readership: to whom should his manuscript be directed? Should his work follow the pattern of many previous letters in giving positive and laudatory descriptions, as Xavier had asked to, *mover a los que las vieren a servir a Dios*, or in other words, for Jesuit recruitment in Europe, regardless of where that potential recruit might end up working in their apostolate? Or should he be more concerned with the would-

³³⁷ *História*, I, p. 3.

³³⁸ Xavier to Barzeus (Goa, April 1551) in *X. Cartas*, p. 308.

³³⁹ The same instructions were sent to other missionaries in 1552, obviously omitting the reference to Barzeus and Ormuz, see Xavier to Barzeus (Goa, April 1551) in *X. Cartas*, p. 303.

be missionaries in Japan? Here I argue that Fróis decides that his *História* would benefit most those who might come to Japan, and to a lesser extent serve to urge men to join the *Companhia* in Europe.³⁴⁰ Answering a letter from Acquaviva, Fróis responded, ‘Me encomienda attender y acabar de perfectionar la História de Japón que tengo entre manos, porque espera aprovechará mucho a los que vendrán ayudar las ánimas de los japoneses.’³⁴¹ And here he specifically pointed out that he thought that even the General expected his manuscript to be for the benefit of those who might go to Japan. Since his manuscript was destined to go to Rome and most probably to be printed for a wider audience, he remains cautious and edifying, but decides to be copious and offer advice through the considerable use of *exempla* or anecdotes to explain the difficulties of the mission, in order to avoid being critical while still being didactic.

II.1.2 To guide - *Roteiro*

Fróis compares his manuscript to a *roteiro*.³⁴² In the prologue of the second part of the *História* he writes, ‘huma couza se me representava que, alem de outros proveitos que desta Historia se podem seguir, particularmente para os nossos que a estas partes forem enviados a cultivar esta christandade, se poderião não pouco ajudar como de balizas e roteiro seguro para sua espiritual navegação.’³⁴³ This was to be a route map, a navigational route description compiled to guide future sailors in their sea-voyage, as in the famous *Roteiro da primeira viagem de Vasco da Gama à Índia, 1497-1499*, attributed to Álvaro Velho.³⁴⁴ For a Portuguese pilot in the sixteenth century venturing into waters he had never before

³⁴⁰ *Companhia* (*Compañía*) as the Jesuits called the Society of Jesus during that time.

³⁴¹ *História*, I, app, p. 407.

³⁴² On roteiros see K. M. Matthew, *History of the Portuguese Navigation in India, 1497-1600* (Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1988), pp. 28-34.

³⁴³ *História*, III, prol., second part, p. 2.

³⁴⁴ Malyn Newitt, *A History of Portuguese Overseas Expansion, 1400-1668* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 74.

navigated, it was essential to possess astrolabe, compass, and quadrant, as well as to know the winds and currents, the types of birds and their flight patterns, amongst other maritime expertise and lore, but above all, the narratives of previous sailors who had navigated in similar areas provided the most significant practical advantage; as such these narratives became descriptions. It is therefore interesting to consider the broader connotations that this word *roteiro* encompasses. To an extent it signals a terminology of empire, a chronological record, almost a log-book by the navigator as the ship progresses through time and space; a record that not only documents the sea routes and the nature of the lands but also the customs of the inhabitants.

The sea could be terrifying and deadly. The long and hazardous eastward voyage that every single missionary had to endure to reach Japan appears consistently in their correspondence. According to Giuseppe Marcocci navigation was one of the most common metaphors about the ideal life during this period, reflecting on the tempests that one encounters throughout a voyage and the final arrival at a safe port as a sign of Salvation.³⁴⁵ Considering all the discomforts that passengers had to endure on board a carrack travelling to India (en route to Japan), such as scarcity of space, food supplies and water; constant diseases on board; anxieties about favorable winds; the pilot's experience (or lack thereof); and sudden storms, the trip must have been overwhelming and have left an indelible impression in their memories. Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) wrote that when Chinese officials threatened the Jesuits with expulsion he begged for clemency, crying that they could not return, crossing all those seas back to their homeland.³⁴⁶ The mortality in the *Carreira da Índia* was so high

³⁴⁵ See Giuseppe Marcocci, 'Saltwater Conversion: Trans-Oceanic Sailing and Religious Transformation in the Iberian World' in *Space and Conversion in Global Perspective*, eds. by G. Marcocci, W. De Boer, A. Maldavsky and I. Pavan (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2015), pp. 235-259, (238).

³⁴⁶ Jonathan Spence, *The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci* (London: Quercus, 1978), p. 68. On Matteo Ricci see R. Po-Chia Hsia, *A Jesuit in the Forbidden City: Matteo Ricci 1552-1610* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

that on 8 September 1573, Gregory XIII conceded plenary indulgence *em artigo de morte* to those missionaries going to India. At least dying en route to a mission was direct entry into paradise for a missionary. In the *História* Fróis quotes Antonino Prenestino, who found comfort during a terrible typhoon while travelling to Japan:

Estando já a nao em termos de agora se vira, agora não, cada hum de nós poz o roزاریo das contas ao pescoço [...] me alembrei duas couzas como nos deviamos muito consolar, porque aquelle nosso morrer era huma especie de martirio [...] e que aquelle genero de morte tão horrendo nos livraria do purgatorio.³⁴⁷

Realising that dying in such a manner was martyrdom, Prenestino felt at peace as he thought he would be circumventing purgatory.

Fróis describes Xavier's stay in India as a *roteiro*: 'Padre Mestre Francisco de sancta memoria [...], o exemplo de sua vida, o roteiro dos annos que viveo na India.'³⁴⁸ What becomes clear is that Xavier had been a Jesuit pioneer in many areas of India, therefore Fróis describes Xavier's apostolic endeavors there as a manual or route to be followed. Likewise, he uses *roteiro* as a metaphor for his *História* on account of the description of the works of the early Jesuits in Japan, from which they could then plot their own journeys to spread the faith. The metaphor also implied success; it is a sea favourable to navigation given that those who wrote it were able to reach their destination and survived to write about their experiences.

As in many Jesuit accounts of the period, when Fróis writes about their apostolate, seafaring metaphors abound. In certain passages Fróis's uses language which allegorises travel by sea.

³⁴⁷ *História*, I, app. 10, p. 407. Portuguese accounts of shipwrecks were originally published in a cheap format, as string literature (literatura de cordel). See Amy Mitchell-Cook, *A Sea of Misadventures: Shipwreck and Survival in Early America* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2013), pp. 134–155; Bernardo Gomez de Brito (1688-c.1759) published two volumes as the *História Trágica Marítima; The Tragic History of the Sea 1589-1622*, ed. by Charles R. Boxer (London: Cambridge University Press, 1959).

³⁴⁸ See Fróis to the Jesuits of Coimbra and Évora (Macau, 1593) in *História*, I, p. 409.

For example he writes: ‘Quando [...] cuidavamos estar já mais seguros, nos sobrevierão de improvizo outras novas e mayores tormentas.’³⁴⁹ Fróis was not referring to real storms here, but metaphorically to increasingly difficult times. He pointed out that when Ōtomo Sōrin converted to Christianity he was afflicted by ‘ondas e tormentas.’³⁵⁰ When Sōrin’s son Ōtomo Yoshimune (1558-1605), baptised in 1587 as Constantino, continued with the persecution of Christianity in Bungo, Fróis compares the church of Bungo to a small ship ‘aquella barquinha da Igreja de Bungo’ afflicted by the winds and waves perilously close to descending to the bottom of the sea.³⁵¹ The book of Acts chronicles the development of the early Christian church and ends with the story of the journey of St. Paul by ship to Rome.

Fróis’s language can be dramatic when he tells of the setbacks of the mission. Here he seems to have found in seafaring matters an ideal comparison to the Japanese mission:

Parece que esta nova christandade e Igreja de Japão, foi [...] como huma nao que vai correndo com mui grande temporal, e que cada passo mete a proa debaixo das agoas parecendo que se vay sumergindo com as furiozas e empoladas ondas do mar, e todavia logo torna de novo aparecer e vay fazendo desta maneira sua viagem com o favor da santissima cruz que em Japão pregamos.³⁵²

In nautical imagery, a ship usually represented the church sailing to heaven carrying souls through a sea of difficulties. With the constant setbacks and the ups and downs of the mission, it becomes apparent that Fróis considered the Japanese mission a difficult and dangerous place, where his work would offer guidance despite the many previous Jesuit letters which recorded the mission, especially from pioneers who had described the early endeavors. He felt that his work offered a better version. As in numerous *roteiros* such as *De Esmeraldo de Situ Orbis* by Duarte Pacheco Pereira and the *Livro de Marinharia* –

³⁴⁹ *História*, V, ch. 55, p. 416.

³⁵⁰ *História*, III, ch. 13, p. 95.

³⁵¹ *História*, IV, ch. 21, p. 165.

³⁵² *História*, V, ch. 52, p. 391.

c. 1560 by João de Lisboa, these authors had revised, corrected, and improved previous route maps with newer information.³⁵³ Many times the pioneering accounts lacked detail, and modern knowledge helped to update the original *roteiros*. To this extent the metaphor used by Fróis is apt, because although there were indeed many preceding epistolary accounts, his was a revision of the early sources, providing more accurate information and hoping to offer better guidance to future missionaries in their *espiritual navegação*.

II.1.3 To inspire - *Balizas*

Fróis regarded his manuscript as a *roteiro*, yet the author still felt pressed to guide his audience to a correct interpretation of the work. One way in which he steers the reader through the *História* is by referring to the predecessors as *balizas*. By describing all the hardships suffered by those *antecessores* he was able to provide a template for the missionaries' actions and to portray them as examples to be followed, metaphorical beacons or buoys, anchored floats serving as navigational marks, to warn of hazards or to indicate safe places for mooring.

According to R.P. Toby, from the Japanese perspective, Europeans already displayed 'markers of alienness and barbarianness' such as sunburnt skin from the long sea voyage, curly hair, heavy beards, and the custom of eating with their hands.³⁵⁴ On top of their appearance, unaware of the complex Japanese social structure and its boundaries, and without clear and specific guidelines on adaptation, the missionaries behaved inappropriately. Aware that in order to have better prospects for a successful mission, the

³⁵³ K. M. Mathew, *History of the Portuguese Navigation in India, 1497-1600* (Delhi: K.M. Mital, 1988), pp. 28-34. On Portuguese cartography in the Renaissance see Armando Cortesão, *History of Portuguese Cartography*, 2 vols. (Coimbra: Junta de Investigações do Ultramar-Lisboa, 1969-71); Luís de Albuquerque, *Historia de la Navegación Portuguesa* (Madrid: Editorial Mapfre, 1991); C.R. Boxer, *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire, 1415-1825* (New York: Knopf, 1969), 13-14.

³⁵⁴ Toby, 'The "Indianness"', in *Implicit Understandings*, ed. by Stuart B. Schwartz, p. 331.

Jesuits needed to be considered among the higher levels of Japanese society, Valignano prohibited anything that lessened their social status and authority because ‘los que tienen cuidado de las almas [...] es necesario que tengan autoridad y reputación.’³⁵⁵ Among those activities in which missionaries engaged, he mentioned that the one which especially diminished their reputation was ‘criar puercos y cabras y vender los cueros de las vacas que mataban para su comer – tan aborrecido de los japones.’³⁵⁶ In fact, Hideyoshi admonished the missionaries since they ate ‘cavalos e vacas, sendo couza tão fora de rezão.’³⁵⁷ This was a serious error, as the killing of animals was assigned to the pariah class, the *eta*.³⁵⁸ In a letter from Kyoto in 1569, Fróis briefly mentions that such jobs were given in Japan to the ‘Getas’.³⁵⁹ In the *História* Fróis copies his own letter, but adds with a rhetorical purpose:

Alcalá Cartas

Getas, que es la mas baxa gente de Iapon, como los Poleas en el Malavar, que tienen por oficio follar bestias muertas, y ser verdugos de los condenados.³⁶⁰

História

Yetas, que hé a *mais vil, baxa e infame gente* de Japão, como os poleas do Malavar na India, que tem por officio esfolar bestas mortas e venderem as peles, e sempre morão afastados das povoações como gente immunda e não digna de conversar com outra gente.³⁶¹

Fróis does not mention that the Jesuits engaged in such activities at the beginning of the mission, but made it clear to the reader that these were done by the lowest people, using, to

³⁵⁵ *Sumario*, I, p. 259. Valignano describes Japanese society as falling loosely into five categories: The nobles, the monks, the soldiers or knights, the merchant and artisans, and finally the peasants and servants, cited in *They Came to Japan*, ed. by Cooper, p. 53. Gaspar Vilela divided the Japanese society into four classes.

³⁵⁶ *Sumario*, I, p. 259.

³⁵⁷ *História*, IV, ch. 53, p. 401.

³⁵⁸ The *eta* were considered unclean according to Buddhist teaching. In 1871 Japanese law abolished this discrimination, see *They Came to Japan*, ed. by Cooper, p. 67. See also J.S.A. Elisonas, ‘The Jesuits, the Devil, and Pollution in Japan: A Context of a Syllabus of Errors’, in *Bulletin of Portuguese-Japanese Studies* [online] 2000 (December) [consulted 1 November 2016] Available <<http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=36100102>>

³⁵⁹ See *Alcalá Cartas*, p. 293v.

³⁶⁰ See *Alcalá Cartas*, p. 293v.

³⁶¹ My own emphasis, see *História*, II, ch. 87, p. 280.

stress his point, his typical style of synonymia *vil, baxa e infame*; and implicitly states that these activities were not appropriate for the Jesuits.

Fróis constantly describes the discourtesies suffered by the Jesuits in Japan with a clear expectation that the reader should be shocked by such behavior. The European society from which the missionaries came valued social distinctions very highly, and it was expected that the clergy should receive due respect based on their position. Xavier wrote to John III thanking him, because on account of his recommendations he had received many honours and favours from the Portuguese in India ‘para que sepa las muchas honras y mercedes y caridades que me hacen sus fieles y leales vasallos de la India [...] nunca hombre vino a la India que tantas honras y mercedes recibiese de los portugueses de la India, como yo.’³⁶² These honours seem to have been extended to other Jesuits as the letters imply.

Fróis often tells the reader of the insults they received, such as: *injurias, descortezias, affrontas, oprobios, despezos, mao tratamento, blasfemias, and improprios*. Indeed, he underlines this by the frequent use of synonymia for greater emphasis ‘(the monks) para se vingarem, uzando de muitas descortezias, affrontas e injurias.’³⁶³ The Jesuits are described as having as travel companions *injurias* and *palavras blasfemas* during the day, and at night a rain of ‘pedradas a os telhados’ where they lodged, and since the roofs were made of wood ‘fazião tão grande estrondo.’³⁶⁴ Giovanni Battista described this all-too-familiar treatment in a letter quoted by Fróis: ‘pelas ruas e caminos [...] até os meninos muito pequenos fazem escarnio de nós, e nos dizem injurias [...] nos tirão pedradas de noite, e outras achamos sobre o telhado frechas de fogo.’³⁶⁵ Gaspar Vilela wrote that *la gente vil* ‘nos llaman perros

³⁶² Xavier to John III (Malacca, 20 June 1549) in *X. Cartas*, p. 323.

³⁶³ *História*, I, ch. 11, p. 73.

³⁶⁴ *História*, I, ch. 49, p. 348.

³⁶⁵ *História*, I, ch. 53, p. 380. On Japanese throwing stones at the Jesuits see *História*, I, ch.3, p.30; ch. 10, p. 69; ch. 11, p. 73; ch. 16, p. 106; ch. 26, p. 171; ch. 29, p. 191; ch. 35, p. 239; ch. 49, p. 348; II, ch. 67, p. 112; IV, ch. 9, p. 67; vol. V, ch. 53, p. 407. Throwing stones was prohibited as a rule among the Jesuit students in

burlando de nosotros [...] nos apedrean los muchachos. Tienen nos por la mas abominable gente que hay en el mundo: y asi nos hablan como a negros.³⁶⁶ On the other hand, to suffer in the name of Christ was edifying. Fróis wrote how Gaspar Vilela, as he was walking through the streets of Kyoto, on his way to visit the Shōgun (Ashikaga Yoshiteru, 1536-65) almost welcomed the indignity of being treated like a spectacle ‘como isto era espetaculo [...] passou o Padre por todas aquellas ruas muito devagar, [...] e alegrava-se grandemente de passar trabalhos e sofrer injurias pelo amor de Deos.’³⁶⁷

The sufferings of the missionaries are described as having been worthwhile in that they had reaped the benefits of their fortitude. To emphasise these abundant virtues of the Jesuits, in the *História* Fróis details all the hardships that they had to endure. He inserts passages of Jesuit letters by way of illustration: ‘Veirão, Irmãos, quanta perfeição de virtudes havemos de mister para poder ser ministros aptos [...] que paciencia, que fortaleza de animo, que esperança, que longanimidade, que constancia nas adversidades?’³⁶⁸ Fróis gave as the reason for the need of a *História de Japam*, that the General of the Society of Jesus wished ‘era exhortar seos filhos que andão na obra da conversão para, com o retrato e o *exemplo* dos que lhe precederão [...] trabalharem por lhes não ser inferiores no zelo nas almas, como padecer por ellas à imitação do Verbo Encarnado qui tradidit semetipsum pro nobis.’³⁶⁹ Valignano also underlines this in his *História*: ‘como los vivos *exemplos* de los pasados mueven mucho a los que despues succeden [...] animaria mucho a los nuestros saber los exemplos de virtud que dieron los primeros Padres.’³⁷⁰ Both authors used the word *exemplo* to describe the early

the *Regulae Scholasticorum*: ‘no tiren piedras’ see *Monumenta Paedagogica*, p. 656; and again ‘No riñan ny tiren piedras,’ p. 660.

³⁶⁶ See Vilela to Fathers and brothers in India and Europe (Hirado, 29 October 1557) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 86v.

³⁶⁷ *História*, I, ch. 25, p. 160; I Peter 4. 13.

³⁶⁸ *História*, I, ch. 16, p. 104.

³⁶⁹ *História*, I, prol., p. 3.

³⁷⁰ Valignano, *História del Principio*, p. 1.

Jesuits, and painted a hagiographic portrait of the pioneers of the mission.³⁷¹ By presenting exemplary images of some of the pioneers and describing them as models of virtue, Fróis intended to provoke a specific reaction from his readers, *dicere ad persuadendum accommodate*.³⁷² In a letter, Fróis highlights the model behaviour and the remarkable virtue of the early Jesuits in Japan ‘Ihe ouvera de tratar de todos os varoens perfeitos, homens insignes e eminentes com que a companhia lançou seus fundamentos nestas partes Orientais.’³⁷³ The early Jesuits in Japan were to serve as an example to new recruits; he describes them as *balizas* on the road. Their actions were to be imitated, and when new Jesuits faced similar circumstances, they could refer to his work and learn how their predecessors had handled the challenges.

One of the pioneers, of whose virtues Fróis gives a eulogistic account, was Juan Fernandes. Fróis explains that in their free time the Jesuits talked about Fernandes’s qualities as a model of behaviour ‘que nas praticas e repouzos dos Padres e Irmãos se não fallava em outra couza.’³⁷⁴ His description of Fernandes reveals his attempts to depict him with notable virtues that imitated Christ, *imitatio Christi*, which are worthy of emulation by future Jesuits. He presented deceased members of the *Companhia* in a very positive light so future missionaries would see them as examples to be followed. His work takes the form of a eulogy of Jesuits and converts, *colunas* of the mission, while it condemns those opposed to the conversion.

Throughout the book the qualities of specific Jesuits are highlighted, emphasised when Fróis dedicates almost entire chapters in a panegyric form to specific individuals, stressing their

³⁷¹ A hagiographic document is an idealized biography usually about a Saint or a religious member.

³⁷² ‘Speech designed to persuade’ see Timothy Hampton, *Writing from History: The Rhetoric of Exemplarity in Renaissance Literature* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990).

³⁷³ Fróis to the Jesuits of Coimbra and Évora (Macau, 1593) in *História*, I, p. 409.

³⁷⁴ *História*, II, ch. 80, p. 215.

remarkable humility and apostolic fervour usually in the context of their death.³⁷⁵ In the *História* Fróis describes some of his previous confreres as being already in heaven: ‘Luiz de Almeida, que Deos tem’, ‘Do P. Joao Baptista de Monte, que tambem esta no ceo’, and ‘Do P. Alexandre Regio, que tambem esta em gloria.’³⁷⁶ In that vein, Fróis gives accolades to Lourenço, the Japanese man who was baptised by Xavier himself, and who was the first Japanese brother to be received in the country.³⁷⁷ He describes the ‘bom velho’ Cosme de Torres ‘varão apostolico a quem o Senhor por tão grandes trabalhos quiz apacentar em suas eternas moradas,’³⁷⁸ Balthazar Gago, who exorcised ‘possessed’ Japanese,³⁷⁹ and Luís de Almeida who was ‘o primeiro portuguez que em Japão foi recebido’, whose name Fróis rightly prophesised would be praised: ‘parece nunca sera posta em esquecimento nesta Provincia sua memoria’; to list but a few.³⁸⁰ At the same time, Fróis is a significant protagonist in the *História* which relates the conversions achieved by Society of Jesus in Japan.

As Fróis wrestles with identifying the benefit of his work, he determines that a review of the writings of the previous four decades was necessary in order to offer a more coherent and edifying account of the mission. As an example to others, the early missionaries are depicted as having great zeal and became the subject of eulogies wherein he embellishes their desirable qualities, especially their endurance and religiosity. In this manner, they became *balizas* who through their actions would guide future Jesuits in this mission; their future apostolate likened to a spiritual navigation where the example of their predecessors serving

³⁷⁵ Such as Juan Fernandes, I, ch. 80; Cosme de Torres, II, ch. 92; Luis de Almeida, IV, ch. 1; and Gaspar Coelho, V, ch. 28.

³⁷⁶ *História*, V, ch. 11, pp. 96-7.

³⁷⁷ *História*, I, ch. 5, pp. 42-3.

³⁷⁸ *História*, I, ch. 92, p. 330.

³⁷⁹ *História*, I, ch. 12, p. 79.

³⁸⁰ *História*, I, ch. 8, p. 59; III, ch. 1, p. 5.

as *balizas e roteiro* enabling them to avoid obstacles and destructive currents and to land at a safe port.³⁸¹

II.2.1 Hardships in the vineyard

The selection and training of the ideal personnel for the various missions was an important process for religious orders. The Jesuit historian Juan de Mariana (1536-1624) criticised the Society for indulging the novices who would be missionaries: ‘¿Cómo se acostumbrarán á los soles y á los frios, á andar á pié ó á mal pasar los que en tiempo de sus fervores se acostumbran al regalo que sabemos y á tantas comodidades?’³⁸² Evidently educating, preparing, and choosing missionaries required great care. Not all the missions required highly trained personnel, and opinions varied as to who was most suited for a specific mission. For the Italian Jesuit Organtino Gnechi Soldo (1533–1609) who wanted ‘a hundred missionaries at once’ to go to Japan, the character of the individual was of paramount importance, as he wished for compatriots whose temperament (*cui natura*) he considered to be well suited to the Japanese.³⁸³ For Manuel da Nóbrega (1517-70) those missionaries destined for Brazil had ‘pocas letras bastan [...] empero la virtud es muy necessaria.’³⁸⁴ In contrast, in the eyes of Xavier the ideal missionary destined for Japan and China had to be not only virtuous but especially well-educated. In 1552, Xavier requested from the vice-provincial in Goa Gaspar Barzeus (1515-53): ‘No mandeis ningun Padre que

³⁸¹ The Jesuit mission in Japan started at the peak of the period of Portuguese expansion overseas. For a general view of language in the Portuguese empire see Luis de Sousa Rebelo, ‘Language and Literature in the Portuguese Empire’, in *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion*, eds. by Bethencourt & Ramada, pp. 358-389. See also Spence, *The Memory Palace*, pp. 59-92.

³⁸² Juan de Mariana, *Obras del Padre Juan de Mariana*, ed. by D.F.P. and M. (Madrid: Imprenta de los Sucesores de Hernando, 1919), Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, vol. 31, p. 600.

³⁸³ Cited in Schütte, *Valignano’s Mission Principles*, I, p. 117. Valignano hoped to develop a native clergy that would be more accepted by the Japanese, something that the Portuguese would resent since ‘están acostumbrados a llamar negros aun a los chinas y japones’, see *Sumario*, I, p. 200.

³⁸⁴ Manuel da Nóbrega to Martín de Azpilcueta Navarro (Salvador, 10 August 1549) in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, I (1538-1553), ed. by Serafim Leite, p. 142.

no sea letrado, para Japón ni para China.’³⁸⁵ Earlier that year, Xavier had asked Loyola for only specially selected members to be sent to Japan: ‘no manden de alla personas a estas universidades, sino personas aprobadas y bystas por vuestra santa Charidad.’³⁸⁶ Valignano requested to the provincial of India Rui Vicente to send him ‘un Padre idóneo’ to China.³⁸⁷ The mendicant friars also wanted their best personnel destined for China.³⁸⁸ In his last letter, Xavier went as far as to ask that in Malacca and Goa only very few should be allowed to join the Society as some that had already joined ‘sería mejor despedirlos.’³⁸⁹ In reality it is not clear whether only the most talented missionaries were chosen to go to Japan and China. According to Brockey this became part of the Society’s publicity, as the China Jesuits ‘were no more than junior members’ who managed to convince their superiors of their missionary vocation.³⁹⁰

In 1549, when Xavier arrived in Japan, the country had been suffering from endemic internal wars since 1467, and these would last until the battle of Sekigahara in 1600. This period has been named the Warring States Era, *Sengoku jidai* and is depicted by historians as one of political intrigue and instability, constant warfare, and social upheaval.³⁹¹ The large armies engaged in battle not only caused huge fatalities on the battlefield, but also brought havoc in their path: marauding troops would engage in arson, pillage, and rape. This devastation, coupled with crop failures due to very cold weather, caused famine. This situation in turn contributed to abortions, infanticide, and suicide, all of which were condemned by

³⁸⁵ Xavier to Barzeus (Singapur, 21 July 1552) in *X. Cartas*, p. 499.

³⁸⁶ Xavier to Loyola (Cochin, 29 January 1552) in *Monumenta Xaveriana: Ex Autographis vel ex Antiquioribus Exemplis Collecta, Sancti Francisci Xaverii*, I (Madrid: Augustini Avril, 1899-1900), p. 669, henceforth referred to as *M. X.*

³⁸⁷ See *Sumario*, p. 35*.

³⁸⁸ Quoted in Cummins, *Jesuit and Friar*, V, p. 81.

³⁸⁹ Xavier to Francisco Pérez and Gaspar Barzeu and (Shangchuan, 13 November 1552) in *X. Cartas*, p. 525.

³⁹⁰ See Brockey, *Journey to the East*, p. 209.

³⁹¹ In Japanese categorisation the Jesuits arrived at the end of the Muromachi period (1336-1573).

Christianity.³⁹² Although Xavier had depicted Japan as potentially the most fruitful mission field, he had also pointed out that travelling to Japan was indeed hazardous, but those missionaries destined for this mission would be tested even more strenuously after arrival than in most other missions:

Los trabajos (in Japan) han de ser muy grandes, por razón de los grandes fríos [...] No hay camas [...] grande esterilidad de mantenimientos, grandes persecuciones de los padres [...] hasta que sean conocidos; muchas ocasiones para pecar; muy en gran manera despreciados de todos [...] muchos ladrones [...] y si [...] no tuvieren muy gran número de virtudes, para resistir a tantos males y trabajos, temóme que se perderán.³⁹³

According to Xavier those missionaries lacking virtue and perseverance would be lost. It is apt then, that Fróis chooses to compare his narrative itself with a *roteiro*. Fróis understood that his intended readership were those missionaries coming to Japan: ‘para los que adelante se inbiarem será cosa de mucha consolación.’³⁹⁴ This is an important point of departure, because Fróis would direct his energies towards this goal. He focuses on a great number of detailed and specific events, sometimes bordering on the anecdotal, with a view to providing as many instances and case studies as possible. His future brethren would therefore be prepared for a parallel diversity of circumstances once in Japan. They also would not lose heart by virtue of the reading of the trials through which others had suffered before and take consolation from that, *mucha consolación*.

Loyola had understood the importance of sending the appropriate personnel as early as 1553, when in a letter addressed to Xavier (already deceased) he argued: ‘You are also aware how important it is for the good of the Indies that the persons sent there should be suitable for the

³⁹² William Wayne Farris, *Japan to 1600: A Social and Economic History* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009), pp. 164-94.

³⁹³ See Xavier to Simon Rodriguez (Goa, 7 April 1552) in *X. Cartas*, p. 437. See also *M. X.*, p. 726.

³⁹⁴ *História*, I, app. 10, p. 407. See also *História*, IV, ch. 2, p. 14.

aim that one is pursuing in those and in other lands.³⁹⁵ In 1583, Fróis also underlines this when he relates that it was expected that the Japanese mission would receive especially selected personnel: ‘Este anno de 1583 [...] em que vinhão raros e escolhidos sogeitos pera Japão.’³⁹⁶

Fróis realised that due to the nature of their apostolate, many of the Jesuit letters that were circulating in Europe and India had been written hastily and were lacking in information and a clear ordering of events. Baltazar Gago admitted as much when he wrote in 1555: ‘En esta sere breve por estar la nao de partida, dire lo que me acordare, y por el orden que se me ofreciere, que aunque vaya desatado, al fin es para mis hermanos.’³⁹⁷ Unfortunately, these letters in this state gave a misleading impression of everything being positive and promising. New missionaries arrived in Japan with overly high expectations, and more importantly without the ideal qualifications for this enterprise.

The Jesuits in Japan had to endure solitude, hunger, and adapt to a very different diet. This adaptation process should not be downplayed, as Europeans of the period constantly complained about foreign food. Francisco de Jerez in the prologue of his *Relación* (1534), for example, argued how the *conquistadores* had excelled ‘manteniendose con los mantenimientos bestiales de aquellos que no tenían noticia de pan y vino; sufriendose con yerbas y raíces y frutas.’³⁹⁸ Fróis lays emphasis on the hardships faced by the missionaries in Japan, as Xavier and others had done before.³⁹⁹ For example, he says that the wine came from Europe and ‘não serve ca mais para as misas, ou para se acudir com elle a [...] algum

³⁹⁵ Loyola to Xavier (Rome, 28 June 1553), see *Saint Ignatius of Loyola, personal writings*, eds. by Joseph A. Munitiz and Philip Endean (London: Penguin Books, 2004), p. 262.

³⁹⁶ *História*, III, ch. 1, p. 3.

³⁹⁷ Gago to the Jesuits in India and Portugal (20 September 1555) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 70r.

³⁹⁸ See Francisco de Jerez, ‘Verdadera Relación de la Conquista del Perú y Provincia del Cuzco’ in *Historiadores Primitivos de Indias*, vol. 2, ed. by Don Enrique de Vedia, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles (Madrid: M. Ribadeneyra, 1853), XXVI, 319.

³⁹⁹ ‘(The Japanese) Bevẽ vino de arroz, porq no ay otro vino en esta partes’, see Xavier to the Fathers and Brothers of the Society of Jesus (Kagoshima, 5 November 1549) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 40r.

enfermo’, and was mainly used for masses ‘vinho das missas, que cá hé tão preciozo por dar tamanho rodeo, como hé de Portugal a Japão passando pela India e pela China.’⁴⁰⁰ Later ‘it was decided that Mass could be said with wine made from (wild black grapes found in Japan) in default of wine from Europe.’⁴⁰¹ On route to Japan Vilela wrote ‘carece esta tierra (Japan) de azeyte, manteca, queso, leche, huevos, açúcar, miel y vinagre. Tambien dicen, que no hay açafraan, canela, ni pimiento, ni sal.’⁴⁰² The staple food was rice ‘que hé o comer ordinario dos jappoens.’⁴⁰³ The manner of its preparation was not appetising to the European palate as it was ‘arroz consertado ao modo do Japão, que hé tal, que se não pode comer sem muita fome e necessidade.’⁴⁰⁴

The *História* depicts the Jesuits travelling through rain, *chuvas*, and tolerating the great humid heat of summer, the *calma*. Valignano complained about the ‘vientos, tempestades y calmerias.’⁴⁰⁵ Fróis remembers the freezing winter of 1565, walking through almost three feet of snow en route to Miaco, ‘Caminhão [...] com altura de 4 ou 5 palmos de neve’.⁴⁰⁶ Xavier recommended that Jesuits from Flanders and Germany should go to Japan, because they were more adapted to endure the freezing temperatures.⁴⁰⁷ One of the *padres* chosen by Xavier to go to Japan was the Flemish Jesuit Gaspar Barzeus.⁴⁰⁸ The weather is certainly a constant worry in the Jesuits’s writings; Xavier wrote that ‘[The Jesuits] an de passar grandes fryos.’⁴⁰⁹ With the purpose of making his book a guide for would-be missionaries

⁴⁰⁰ *História*, III, ch. 12, p. 85.

⁴⁰¹ *João Rodrigues’s*, ed. by Cooper, p. 106.

⁴⁰² See Vilela to the college of Coimbra (Cochin, 24 April 1554) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 70v.

⁴⁰³ *História*, I, ch. 31, p. 212.

⁴⁰⁴ *História*, I, ch. 16, p. 103. ‘Los comeres de Japón [...] son asquerosos y odiosos para los de Europa’, see *M. X.*, pp. 128-9.

⁴⁰⁵ *V. Historia*, p. 10.

⁴⁰⁶ A *palm* was 22 cm, see *História*, II, ch. 56, p. 10. On the severity of the weather in Japan see also *História*, I, ch. 30, p. 203; ch. 32, p. 212; ch. 44, p. 305; ch. 49, p. 352; ch. 55, p. 393; III, ch. 18, p. 129; IV, ch. 5, p. 39; ch. 50, p. 376; ch. 60, p. 471; ch. 63, p. 501; V, ch. 6, p. 52; ch. 7, p. 56; ch. 35, p. 268; ch. 60, p. 464; ch. 61, p. 478.

⁴⁰⁷ Xavier to Loyola (Goa, 9 April 1552) in *X. Cartas*, p. 449.

⁴⁰⁸ See Fróis to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Goa, 1 December 1552) in *Documenta Indica*, I, p. 449. *Documenta Indica*, I, pp. 50*-51*.

⁴⁰⁹ Xavier to Loyola (Cochin, 29 January 1552) in *M. X.*, p. 670.

in Japan, rather than writing an accessible and concise historical account, Fróis decided to be comprehensive with his examples. These serve to highlight the struggles that the pioneers suffered in trying to spread the Gospel during those early years.

II.2.2 Exempla

While there is no doubt that Fróis believed that the Japanese mission would be a challenge, he also includes anecdotes, *exempla*. *Exemplum* is a rhetorical device that refers to a moral anecdote or illustrative story, which occasionally provided a comical intermission in the *História*.⁴¹⁰ This is not a distraction from the decorum of his sacred history, rather, he sought to amuse whilst educating. Humour can be considered rhetorical in intent. Rosalind J. Gabin shows that humour is an inversion of reality and works as an invitation for the minds of the audience to set the inversion straight. At least two versions of a situation are given, but there is no doubt as to which side the author favours.⁴¹¹ In this section we are able to appreciate how Fróis uses anecdotes with two specific roles. First, I argue that his intentions are to entertain through the description of seemingly irrelevant comical episodes. Second, these *exempla* are used to indicate not only the difficulty of teaching the Gospel but also the problems of the neophytes in understanding it, and reveals an undercurrent thread of adaptation that points at the slow process of teaching Christianity and in return not expecting too much too soon from the new Christians.

The *História* does not dwell on how the missionaries employed their free time, clearly not considered edifying enough to be recorded. The reader finds that all the efforts of the Jesuits,

⁴¹⁰ Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought*, p. 241. *Exemplum* is a short, embedded narrative used to illustrate a moral point. The term is applied chiefly to the stories used in medieval sermons, first in Latin, then in the vernaculars, see *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* (4 ed.) eds. by Roland Greene, et al. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012). On the use of exempla as a rhetorical device by Cicero, who was very influential in education during the Renaissance, see Blom, *Cicero's Role Models*.

⁴¹¹ Rosalind J. Gabin, 'Humor as Methaphor, Humor as Rhetoric', in *The Centennial Review*, 31/1 (1987), 33-46, <www.jstor.org/stable/23740634>.

from the moment of their arrival up until their death, were dedicated to learning Japanese as soon as possible, and working indefatigably from dusk to dawn (as the Japanese nobles visited them late at night), converting and administering their priestly duties. However, we learn from Valignano that some early Jesuits went ‘pasando en cuerpo (badly dressed), por las aldeas con una caña en la mano y de ir gastando el tiempo pescando [...] y hacer otras mil liviandades que se acostumbran hacer en el Japón.’⁴¹² In my opinion, Fróis has partially considered that his text should also entertain and fill the few leisure hours that his future brethren would enjoy. He wrote in 1552 that the letters from the Jesuit college in Portugal as well those from Brasil were subject of much rejoicing; they were read the night they arrived until one in the morning and then for the next ten days: ‘se soubeceys, charissimos [...] quantas reliquias se quá faz de vossas cartas [...] vos ofereceriaes a qualquer detrimento do corpo, por dardes quá aos Irmãos recreaçõis tan suaveis.’⁴¹³ These letters were not just inspiring because of the news and deeds of fellow Jesuits in other missions but also served as recreation.

Mikhail Bakhtin stressed the vast world of humorous forms of the medieval and Renaissance periods, opposite to the official and sober tone of ecclesiastical culture.⁴¹⁴ This humourous spirit deeply penetrated the fabric of society and to ignore it would distort our appreciation of the complete picture. Clerics such as Rabelais and Erasmus wrote comical and satirical masterpieces during the Renaissance.⁴¹⁵

⁴¹² See *Sumario*, I, p. 260.

⁴¹³ Luís Fróis to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Goa, 1 December 1552) in *Documenta Indica*, II, p. 488.

⁴¹⁴ Mikhail Bakhtin, ‘Medieval and Renaissance Folk Humour’ in Desiderius Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly and Other Writings*, trans. and ed. by Robert M. Adams (London and New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989), pp. 309-17.

⁴¹⁵ Desiderius Erasmus *The Praise of Folly* (1511) and François Rabelais *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (1532-1552).

Fróis's character, according to the testimonies of former teachers and superiors, appears to indicate someone quite witty, usually jesting, prone to gossip and possessed of rhetorical ability. In 1559, his former teacher of logic, António de Quadros commented: 'Irmão Luis Frois [...] graceja muito [...] parece que terá graça no pregar, hé muito abil para todo o genero de negocio temporal.'⁴¹⁶ Belchior Carneiro expressed: 'es humano en la conversación, es mui compadre de sus companheros.'⁴¹⁷ And in 1560, Belchior Nunes Barreto wrote to the General:

tem muita viveza com rethorica natural [...] tem persuasiva pera declarar e persuadir seus conceitos [...], algumas vezes as cousas que escreve ou sabe dos superiores, sendo cousas de segredo, as comunicava no tempo pasado (non sei agora) aos Irmãos seus amigos.⁴¹⁸

This tendency for jesting seems to have permeated into his text. Fróis writes about many amusing events in his manuscript, subtly noting that the conversion of Japan was not as straightforward as had been previously described.

Though his *História* was to serve as a guidebook or *roteiro* for newcomers, written with the appropriate knowledge and experience of Japan, it did not need to be sombre 'E se vier a effeito, creyo será hum pedaço de recreação aos carissimos Irmãos, que com tão intenso amor dezejão saber as cousas de Japão e achar-se nellas.'⁴¹⁹ In 1585, in a letter Fróis wrote: 'Hũa de estas [Ōtomo's daughter] deseja ser Christã secretamente [...] aqual mandou hum recado gracioso ao padre Pero Guomez, perguntando se sepoderia ella baptizar sem agoa.'⁴²⁰

While Fróis presents anecdotes in a light-hearted manner, they convey the underlying

⁴¹⁶ *História*, I, prol., p. 8.

⁴¹⁷ Erasmus' *In Praise of Folly*, and Rabelais' *Gargantua and Pantagruel*.

⁴¹⁸ *História*, I, prol., p. 8.

⁴¹⁹ *História*, I, app, p. 410.

⁴²⁰ Fróis to General Acquaviva (Nagasaki, 20 August 1585) in Évora *Cartas*, II, p. 134v.

message that some Japanese have not completely grasped the fundamental requirements of Christianity.

The anecdotes related by Fróis served to illustrate some of the many grey areas in the process of conversion, adding detail to the guidance offered by his *História*. It could be argued that by describing the misunderstandings in these episodes humourously, the events are not seen as reflecting badly on the Jesuits themselves:

Hum Christão bom homé [...] foi adocendo da cabeça tanto que estava alienado totalmente de seu juizo [...] falando cõ o padre em secreto, lhe disse [...] não quero fazer cousa que discrepe da lei de Deos, & estou determinado de matar a minha molher, mas porque conforme ao costume dos Christãos, os que morrem se hão de confessar primeiro; rogouos muito, que a confessies, porque logo a quero despachar [...] O padre trabalho por acomodar bem o negocio, & porque a paixão nelle era vehemente ouve algũa difficuldade em quietalo.⁴²¹

Immediately following this passage, Fróis highlights the importance of a sound teaching of the Gospel ‘quanto val hum animo bem doutrinado, pois [...] fazia escrupulo de matar sua mulher sem a fazer primeiro confessar, e queria que morresse contrita, mas pela bondade de Deos ficou quieto.’⁴²² The juxtaposition of humour alongside a threatening situation, in Fróis’s retelling of planned murder, in fact strengthens the message of Christian superiority, because having learned Christian values the man pauses and reconsiders his intentions, and in the end the priest is able to deter the man from his plan to kill his wife. As has been demonstrated in the stories given by the author, Fróis maintained a strong belief in the value of a thorough teaching of the new religion. Yet this undertaking, of primary importance to the mission, was a challenge in and of itself: the Jesuit mission lacked manpower, and alongside the political upheavals during this period, this made the constant and continued

⁴²¹ *História*, IV, ch.17, p. 129.

⁴²² *Ibid.*, p. 129.

presence of the missionaries in one place in order to spread the gospel extremely difficult.

In the same vein Fróis tells:

[a] homen honrado, velho, [...] dezejoso da salvação [...] tinha recebido o baptismo [...] andava [...] diante desta nova igreja, rezando [...]: “Namu Amidabut” [...] O Padre acertou de o ver e, espantado, lhe perguntou: “Fulano, vós não sois christão?” – “Padre, sim, sou” – “Pois onde estão as vossas contas de christão?” – “Aqui (diz) as trago postas na cinta”. – “E estas que tendes na mão, para que rezais por ellas?” – Respondeo o velho: “Padre, eu fui hum grande pecador [...] e com as contas de christão rezo a peço a N. Senhor que haja misericordia de minha alma; mas, como ouvi [...] he muito inteiro e rigurozo na justiça, se pela ventura quando morrer [...] não mereção levar-me Deos à sua gloria, rezo tambem por estas contas a Amida, pedindo-lhe que então me queira levar ao seo paraizo a que chamão Gocuracu. Os fidalgos christãos, que hião em companhia do Padre, não poderão deixar de festejar a intenção e devoção do velho com grandes rizadas.⁴²³

In this case, the reality is that a convert should aim to be a good Christian, but the inversion is that he is still praying to the old religion as an insurance policy. This could have been punishable by the Inquisition in Europe, but the candour of the telling results in a humourous episode. This episode could also be considered as comic relief that Fróis includes as a respite from pious seriousness. In the above passage there is also a suggestion of syncretism among the Japanese Christians.

Humour was used by Fróis to emphasise the varied approaches necessary for handling the same situation in different cultures; Fróis believed that for actions which in Europe could even be considered heresy, in Japan a more lax approach should be implemented. He wrote of an old ex-monk who converted to Christianity, and not yet knowing or understanding the mystery of the Eucharist ‘antes ainda de ter noticia do mysterio sagrado do Santissimo Sacramento da missa,’ felt sorry at seeing the priest celebrating mass in Winter. Especially in the bitter mornings ‘o que mais sinto hé ver-lho beber, por aquelle copo de prata, vinho

⁴²³ *História*, I, ch. 38, p. 259.

frio que lhe pode fazer mal.⁴²⁴ Therefore he offered a little cauldron to the priest so he could heat the wine during mass. Of course, *nihonshu* (sake) or Japanese wine could be drunk hot or cold, but the suggestion to a priest of Counter-reformation Europe that he should consider heating the consecrated wine, ‘the blood of Christ’, during or after the transubstantiation in mass, demonstrates that the evangelisation of Japan was to be a slow process. The religious teachings received by a European accustomed since childhood to immersion in Christian culture, could not be taught to the Japanese and be expected to be understood without misinterpretations. Valignano was aware that inadequate methods of evangelisation would result in the complete rejection of the Gospel. In *Advertimentos e Avisos*, written in 1581, Valignano argues that Japan was a new-born Christianity, and therefore should be given ‘milk and not bread.’⁴²⁵

Fróis relies on a theme very familiar to his intended audience, in this case Christianity and its teachings, and gives inverted versions: baptism without water; a considerate husband who wanted to commit uxoricide; a zealous Christian keeping his options open in the after-life; and heating the ‘blood of Christ’ during the transubstantiation, amongst other examples. Even when the missionaries were fluent in the language and with the best-willed neophytes in Japan, there was a monumental task encountered by the missionaries while proselytising: ‘como os Padres da Companhia de Jesus, com muitos trabalhos e dificuldades, lançarão nella os primeiros fundamentos da fé catholica e religião christã.’⁴²⁶ But those difficulties also provided some entertainment for future missionaries.

⁴²⁴ *História*, I, ch. 26, pp. 171-2.

⁴²⁵ See Alessandro Valignano, *Il Cerimoniale per i Missionari del Giappone: Advertimentos e Avisos acerca dos Costumes e Catangues de Jappão*, ed. by Josef Franz Schütte S.J. (Rome: Istituto Grafico Tiberino, 1946), p. 256, henceforth referred to as *Advertimentos e Avisos*. In the Philippines too, Ramon Prat (1557–1605), was an advocate of not expecting too much too soon: ‘those of middle age, they should be required to know how to bless themselves, and how to say the Our Father [...] from memory, although in certain cases these requirements could be dispensed with’, see H. de la Costa S.J., *The Jesuits in the Philipines, 1581-1768* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1967), p.168.

⁴²⁶ *História*, III, prolog., second part, p. 1.

II.3.1 Translating Christianity

In 1552, Xavier admitted that he had desperately sought any evidence of Christianity in Japan, perhaps leading to his conscious decision to use Japanese religious terms to explain the Gospel, and his descriptions of a country that shared similarities with Europe:

Mucho trabajé en Japón por saber si [...] tuvieron noticia de Dios y [...] hallé que nunca tuvieron noticia de Dios. En Cangaxima [the nobles] tenían por armas una cruz blanca; mas no era por conocimiento que de Cristo nuestro Señor tuviesen.⁴²⁷

In his eagerness to see in Japan common ground with Christianity, Xavier was akin to the exhausted traveler in the desert deceived by mirages. At the same time, while the early Jesuits tried to find similarities in Japanese religion ‘there was a fear of understanding any such religion as a legitimate discourse.’⁴²⁸ Cross-cultural communication presented the missionaries with many challenges. Here I examine how European ideas and concepts were translated into Japanese, and how Fróis presents these translations and exonerates the mistakes of his fellow missionaries.

There were cultural and linguistic barriers when translating difficult religious concepts into a new language. It is known that for almost the two first years of the mission, 1549-1551, Xavier used the term *Dainichi* (Vairocana, or Buddha, sometimes written Diniche), to refer to the Christian God, which had led the Japanese to believe that these foreigners were members of a Buddhist sect, or as the Japanese called it, Tenjiku-shū.⁴²⁹ William Farge argues that translating some texts into Japanese was extremely difficult as some religious

⁴²⁷ Xavier to his confreres in Europe (Cochin, January 1552) in *X. Cartas*, pp. 397-8.

⁴²⁸ Joan-Pau Rubiés, ‘The Oriental Voices of Mendes Pinto, or The Traveler as Ethnologist in Portuguese India’, in *Portuguese Studies*, 10 (1994), 24-43 (30). According to the Constitutions in theology the Jesuits studied and taught the scholastic doctrine of St Thomas Aquinas.

⁴²⁹ Joan-Pau Rubiés, ‘Real and imaginary dialogues in the Jesuit mission of Sixteenth-Century Japan’, in *JESHO*, 55/2-3 (2012), 447-94 (463-4). Schurhammer in *Das Kirchliche Sprachproblem in der Japanischen Jesuitenmission des 16 und 17. Jahrhunderts* (Tokyo: Deutsch Gesellschaft für Naturund Völkerkunde Ostasiens, 1928; “Mitteilungen,” vol XXIII) deals with the use of *Dainichi* by Xavier.

idioms were unknown in Japanese.⁴³⁰ At the same time, some words were too closely associated with Buddhism and were not used. According to George Elison, Xavier used the term *Dainichi* in an attempt to make the new religious concepts easier to understand for the Japanese people.⁴³¹ Similarly, Kishino Hisashi argues that Xavier used the word *Dainichi* after careful consideration, attributing its meaning to the Latin, *Deus*. In India, Xavier used *Deus* instead of translating this word into the Tamil language. But in Japan, the Jesuit pioneers used Buddhist terminology to aid them in preaching the Gospel, perhaps as a result of the similarities with some Christian representations: *Dainichi Nyorai* is represented as a three-headed God, which may have been helpful to explain the Christian teaching of the Holy Trinity; and *Kannon* the goddess of mercy is usually depicted as a mother carrying her child in her arms, similar to the representation of the Virgin Mary.⁴³² Perhaps the resemblance between the two religions was a factor when the Japanese mistook the Christians for members of a subset of Buddhism, but what is noted in this study is that the three pioneers certainly used the term *Dainichi* while evangelising during those first two years. It is generally accepted that it was Yayirō who was responsible for telling Xavier, before he reached Japan, that the Japanese worshipped one god called *Dainichi*, which Fróis translated as *grande sol* or *materia prima*.⁴³³ In 1551, two years after the mission began, Cosme de Torres had already realised their initial errors, lamenting that ‘por falta de

⁴³⁰ William J. Farge, S.J., ‘Translating Religious Experience Across Cultures’, in *Christianity and Cultures, Japan & China in Comparison 1543-1644*, ed. by Üçerler, M. Antoni J., S.J. (Roma: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2009), vol. 68, pp. 83-106.

⁴³¹ Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, p. 31.

⁴³² See Kishino Hisashi, ‘From Dainichi to Deus: The Early Christian Missionaries’ Discovery and Understanding of Buddhism’ in *Christianity and Cultures*, ed. by Üçerler, pp. 45-60. In Mexico, the Franciscan Bernardino de Sahagún criticised in his *História General* the Spanish preachers for calling Mother Mary by the Nahuatl name of the goddess Tonantzin; Saint John by Tezcatlipoca; and Saint Anne by Toci, see Serge Gruzinski, *The Mestizo Mind: The Intellectual Dynamics of Colonization and Globalization* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 170. In China Ai Tian concluded that Matteo Ricci was Jewish after mistaking a picture of the Virgin, the Child and John the Baptist for Rebecca with Jacob and Esau, see Spence, *The Memory Palace*, p. 120.

⁴³³ *História*, I, ch. 5, p. 40. Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier*, IV, pp. 223-6.

experiencia y ignorancia de la lengua, no entendiamos lo que ahora.⁴³⁴ However, Fróis does not mention this fact, and instead blames the monks of the sect Shingon-shû in Yamaguchi for this mistake:

parecendo aos bonzos que se assimilhavão muito os attributos divinos com o seo Dainichi disserão ao Padre que nas palavras diffirião, e na lingua e habitos, mas que o interior da ley, que o Padre professava, e a sua delles era tudo huma mesma couza.⁴³⁵

Fróis writes that Xavier was perplexed at the welcoming of the monks:

mandavão chamar o Padre [...] e fazião-lhe grandes honras e gazalhados, [...] pelo proveito que esperavão alcansarem de seos freguezes e d'el-rey, quanto mais sua seita se fosse por aquelles estrangeiros propagando.⁴³⁶

Torres ratifies this when he writes that the '(Monks) al principio holgaron con nuestra venida.⁴³⁷ These monks may have also believed that the Jesuits were Buddhist monks as a result of their adoption of Buddhist expressions. Before this event, Fróis relates that in Hakata, Xavier and Fernandes had been welcomed by the local monks: 'os bonzos folgarão de ver o Padre e praticar com elle, por lhes parecer que era homem que vinha do Tengicu.⁴³⁸ In other words, according to Fróis, the monks assumed the *Bateren* (Fathers) were religious men coming from the land from where Buddhism had originated. It was only in Yamaguchi, Fróis continues, when Xavier realised that the *bonzos* had no idea of the Holy Trinity, that he decided to cease any association with the word *Dainichi*, sending 'João Fernandes que pregasse pelas ruas que não adorassem a Dainichi nem o tivessem por deos.⁴³⁹ Fróis pointed at this event as a watershed in the relations between the Jesuits and the monks of the

⁴³⁴ Torres to the Society of Jesus in India (Yamaguchi, 29 September 1551) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 47v.

⁴³⁵ *História*, I, ch. 5, p. 41.

⁴³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁴³⁷ Torres to the Society of Jesus in India (Yamaguchi, 29 September 1551) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 48v.

⁴³⁸ *História*, I, ch. 3, p. 30.

⁴³⁹ *História*, I, ch. 5, p. 41.

Shingon-shû: ‘Dalli por diante nunca mais os bonzos daquela seita o quizerão ver nem admitir em seos mosteiros; antes começarão a criar odio às couzas de Deos.’⁴⁴⁰ If some Buddhist monks were initially friendly, they soon represented one of the main obstacles encountered by the Jesuits in spreading Christianity. In Japanese *Deus* is phonetically pronounced De-u-su, and the monks sarcastically used the similar pronunciation of dai-uso (dai-big, uso-lie) to designate the God of the Christians.⁴⁴¹ The monks accused the missionaries of eating beef and fish, which were not customarily eaten by religious people in Japan. They also accused them of eating human flesh, horse- and dogmeat; and of being demons who disguised themselves as *rapozas* (foxes).⁴⁴²

What is shown here is that Fróis was in fact prevaricating and carefully avoiding blaming the pioneers for their use of *Dainichi* which clearly caused great confusion. This is what Fróis would have liked to portray, that it was the fault of the monks for misinterpreting the Gospel for their own advantage, covering up the fact that the Jesuits themselves had a clear hand in the misinterpretation. Fróis, who met Yayirō in Goa and worked with Fernandes in Japan, would have been well aware that it was the Jesuits who wrongly used *Dainichi* and other Buddhist terminology. He lays all the blame on the monks who, according to him, exploited the misunderstanding to their benefit, deliberately leaving this impression in the reader’s mind.

Xavier was also responsible for causing some misconceptions concerning the Japanese educational system, which he used as a means of indicating that Japan was ‘civilised’ and ideal for conversion. He spoke of Japanese universities, which clearly were not at the same

⁴⁴⁰ *História*, I, ch. 5, p. 41.

⁴⁴¹ ‘(The monks) interpretaban el nombre de Dios como ellos querían, diciendo que Dios y "dayuzu" son de una misma cosa. Dayuzu en lengua de Japón quiere decir "grande mentira": por eso que se guardasen de nuestro Dios’ see Xavier to the Society of Jesus in Europe (Cochin, 29 January 1552) in *X. Cartas*, p. 397.

⁴⁴² *História*, I, ch. 11, p. 72.

as those in Europe. According to Fróis, the only one which could be termed a university taught some arts and sciences in the whole of Japan (in Ashikaga) ‘as universidades [...] não há-de formar conceito que representem as de Japão a autoridade, nobreza, sciencias, renda e grao, que tem as de Europa.’⁴⁴³ Fróis tries to clarify that in Japan the students were only aspirants to the clergy and therefore dedicated most of their time to the study of ‘sua theologia’, and what had been called universities were mainly monasteries in which teaching was given in private and without any ostentation.⁴⁴⁴

Xavier embellished the chivalric virtues of the local military classes, all of which created an idealistic impression of Japan. In the ritual ceremony of homage and fealty, a vassal swore on holy relics to be loyal to his lord. He highlights one of the key values of European chivalry, loyalty, specifically loyalty to one's lord. By contrast, Fróis offered opposing views of the Japanese ‘fidalgos’ in a letter:

Xavier

Todos os fidalgos se prezão muito de server ao senhor da terra, & sam muito sogeitos a elle [...] por lhes parecer que fazendo o contrario perdem de sua honra.⁴⁴⁵

Fróis

Nenhum he senhor natural nem em Iapão ha vassalagem da maneira que corre em Europa, & são gentios, ha entre elles mui pouca fidelidade, & menos amizade, & facilmente se alevantão contra os mesmos com quem estão ligados.⁴⁴⁶

Battista, companion of Fróis, echoed the same views in a letter ‘[In Japan] cada uno quiere ser cabeça, no obedecen a los superiores [...] y viendo en la suya, se levantan contra sus

⁴⁴³ *História*, I, prol., p. 9.

⁴⁴⁴ Joao Pedro Ferro, ‘O Ensino’, in A. H. de Oliveira Marques, ed., *História dos Portugueses No Extremo Oriente* (Lisbon: Fundação Oriente, 1998), vol. I, book 1, pp. 436-9. Although Universities in Europe also taught the clergy, many studied for secular jobs, such as government positions in the towns and cities.

⁴⁴⁵ Xavier to the brothers of St Paul college (Kagoshima, 5 November 1549) in Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 9v. This resembles the advice of Castiglione: ‘Obey your lord in everything that redounds to his profit and honour’ see Baldassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier* (London: Penguin Classics, 2003), p. 131.

⁴⁴⁶ Fróis (Arima, 20 February 1588) in Évora *Cartas*, II, p. 188v.

señores.⁴⁴⁷ As Fróis took it upon himself to revise the sources, he must have encountered much with which he disagreed, as evidenced by the changes he made. In his *História*, as well, he wrote that Hideyoshi was constantly afraid of suffering treachery at the hands of his retainers, relying as a deterrent upon continuous threats and counting on mutual distrust ‘os fidalgos de Japão se fião muito pouco huns dos outros, nem há dous que se atrevão a se confederar para commetterem huma traição, pelo temor que tem de huns descobrirem aos outros.’⁴⁴⁸ Fróis’s views were echoed by Valignano: ‘Fraud and deception are rife among them; guile, treachery, and plottings abound. The servant is disloyal to his master, contracts and covenants are broken with ease.’⁴⁴⁹ Of course, both understood that these issues stemmed mainly from the tumultuous state of affairs that Japan was experiencing at the time.⁴⁵⁰ But it also signals a process of disconnection, and the distancing from the initial marvel to a degree of disenchantment.⁴⁵¹ Xavier glorifies and exalts the loyalty and the thirst for honour of the Japanese *fidalgos*. He is playing to a cherished European preconception.⁴⁵² His letters must have seemed like a book of chivalric romance to his audience in India and Europe, concerning people with warlike aristocracies who value honour above all else; people already embodying the religious elements of chivalry, such as fidelity, and only missing the Christian religion to become exemplary. Fróis, however, is more reluctant to describe so highly non-Christians, and he had seen first-hand many acts of disloyalty between Japanese lords and vassals: Oda Nobunaga (1534-82), a ruler known personally to Fróis, was famously betrayed in 1582 (thus prior to Fróis writing the *História*),

⁴⁴⁷ Battista to Miguel Torres Provincial of Portugal (Bungo, 11 October 1564), p. 180r.

⁴⁴⁸ *História*, V, ch. 70, p. 538.

⁴⁴⁹ See Schütte, *Valignano's Mission Principles*, II, p. 85.

⁴⁵⁰ ‘On all sides they are harassed by wars’ see *ibid.*, p. 85.

⁴⁵¹ See Zoltán Biedermann, *(Dis)connected Empires: Imperial Portugal, Sri Lankan Diplomacy, and the Making of a Habsburg Conquest in Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

⁴⁵² See Subrahmanyam, *Courtly Encounters*. See also Ana Fernandes Pinto, ‘Japanese Elites as seen by Jesuits Missionaries: Perceptions of Social and Political inequality among the Elites’, in *Bulletin of Portuguese - Japanese Studies*, 1 [online] 2000 (December) [consulted 10 November 2017], 29-43. Available <<http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=36112010004>>.

by one of his retainers Akechi Mitsuhide.⁴⁵³ Akechi, described by Fróis as ‘homem muito amigo de treições’, who revolted against his Lord, causing the death of Nobunaga and his heir.

II.3.2 Edifying work and great obstacles

If errors had occurred in the written accounts and in translations, flaws were also present in the Jesuits’ methods of evangelisation in Japan, as they later realised. Theologian Avery Dulles argues that the Jesuits understood the need for Christianity to adapt to local cultures and developed styles of theology that facilitated this process.⁴⁵⁴ Ignatia R. Kataoka points out that the adaptation of the liturgy in Japan was born out of the missionaries’ understanding of the local culture, a knowledge that the missionaries successfully applied to their advantage and adapted their ways to fit in with the locals. In Japan, the Christian churches were built in the local style, with the Christian neophytes sitting cross-legged on tatami mats during mass, following the local custom.⁴⁵⁵ Perhaps one of the best known examples of ‘cultural accommodation’ are the policies implemented by the visitor Alessandro Valignano which would have a deep impact on the Jesuit missions in Asia.⁴⁵⁶ Arguing against the arrival of the mendicant orders in Japan, Valignano acknowledged the Jesuits’ own mistakes ‘viniendo ellas (other religious orders) a Japón han de hazer primero los yerros que nosotros hizimos al principio.’⁴⁵⁷ Here we analyse how Fróis presents those errors in his literary

⁴⁵³ On the betrayal of Akechi (Aquechi) and the death of Nobunaga see *História*, III, ch. 41; Évora *Cartas*, II, pp. 64v-66r. See also Jeroen P. Lamers, *Japonius Tyrannus: The Japanese Warlord Oda Nobunaga Reconsidered* (Leiden: Hotei Publishing, 2000), pp. 213 -7.

⁴⁵⁴ *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the Jesuits*, ed. by Thomas Worcester, S.J. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp. 782-6.

⁴⁵⁵ See Ignatia Rumiko Kataoka, ‘The Adaptation of the Sacraments to Japanese Culture during the Christian Era’ in *Christianity and Cultures*, ed. by Üçerler, pp. 113-25. See also Rie Arimura, ‘The Catholic Architecture of Early Modern Japan: Between Adaptation and Christian Identity’, in *Japan Review*, 27 (2014), 53-76. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/23849570.

⁴⁵⁶ *Encyclopedia of the Jesuits*, ed. by Worcester, pp. 814-5.

⁴⁵⁷ *História*, V, app., p. 641.

production by focusing on his description of the works of Luís de Almeida (1525-83), and how he presents the tensions that arose in the Jesuits' attempt at cultural adaptation in Japan.

Almeida, who had been a surgeon and merchant, opened an orphanage and a hospital in Funai, Bungo (1557), when he joined the Society of Jesus in Japan. In these two houses, Almeida dedicated himself to the care of Japanese orphans and to the free treatment of the poor, including lepers. Although born of good intentions, the hospital actually damaged the Jesuits' reputation, as we shall see below. The hospital and orphanage helped the mission advance as the Jesuits combined physical care with proselytising work. The proud founder wrote in 1559: 'La obra del hospital, que tenemos en Bungo, es una campana, que suena por toda esta tierra de Iapón [...] muchos se hazen Christianos despues de las enfermedades [...] es un continuo sermón esta buena obra.'⁴⁵⁸ But if the 'bell' tolled in all of Japan, it was sending the wrong message. The Japanese misinterpreted that which the Fathers did out of charity and humbleness, as evidence that they were lowly men relegated to those jobs in their own right, as in Japan caring for lepers was left to outcasts.⁴⁵⁹ Having inadvertently given this impression the Jesuits learned that it had been greatly to their cost as they attempted the conversion of the upper echelons of society. It was difficult for the ruling classes to associate themselves with a clergy that valued humbleness so highly. Valignano states that Japanese lords had complained personally to him regarding the missionaries' behaviour 'juzgan que es contra la autoridad de la ley y de ellos mismos tratarse bajamente los Padres [...] y de esto se me quejaron a mi los mas principales señores y caballeros.'⁴⁶⁰ In *Advertimentos e Avisos*, Valignano delineated Jesuit behaviour in Japan: by following the

⁴⁵⁸ Almeida (1559) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 88v.

⁴⁵⁹ See *Sumario*, I, p. 131*.

⁴⁶⁰ *Sumario*, p. 240.

structure of the Nanzenji, they were recommended to locate themselves in the same hierarchy as the highest Zen Buddhist monks in Japan.⁴⁶¹

Fróis wrote that by the time Almeida went to convert the island of Shiki in 1566, ten years after Almeida had begun his evangelical work in Bungo, and he noted:

Porque o processo de Bungo tinha mostrado por experiencia o grande inconveniente que se seguia em se começar a ley de Deos a propagar em terras novas por gente baixa, intentou o Irmão ver se podia fazer primeiro o tono christão.⁴⁶²

He is very elusive here, only pointing to the conversion process upwards from below, and not giving much in the way of an explanation as to what had been the ‘process of Bungo’, but quickly moving on to focus on the conversion of the ruling classes. Fróis, who was aware of the negative impact that this had created, yet merely hints at the problem; according to Francisco Cabral, the hospital was ‘both a most edifying work of mercy and a great obstacle to spreading Christianity.’⁴⁶³ James Murdoch went so far as to argue that Almeida’s hospital ‘did more to impede the spread of Christianity in Bungo than all the hostile efforts of the monks.’⁴⁶⁴

Fróis had praised the hospital previously in his manuscript ‘foi mui grande o serviço que a Deos N. Senhor se fez naquelle hospital dos pobres de Funai.’⁴⁶⁵ While he notes that it had been for the *pobres*, he blames the Japanese, who are ‘naturalmente soberbos’, for not understanding that this work was ‘obra de sy heroica, e exercicio fundado em grande mizericordia, amor e piedade dos proximos (couza tão peregrina e alheia de seos bonzos).’⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁶¹ See Adriana Boscaro, ‘Valignano Interpreta il Giappone: Il Cerimoniale’, in *Alessandro Valignano*, ed., by Tamburello, et al., pp. 217-229. See also Tolosana, *La Fascinación de la Diferencia* (Madrid: Ediciones Akal, 2005).

⁴⁶² *História*, II, ch. 72, p. 149.

⁴⁶³ Cited in Moran, *The Japanese and the Jesuits*, p. 105.

⁴⁶⁴ Murdoch, *A History of Japan*, II, p. 76.

⁴⁶⁵ *História*, I, ch. 19, p. 122.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

At the same time he does not waste this opportunity to take aim at the monks, who are described as lacking the Christian virtues. The use of *soberbos* and *superbia*, here has rhetorical intentions: Fróis uses it to elaborate that this sin had blinded the Japanese, just as it had blinded Lucifer. *Superbia*, one of the seven deadly sins, is presented in a similar manner to the rhetorical system used by as argued Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala (c. 1535-1616), in his *Nueva Corónica y buen gobierno* (1615), to condemn the colonists and the Andeans in Peru for succumbing to the sin of pride, as argued by Rolena Adorno.⁴⁶⁷ Fróis contrasts the *humilitas* and *caritas* found in Almeida's work against the *superbia*, found in the Japanese nobles, implying that their pride had bewitched them, causing their failure to comprehend that the hospital was in essence a good work. The apostate Fabian Fucan repeated in his document what he must have been taught often: 'pride is the root of all evil, and humility, the foundation of all good.'⁴⁶⁸

In 1583, Valignano, who clearly favoured conversion downwards from above explains in his *Sumario* that the Japanese looked down on the fathers for the first 13 years, until they converted a noble 'un *kuntshu* llamado Omuradono.'⁴⁶⁹ Valignano was aware of how the Japanese followed strict and detailed ceremonies, in which precedence was granted according to their rank and dignity, and it was easier to convert from the top down.⁴⁷⁰

The Bungo Consultation held in October 1580 was the 'first big meeting' between Valignano and all the fathers in Japan to consider the main issues that afflicted the mission.⁴⁷¹ One of the issues discussed was the missionaries' dress. The use of this specific

⁴⁶⁷ See Rolena Adorno, 'The Rhetoric of Resistance: The 'Talking' Book of Felipe Guaman Poma', in *History of European Ideas*, 6/ 4 (1985), 447-464.

⁴⁶⁸ *Refutation of Deus by Fabian*, trans. by Esther Lowell Hibbard (Tokyo: I.S.R. Press, 1963), p. 41.

⁴⁶⁹ *Sumario*, p. 272. Ōmura Sumitada (D. Bartolomeu) was the first Daimyo Lord to convert to Christianity in 1563.

⁴⁷⁰ See *Advertimentos e Avisos*, pp.123-5.

⁴⁷¹ See Schütte, *Valignano's Mission Principles*, II, p. 7.

garment indicates, as D'Ortia argues, a close relationship between appearance and identity.⁴⁷² The appearance of the Jesuits was clearly an issue, as in Japan it signalled their authority. Francisco Cabral dedicated great effort to getting rid of the silk kimonos used by the Jesuits in Japan and to introducing the black cotton garb used in India. Fróis was against this change in policy, as were other Jesuits such as Organtino.⁴⁷³ While a return to wearing silk was out of the question, as it was considered incompatible with religious poverty, an agreement on uniformity of dress was reached.⁴⁷⁴ In China, Matteo Ricci exemplifies the importance of appearance and this principle of acculturation by adopting the local attire of the monks.⁴⁷⁵ Later, Ricci's changing the monks' robes for those of a mandarin, is according to Peter Burke, the acknowledgement that a 'cultural mistranslation had occurred and needed to be corrected.'⁴⁷⁶ Similarly, as previously discussed, the pious work of the hospital and orphanage in Bungo, something that would have been praised in Europe, was in Japan a hindrance, and changes needed to be made. Valignano thought that if a hospital was required, then it should only accept Christians from the upper classes, and not admit lepers.⁴⁷⁷

Even after all the criticism and negative response that the hospital and orphanage had received from both Jesuits and Japanese alike, in a highly eulogistic epitaph to Almeida, Fróis writes:

⁴⁷² Linda Zampol D'Ortia, 'Purple Silk and Black Cotton: Francisco Cabral and the Negotiation of Jesuit Attire in Japan (1570–73)', in *Exploring Jesuit Distinctiveness: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Ways of Proceeding within the Society of Jesus*, ed. by Robert Aleksander Maryks (Boston: Brill, 2016), pp. 137-55. Paulo Drumond Braga, 'A Vida Quotidiana', in *História dos Portugueses No Extremo Oriente*, ed. by A. H. de Oliveira Marques (Lisbon: Fundação Oriente, 1998), I, book 1, 527-8.

⁴⁷³ Schütte, *Valignano's mission principles*, II, p. 44. See Pedro Lage Reis Correia, 'Francisco Cabral and Lourenço mexia in Macao (1582-1584): Two Different Perspectives of Evangelisation in Japan', in *Bulletin of Portuguese – Japanese Studies*, 15 [online] 2007 (December) [consulted 10 November 2017], pp. 51-64. Available <<http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=36112010004>>.

⁴⁷⁴ Schütte, *Valignano's Mission Principles*, II, p. 44.

⁴⁷⁵ See Brockey, *Journey to the East*, pp. 43-5.

⁴⁷⁶ Burke, 'The Jesuits and the Art', in *The Jesuits II*, eds. by O'Malley, et al., p. 24.

⁴⁷⁷ Moran, *The Japanese and the Jesuits*, pp. 105-6.

Elle (Almeida) foi o que inventou fazer o hospital em Bungo junto de nossa caza, aonde se recolhião as crianças engeitadas, filhos de gentios, que por sua pobreza tem por melhor remedio matá-los quando nascem. Elle curava, sendo Irmão, por suas mãos todos os doentes de chagas e podridões afistoladas, e de todas as enfermidades que alli pela fama concorrião, por ser cousa tão nova em Japão, e os remediava corporal e espiritualmente.⁴⁷⁸

Fróis could have avoided mentioning the controversial hospital and focused purely on the positive aspects of his life. What this shows is that he still believed that what Almeida had built was worth remembering. If the hospital had created difficulties for the Jesuits, Fróis still believed that it had been an integral part of Almeida's apostolate and he describes it in a positive light. By analysing the manner in which Fróis copies, censors, and amends the sources in his *História* one is able to uncover his beliefs and his views of the Japanese mission. This vision of the deeds of the early Jesuits was written to aid future missionaries and to this I turn in the next section.

II.3.3 Kings and *vassalos nobres*

From early reports, Fróis wrote that mistakes had been made when writing about Japan,

nos primeros annos – por se ter pouca noticia da terra, e carecerem da experiencia que era necesaria – se escreverão algumas couzas das quaes depois se entendeo melhor sua realidade, e assim a carencia do lume, que se dellas tinha, fez alguma opozissão às informações mais modernas.⁴⁷⁹

Here, as argued by Patricia Seed, the word *modernas* emphasises a clear division between the past and the present, in this case the past representing a lack of knowledge and understanding of the land.⁴⁸⁰ Fróis stressed the number of years that had passed since the beginning of the mission, alluding to current knowledge. Once the land and customs of Japan

⁴⁷⁸ *História*, IV, ch. 1, p. 4.

⁴⁷⁹ *História*, I, prol., p. 2.

⁴⁸⁰ Patricia Seed, 'Modern' in *Renaissance Keywords*, ed. by Ita Mac Carthy (London: Legenda, 2013).

had been clearly explained, Fróis considered that he could then concentrate on the conversion aspect of this new mission. However, once this was completed, he realised that even then, his use of the letters as a source for his history would entail occasions of confusion, as some descriptions had not been followed by a detailed explanation of what they really meant in Japan:

Quando, na India ou na Europa, se vir ou ler alguma historia ou cartas de Japão, em que parece, pelo excesso da qualidade ou quantidade das couzas, haver ou cauzar alguma duvida em seos conceitos - que o podem attribuir à falta de se não terem as taes palavras bem declaradas, como para isto se podem trazer por exemplo as couzas em que apontaremos.⁴⁸¹

Usually Fróis is subtle about his corrections, avoiding overt criticisms of his fellow Jesuits. One instance where he does make it clear that he is correcting misconceptions is in a list of ten famous misrepresentations of Japan, provided in his prologue:

Pelos portuguezes que vem de fora a Japam a tratar com suas fazendas, assim por carecerem da lingua, como pela pouca noticia que tem das couzas, das terras e estados de Japão [...] nomearem por reys e reynos os que nem por imaginação o podem ser, nem nunca forão, como hé dizerem o rey de Firando [...] todos estes são tonos, id est fidalgos particulares, dos quaes há muito[s] em hum mesmo reyno, como entre nós. [...] o senhor universal, rey e monarca de todos estes 66 reynos, não hé mais que hum [...] Dairi; e assim os outros senhores de reynos podem [...] ter [...] titulo de duques [yacatas]. Mas porquanto são senhores absolutos de hum reino, ou muitos reinos, corremos ordinariamente com lhes chamar: a elles, reys; e a seos vassallos nobres - capitães [d]e fortalezas e senhores de algumas terras - chamamos tonos [...] Nem ainda estes 66 reynos se há-de imaginar que tenham a mesma latitude e grandeza, que tem os reynos de Europa, tirando alguns ainda que poucos.⁴⁸²

Japan was divided into 66 ‘kingdoms’ when the Jesuits arrived; the news that a ‘king’ was welcoming or considering conversion to Christianity thus gave the wrong impression that a kingdom with similar *latitude e grandeza* to kingdoms in Europe was accepting the Gospel.

⁴⁸¹ *História*, I, prol., p. 5.

⁴⁸² *História*, I, prol., pp. 8-9.

This was especially true when the examples given were merely small islands such as Firando (Hirado), Xiqui, and Amacusa, and their lords no more than *fidalgos particulares*.

Regrettably, it was not only the Portuguese merchants, as Fróis tells us, who wrote erroneously and referred to the *vassalos nobres* as kings; the Jesuits themselves were also guilty of this. Here, as in his whole *História*, Fróis redirects the blame away from the Jesuits avoiding overt criticism of his *confrères*. Occasionally Fróis made the corrections silently. For example, Belchior Nunes Barreto's letter from Macao in 1555, printed in the Alcalá *Cartas*, mentioned the 'king' of Firando: 'Con esta va el traslado de una carta, q el Rey d Firãdo me escribio d Japon.'⁴⁸³ But in the *História*, as he was more well-aquainted with the regional geo-politics, Fróis corrects his former Superior in Goa, and changes the word king for the more appropriate *tono* '[Escrevendo deste porto o P. Mestre Belchior, assim termina uma sua carta:] com esta vai huma carta do *tono* de Firando que me escreveo.'⁴⁸⁴ Worse still, in the Alcalá letter-book, the above-mentioned letter appears with the title 'Carta del Rey de Firãdo.' This is a very short letter, about half a page, inviting the Provincial of India Belchior Nunes Barreto to come to Japan, and showing a desire to convert to Christianity. Fróis would have been all too aware of this error, as the 'Carta del Rey de Firãdo' is directly above his own letter in the letter-book, which he wrote in Malacca in 1556 – seven years before he reached Japan.⁴⁸⁵ In another instance Fróis draws attention to the error, pointing it out, and he paraphrases to clarify 'O Fixo de Firando (o qual não hé rey nem por imaginação, mas hum tonozinho pequeno que ainda entre nós, quando muito conforme a seo estado, poderia ser hum mediocre conde).'⁴⁸⁶ Generally, Fróis prefers to paraphrase than to give a tighter word-for-word translation, and this seems to be what he considers the best way to

⁴⁸³ My own emphasis, Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 68v. In the Alcalá *Cartas* he is called Melchior.

⁴⁸⁴ My own emphasis, see *História*, I, ch. 15, p. 97.

⁴⁸⁵ Gaspar Vilela also wrote 'Rey de Firando', see Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 88v.

⁴⁸⁶ *História*, I, ch. 63, p. 71.

describe the Japanese mission, as it allows him the freedom of incorporating multiple sources while correcting the written correspondence.

A few years after Fróis had begun to write his history he clarified in his prologue that this was the right time for such an account to be written. He hints that it had taken a long time to truly penetrate the secrets of the Japanese culture that went beyond initial superficial observations. The early pioneers did not enjoy such an advantage and had to work as best they could with an insufficient knowledge of culture and language, and react to the new environment and circumstances they encountered. As well as correcting the sources, there are instances when Fróis constructs a narrative using rhetorical strategies for edifying purposes, as we shall see next.

II.3.4 Nobunaga's death

The missionaries' conviction that outside the church there was no salvation is best expressed in the context of Fróis's description of the violent death of the powerful *daimyo* lord Oda Nobunaga, and his attempt to incorporate this enlightened despot into a Christian framework.

In the early hours of 21 June 1582, Oda Nobunaga (1534-82) and his entourage were attacked and killed by Akechi Mitsuhide's (明智 光秀, 1528-82) coup d'état at the Honnō-ji temple in Kyoto. Thus, met his end one of the three so-called unifiers of pre-modern Japan, and one who the Jesuits, such as Fróis, had been pursuing to convert for many years without success.⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸⁷ On Oda Nobunaga's biographical account see Lamers, *Japonius Tyrannus*. See also Fróis letter (Kyoto, 1 June 1579) in Alcalá *Cartas*, pp. 285v-99r.

In a letter to General Acquaviva, Fróis described Nobunaga wishing to be worshipped as a divine being.⁴⁸⁸ For this purpose, according to Fróis, Nobunaga built a temple in Azuchi, in his newly-built castle-town ‘quatorce legoas’ from Kyoto.⁴⁸⁹ The issue of Nobunaga’s self-deification has divided historians, with some including Asao Naohiro and Herman Ooms putting forward the reliability of Fróis’s account, while others such as W.J. Boot doubt the veracity of Fróis’s account especially given the lack of any Japanese document that could corroborate it.⁴⁹⁰ Jeroen P. Lamers concluded that Nobunaga’s self-deification does not seem plausible and that Fróis’s account is for the purpose of fitting the hegemon’s death into a European context.⁴⁹¹ However Lamers fell short of elaborating upon the nature of the European context. My contribution to this debate is to take the position in favour of the invention of this passage by Fróis and my reading is that he is attempting to interpret Nobunaga’s fall within a Christian framework. I argue that he is constructing an edifying narrative that makes sense of Nobunaga’s violent death within the Christian tradition of *historia sacra*, and is incorporating the most important military leader of Japan into the history of Christianity.⁴⁹² Using the benefit of hindsight, a theme that I develop further in chapter III, Fróis fabricates a series of events that promotes an instructive lesson.

Nobunaga suffered a gruesome and unexpected death (*mors improvisa*), of the type that is usually attributed to enemies of the Gospel in the Jesuits’ accounts. Therefore, the death of this non-Christian patron of the Jesuits was problematic to describe not just because it was unexpected but also because it was ghastly.

⁴⁸⁸ See Fróis to Acquaviva (Kuchinotsu, 5 November 1582) in Évora *Cartas*, II, pp. 61r-82r.

⁴⁸⁹ *História*, III, ch. 40, p. 330. See Üçerler, ‘The Jesuit Enterprise’, in *Companion to the Jesuits*, ed. by Worcester, p. 159.

⁴⁹⁰ W. J. Boot, ‘The Death of a Shogun: Deification in Early Modern Japan’ in *Shinto in History: Ways of the Kami*, ed. by John Breen and Mark Teeuwen (Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000), p. 146.

⁴⁹¹ Lamers, *Japonius Tyrannus*, p. 223.

⁴⁹² See Murdoch, *A History of Japan*, vol. 2, pp. 144-88.

Michael Cooper argued that the *História* tends to be too diffuse, giving the example of the lengthy chapter devoted to the violent death of Nobunaga as unnecessary in the history of the Christian mission.⁴⁹³ But what Cooper fails to appreciate is that Fróis commits his energies to presenting this very important event for edifying reasons, while historical accuracy is neglected. Fróis based this chapter on his own letter dated 5 November 1582.⁴⁹⁴ In this letter addressed to General Claudio Acquaviva and written more than four months after the death of Nobunaga, he composed an edifying account for a European audience. Jeroen P. Lamers rightly points out that not only is Fróis the only known source of the alleged hegemon's deadly sin of *superbia* in this letter, and later in the *História*, but also argues that his previous letter, the *annua* dated only five days earlier, does not mention this very important event.⁴⁹⁵

The annual letter dated by Fróis 31 October 1582 raises problems. The *annua* ends with Nobunaga still alive and his son, Oda Nobutaka, about to embark on the conquest of Shikoku, this despite Nobunaga having been dead for four months.⁴⁹⁶ Fróis was not an eyewitness of events and relied on the information that came from those residing in the Gokinai, such as Organtino.⁴⁹⁷ But news of Nobunaga's death more likely would have reached Fróis in Kyushu within weeks.⁴⁹⁸ It is therefore more likely that Fróis finished his annual letter months before the end of October 1582, and on learning the news of Nobunaga's death, he left it without alterations while the Jesuits were occupied with

⁴⁹³ *João Rodrigues's*, ed. by Michael Cooper, p. xxiv. On the death of Nobunaga see also Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, pp. 82-4.

⁴⁹⁴ See Fróis to Acquaviva (Kuchinotsu, 5 November 1582) in Évora *Cartas*, II, pp. 61r-82r.

⁴⁹⁵ Lamers, *Japonius Tyrannus*, p. 218.

⁴⁹⁶ Shikoku 四国, which literally means 'four provinces' is the smallest of the four main islands of Japan south of Honshu. Lamers, *Japonius Tyrannus*, p. 218.

⁴⁹⁷ In Azuchi were also Father Stefanoni (1541-1612) and brothers Simão de Almeida, Diogo Pereira, Jerónimo Vaz, and Vicente (Japanese).

⁴⁹⁸ Fróis wrote that the news of the coup d'état reached Kyoto by noon of the same day 'foi lá voando esta triste nova' and certainly, this kind of news would have flown over the archipelago, see *História*, III, ch. 42, p. 345.

considering their position. The Honnō-ji incident and the subsequent upheaval that it caused left the missionaries in a very precarious situation. These were sad tidings for the missionaries who abandoned their house in Azuchi in fear for their lives.⁴⁹⁹ Lamers argues that the chapter referring to Nobunaga's self-deification was written to remedy a problem which Fróis had created himself by building up this figure of an enlightened despot who was a friend to the Jesuits and an enemy of the *Ikkō-ikki* Buddhist warrior-monks.⁵⁰⁰ But it was not just Fróis who had written in this way. Most Jesuit writers reported very favourably upon Nobunaga.⁵⁰¹ The image that the Jesuits had painted of Nobunaga for years was of the 'principal senhor de todo Iapaō'; scourge of Buddhist monk-warriors; and one who welcomed, protected, and gave land in his new-built city for the missionaries to build a house and a church.⁵⁰² It was with this image that Fróis had to contend when he wrote his letter to Acquaviva.

The *História* depicts Nobunaga's rise and fall based on biblical precedent. This could be fully appreciated in the chapters describing Nobunaga's ascent from lord of half a kingdom to conqueror of more than forty kingdoms; he ultimately became the richest man in Japan.⁵⁰³

Nobunaga is then described as a divine whip or *flagellum*, as an instrument used by the

⁴⁹⁹ Organtino escaped 'com vinte e oito pessoas' see *História*, III, ch. 42, p. 346.

⁵⁰⁰ Lamers, *Japonius Tyrannus*, p. 223. Engelbert Jorisen, review 'Japonius Tyrannus: The Japanese Warlord Oda Nobunaga reconsidered Japonica Neerlandica' Jeroen Lamers, in *Bulletin of Portuguese-Japanese Studies* [online] 2002 [December]: 19 August 2018 <<http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=36100509>> ISSN 0874-8438.

⁵⁰¹ In 1579, Francisco Carrion noted 'Nobunanga com seus filhos nos favorecem muito', see Francisco Carrion to Archbishop of Évora Dom Theotónio of Bargaça (Japan, 25 December 1579) in Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 454r. In 1580, Lourenço Mexia wrote positively of the great 'favores que Nobunanga [...] fizeraõ este anno à Christandade, & aos Padres', see Lourenço Mexia to General Acquaviva (Bungo, 20 October 1580) in Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 459r. Organtino describes Nobunaga's war against the monks as God's will: 'Muito foi destruir nosso Senhor por meo de Nobunanga [...] os mosteiros', see Organtino to Fróis (Kyoto, 1579) in Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 451v.

⁵⁰² The evidence points to Nobunaga considering the Buddhist armies as an obstacle rather than having hatred toward Buddhism, see Peter Nosco, 'Early Modernity and the States Policies toward Christianity in 16th and 17th century Japan', in *Bulletin of Portuguese-Japanese Studies* [Online] 2003 (December): [23 September 2018] <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=36100701> ISSN 0874-8438, p. 8.

⁵⁰³ 'Seos thezouros em grande numero e quantidade' see *História*, III, ch. 40, p. 330; 'Elle foi, segundo affirmão, o mais prospero, rico e poderozo principe de todos os que lhe precederão em Japão', see *História*, II, ch. 84, p. 256.

Christian God to punish non-believers and the enemies of the Gospel persecuting and destroying the monks.⁵⁰⁴ At the same time Nobunaga favours the Jesuits.⁵⁰⁵ So far, Nobunaga's description is that of a leader who had been prosperous and fortunate, but whose good luck, within a Christian framework, could only be explained as originating from God: '[Nobunaga] sem o elle entender, o escolheo Deos Nosso Senhor para aparelhar o caminho a nossa santa ley.'⁵⁰⁶ But if God had chosen him to be the *flagelo* of the 'ministers of the Devil' how could his violent and sudden death be explained?

Fróis resorts to the Christian past to locate Nobunaga's brutal end. Nobunaga is depicted as becoming blinded by his success and presenting himself as someone who should be worshipped, instead of humbling himself and acknowledging that everything he had achieved had come from God.⁵⁰⁷ He characterises Nobunaga as becoming increasingly filled with pride to the point of blasphemy: 'proromper na temeridade e insolencia de Nabucodonosor, pertendendo se[r] de todos adorado [...] como se tivera ser divino e fora senhor da immortalidade.'⁵⁰⁸

Fróis is writing in the style of *historia sacra*, in this case suggesting that madness precedes a fall, or perhaps more dramatically, pride and arrogance, the ultimate sins of Lucifer who tried to be like God. The sin of pride is considered the sin of sins, a direct offence to God, and Nobunaga yields to this capital sin of *superbia*.⁵⁰⁹ Akechi is also represented by Fróis

⁵⁰⁴ 'Tomou Deos por flagelo dos bonzos' see *História*, III, ch. 25, p. 190. This is similar to how Organtino had portrayed Nobunaga in his letter in 1579.

⁵⁰⁵ 'Sempre uzou comnosco de grande humanidade depois que começou a reinar', see *História*, III, ch. 40, p. 331.

⁵⁰⁶ *História*, III, ch. 25, p. 191.

⁵⁰⁷ 'Author da natureza, foi-se tanto ensobervecendo e jactando em sua potencia, que chegou ao ultimo donde sua demencia e arrogancia o podião precipitar', see *História*, III, ch. 40, pp. 331-2.

⁵⁰⁸ *História*, III, ch. 40, p. 332.

⁵⁰⁹ While teaching a Jesuit novice, Xavier points explicitly to pride as one of the sins that was to be avoided within the Society 'esta mínima Compañía [...] no sufre hombres soberbios, arrogantes y amigos de su juicio y honra propia' see Xavier to the novice Juan Bravo (Malacca, 23 June 1549) in *X. Cartas*, p. 347.

as being no less proud than Nobunaga.⁵¹⁰ And his end is also ‘*não menos desestrada, & miseravelmente.*’⁵¹¹

Fróis’s account echoes many biblical passages wherein pride leads to destruction: ‘Before destruction the heart of man is haughty.’⁵¹² Fróis uses the analogy of Nebuchadnezzar, the biblical king of the Babylonian empire in the book of Daniel, as a rhetorical device to highlight Nobunaga’s sins. The comparison with the book of Daniel is revealing. To a large extent the Jesuits, like the Jews, are living among pagans. Nobunaga, similar to Nebuchadnezzar, is a very powerful leader, and both commanded their subjects to worship idols. What transpires is that Fróis (and perhaps his sources) is constructing historical fiction in a Christian context for edifying purposes, which is based on a real historical figure in Oda Nobunaga, but where some events seem fabricated or inaccurate. During the visits of Alessandro Valignano to Nobunaga in Kyoto in 1581 (just over a year before Nobunaga’s sudden and tragic death), Fróis has portrayed Nobunaga giving a feast in the context of a Christian narrative ‘*para mostrar como outro rey Assuero sua gloria,*’⁵¹³ as in the Bible, where the Persian king Ahasuerus held a banquet to display the vast wealth and glory of his kingdom.⁵¹⁴ When Fróis writes this passage in the *História* Nobunaga was already dead by the betrayal of his retainer Akechi Mitsuhide. Therefore, the comparison with Ahasuerus is meaningful, as this king is usually identified as Xerxes I (419-465 BC), who according to legend was killed by his commander of the royal bodyguard Artabanus. Schütte argued that

⁵¹⁰ ‘(Akechi) nao era menos soberbo que elle (Nobunaga)’, see Fróis to Acquaviva (Kuchinotsu, 5 November 1582) in Évora *Cartas*, II, p. 82r.

⁵¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 82r.

⁵¹² Proverbs 18. 12.

⁵¹³ *História*, III, ch. 31. Juan Fernandes explained how the Christians of Bungo used to get together in the house of a Christian who hosted a *convite* ‘el cual no es como el del rey Asuero’ see Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 79r.

⁵¹⁴ Esther 1. 3-4.

this chapter in the *História* is incredibly incorrect, Wicki defends Fróis's inaccuracy by pointing out róis was not present all the time and relied on sources from other Jesuits.⁵¹⁵

This is not the first time that Fróis is guilty of fabricating an event. The disputations that Xavier had with Ninjit (Ninjitsu, Ninshitsu, the superior Buddhist monk whom Xavier had met in 1549-50), which were written about in chapter 2 of the *História*, are according to scholars such as Helmut Feldmann a complete fantasy.⁵¹⁶ The reason for doubting the veracity of these theological and philosophical exchanges is that it seems implausible for him to have engaged in such sophisticated debates, seemingly without an interpreter.⁵¹⁷ Yet Xavier himself wrote that he spoke many times with Ninjit. According to him the Buddhist abbot was hesitant about the immortality of the soul.⁵¹⁸ It seems that Fróis creates the narrative around Xavier's account and constructs an imaginary debate between two important exponents of their respective religions to portray a religious principle. In other words, Fróis is constructing a parable, a figure of speech, a short fictitious story to illustrate a moral principle or spiritual lesson. This didactic story alludes to the Buddhist abbot not believing in the immortality of the soul and in the end losing his own for not converting and spending an eternity in hell.⁵¹⁹

The case of Nobunaga is taught in rhetorical hyperbole. Nobunaga grows from a *daimyo* of small province to become the lord of the *Tenca*.⁵²⁰ This growth leads him to the ultimate

⁵¹⁵ *História*, III, ch. 31, p. 262, n. 22. See Schütte, *Valignanos Missionsgrundsätze für Japan*, I/2 (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1958), p. 169.

⁵¹⁶ Helmut Feldmann, 'As Disputas de São Francisco Xavier com Bonzos e Nobres do Japão Relatadas por Luís Fróis S.J. e João Rodrigues S.J.', in *Portuguese Voyages*, ed. by Milward, p. 288.

⁵¹⁷ Especially when in the same letter he wrote 'si nos supiésemos hablar la lengua'; see Xavier to the Jesuits in Goa (Kagoshima, 5 November 1551) in *X. Cartas*, p. 357.

⁵¹⁸ 'No saberse determinar si nuestra alma es inmortal o si muere juntamente con el cuerpo; algunas veces me dice que sí, otras que no' see Xavier to the Jesuits in Goa (Kagoshima, 5 November 1551) in *X. Cartas*, pp. 356-7.

⁵¹⁹ On Hell see Jean Delumeau, *Sin and Fear: The Emergence of a Western Guilt Culture, 13th-18th Centuries*, trans. by Eric Nicholson (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), pp. 373-82.

⁵²⁰ Of Owari province.

temptation, *superbia*. But before Nobunaga is slain, Fróis presents God, as an act of His grace and mercy, trying to persuade him to repent and change his behaviour by sending ominous celestial warnings. As Nobunaga's fall begins to accelerate, Fróis turns to the sacred scripture to make sense of what is about to happen. First, on 8 March 1582 he observes a brightness in the sky: 'Apareceo o ceo pela banda do Oriente muito claro, e em riba da mais alta torre de Nobunanga se mostrou tão vermelho que punha espanto.'⁵²¹ Fróis then also describes a comet that appeared on 14 May 1582: 'E dahi a poucos dias cahio em Anzuchi ao meio dia huma couza como cometa ou foguete do ceo, que sete ou oito pessoas de nossa caza virão.'⁵²² These *ignis fatuus* and celestial bodies are seen in direct connection to Nobunaga, in that they appear near or in his castle. In Europe comets were considered as harbingers of doom and of weighty events about to transpire.⁵²³ A comet was seen from Earth around 6 May 1582, which is in line with what Fróis describes, but it is the way in which he interprets this event that is telling. All of these celestial portents are described as admonitory and sent by God to compel Nobunaga to change his ways. He uses these apparent signs, *sinaes e prodigios espantozos*, to show God's power and divine mercy, *infinita clemencia e piedade*, to give Nobunaga a final warning: 'para que ainda o infelice homem [Nobunaga] ajudado do espanto delles podesse tornar sobre sy e reconhecer [...] a Deos por Senhor absoluto.'⁵²⁴ These celestial signs appear in other parts of the *História* as well.⁵²⁵ Before the battle of Okitanawate in 1584, Fróis observes in Nagasaki during three or four nights 'tres columnas de fogo no ceo.'⁵²⁶ Fróis is not alone in writing about divine signs shown

⁵²¹ *História*, III, ch. 40, p. 334.

⁵²² *Ibid.*, p. 335.

⁵²³ Such as the depiction of the Halley comet in 1066 in the Bayeux Tapestry.

⁵²⁴ *História*, III, ch. 40, p. 334.

⁵²⁵ Between the Christian *daimyo* Arima Harunobu (Dom Protazio) allied with the Shimazu clan against the *daimyo* of Hizen Ryuzoji Takanobu (龍造寺 隆信, 1530-84). According to Fróis Dom Protazio and the people of Arima with great zeal prayed to God and disciplined themselves three times a week. Ryūzōji is defeated and killed, and his army 'irruit super eos formido et pavor' (Exodus 15. 16), as the army retreated, they received 'o açoute da divina Justiça' see *História*, IV, ch. 6, p. 45.

⁵²⁶ *História*, IV, ch. 8, p. 61.

in the sky. When Vilela was expelled from Hirado he wrote that God, rather than show revenge by sending ‘rayos y fuego,’ sent the people of Hirado many signs: ‘se vieron claramente cruces en el cielo, y otras señales manifestas.’⁵²⁷

The *História* tells that Nobunaga is unable to understand the ‘warnings’ as in Psalm 10. 4.⁵²⁸ He behaved as a man blinded with pride, similar to King Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar in the book of Daniel. Fróis argues that the signs are very clear to the missionaries.⁵²⁹ But while the missionaries are able to interpret these omens, the Japanese fail to read into them.⁵³⁰ In the Bible, the Babylonian diviners and soothsayers are unable to decipher the king’s dream or the message of ‘the writing on the wall’, but for Daniel the meanings of these omens are very clear because God reveals them to him. To the Jesuits, like sixteenth century Daniels, these alleged events are portents that predict the fall of Nobunaga. Fróis writes that to the Japanese, who according to him are not skilled at augury, these events appeared meaningless, similar to the lack of interpretation by the magicians and seers in the book of Daniel. However, this is contradictory to what Fróis wrote for the year 1578, when according to him a comet was seen for two months in Bungo; in this case the monks who were suffering the destitution of their temples and their income by Ōtomo Yoshimune, are capable of predicting that is an adverse omen for them.⁵³¹

The prospects of Christianity expanding while Nobunaga was in power were significant. The chapter before Nobunaga’s death closes with his son, Oda Nobutaka (1558-83) in 1582 leading an army against one of Japan’s four main Islands, Shikoku, who is depicted as a

⁵²⁷ Vilela to the Goa College (Japan, 1 September 1559) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 93r.

⁵²⁸ ‘In his pride the wicked man does not seek him; in all his thoughts is no room for God.’

⁵²⁹ ‘Maravilhados estavam os nossos de verem como com tão espantozos sinaes se partia Nobunanga tão sem temor para a guerra’ see *História*, III, ch. 40, p. 335.

⁵³⁰ ‘Mas como os japões não estão muito correntes nestes pronosticos e em sua origem, parece que não advertião nem ponderavão o que poderia ser’ see *História*, III, ch. 40, p. 334-5.

⁵³¹ ‘Dizião [...] os bonzos que o pronostico da cometa cahira sobre elles, e [...] indicava [...] sua destruição e de seo culto, rendas e templos’ see *História*, III, ch. 1, p. 11.

sympathizer of Christianity and promising Organtino that after subjugating Shikoku: ‘eu sem falta espero lá que se há-de propagar vossa ley.’⁵³² However, all these hopes came crashing down, and the Jesuits must accept that any setback came from God, since ‘Dios es el autor y causa principal de todas las tribulaciones y penas que padecemos.’⁵³³ Valignano, in his *Sumario* (1583), argues in line with Fróis’s narrative. Valignano points to Divine Providence which allows these reverses to occur. The Honnō-ji incident was a major setback for the Jesuits, one that needed to be explained within the boundaries of a Christian framework. This shows the firm belief that outside the church there was no salvation, and that Fróis is constantly constructing a narrative that fits within the Christian past, where the *historia sacra* predominates even when historical accuracy is neglected in the manuscript.

II.3.5 Hideyoshi’s volte-face

Fróis’s report of the meeting between Valignano and Oda Nobunaga in Kyoto in 1581, and later in Azuchi fortress, provides little information about the content of the meetings; instead the narrative focuses on the magnificent palaces and their beauty which could be compared to the ‘grandiozas fabricas de Europa.’⁵³⁴ This style of writing echoes another important event, the description of the audience in 1586 with Toyotomi Hideyoshi (豊臣 秀, 1537-98), in his castle in Osaka with ‘camaras douradas’ and the beautiful design and spotless ‘jardins de estranho artificio.’⁵³⁵ As we shall see the ekphrastic descriptions of Nobunaga’s and Hideyoshi’s precincts, in Azuchi and Osaka respectively, were not just intended to transport the readers directly to the scene but also to shift attention to the beautiful surroundings. The event was a crucial meeting between the vice-provincial Gaspar Coelho

⁵³² *História*, III, ch. 40, p. 336.

⁵³³ Pedro de Rivadeneira, *Tratado de la Tribulación* (Madrid: Imprenta de los Sucesores de Hernando, 1919), p. 364.

⁵³⁴ *História*, III, ch. 31, p. 257.

⁵³⁵ *História*, IV, ch. 31, p. 229.

(1529-90) and senior members of the Japanese mission, which included Fróis as interpreter, and the *Kampaku* (Imperial Regent). Given that what was discussed during this audience was of vital importance for the survival of the mission, Fróis's account leaves much to be desired, as he drives the narrative away from the actual dialogue between Hideyoshi and Coelho.

Partha Mitter, in his seminal work *Much Maligned Monsters*, argued that Indian art was considered as infernal representations by European travellers viewing through their preconceived mindset.⁵³⁶ Through their European stereotypes the Indian gods were seen as monsters.⁵³⁷ In Japan too, when Valignano saw, with European eyes, Japanese religious representations, he interpreted them as a warning of hell to the Japanese: 'in Japan, where demons are depicted in their monstrous and abhorrent shapes.'⁵³⁸ Historians have argued that Fróis had developed a true appreciation for the Japanese culture and art, and the focus of the narrative is on the scenic beauty.⁵³⁹ In the *História*, the author shows, on the one hand, contempt for the Japanese representations of their Gods: 'adorarão os demonios em figuras de pedras e paos.'⁵⁴⁰ On the other hand, when he copied Almeida's description of the Tōdai-ji monastery and the gigantic statue of Buddha (*Daibutsu*), he did not hide his confrere's admiration for the Japanese artistry: 'Este pateo e claustro foi huma das fermozas couzas que vi de obra bem acabada, forte e agradável aos olhos.'⁵⁴¹

Sioris found Fróis wavering in the domain of aesthetics, especially in his descriptions of Osaka, Gifu and Azuchi castles and the Sanjusangendo Temple, where the missionary

⁵³⁶ Partha Mitter, *Much Maligned Monsters: A History of European Reactions to Indian Art* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1977, 1992).

⁵³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁵³⁸ Cited in Schütte, *Valignano's Mission Principles*, p. 83.

⁵³⁹ Michael Cooper wrote that Fróis was 'struck by the rock gardens and ponds of various temples' see Cooper, 'The Early Jesuits in Japan and Buddhism', in *Portuguese Voyages*, ed. Milward, p. 152. Boxer wrote that Fróis describes Gifu Castle 'in term of unqualified rapture', see Boxer, *The Christian Century*, pp. 62-3.

⁵⁴⁰ *História*, V. ch. 6, p. 52

⁵⁴¹ *História*, V. ch. 61, p. 54. Alcalá *Cartas*, pp. 194r-196v.

appears to admire the Japanese architecture without any European prejudices, either religious or cultural. That may be, but choosing to describe the scene rather than the key elements of a very important audience leads us to believe that the omission is deliberate in order to avoid talking about issues that were controversial and were not considered edifying. Fróis also focuses on describing how courteous and welcoming *Kampaku* was toward the *Padres*. This consists of a series of sentences arranged in order to gradually increase the importance of what would occur a year later, as the climax. This rhetorical device is acknowledged by the same author: ‘Particularizamos de proposito estes favores tanto por extenso, para se melhor entender a volta que o mundo deo dahi a hum anno.’⁵⁴²

A close analysis of the audience between the Jesuits’ vice-provincial Gaspar Coelho (1537-90), and Hideyoshi in Osaka 1586, as described by Fróis, serves to illustrate how he treated crucial and sensitive events and demonstrates how cautious he was to avoid writing anything that could taint the missionaries’ reputation. The audience took place at an important juncture for the mission; the hostility of the Satsuma clan threatened to destroy not only Bungo but also Christianity in the whole of Kyushu. For this reason, the historian Diego Pacheco called the year 1586 the ‘most important in the history of the relations between Hideyoshi and the Europeans.’⁵⁴³

In the chapters preceding this momentous audience, Fróis depicted a very perilous time for the mission, with the missionaries’ and the Christians’ position being in a very dangerous state, especially in Kyushu. The prince of Bungo Ōtomo Yoshimune (1558-1605) was turning unsympathetic towards Christianity by 1585 ‘perseguido aos christãos e impedindo

⁵⁴² *História*, IV, ch. 31, p. 233. The title of the chapter is ‘Dos gazalhados e favores que Quambacu (Hideyoshi), fez ao Padre Vice-Provincial’ see *História*, IV, ch. 31, p. 227.

⁵⁴³ Diego Pacheco, S.J., ‘The Europeans in Japan, 1534 -1640’, in *The Southern Barbarians: The First Europeans in Japan*, ed. by Michael Cooper (Tokyo; Kodansha International Ltd, 1971), p. 61.

aos que de novo o querem ser.⁵⁴⁴ He is described as being under the influence of an evil spirit: ‘o Principe era sugeito a hum de seos companheiros (a demon).’⁵⁴⁵ He had many difficulties with which to cope at the time: the loss of territories, rebellious vassals, and the imminent invasion by the Shimazu, of whom Fróis noted that if ‘Deos não soccorrer a Bungo com sua poderosa mão, parece que o hão estes tiranos de pôr em grandissimo aperto e affliçam.’⁵⁴⁶ Bungo was an important bastion for Christianity, especially under the patronage of *daimyo* Ōtomo Sōrin (大友 宗麟, Dom Francisco, 1530-87). If Bungo was to be lost to its enemies, it could prove a very detrimental blow to the mission. At the same time in Nagasaki, according to Fróis, Coelho received death threats from the Shimazu clan of Satsuma should he intend to go to Bungo and Kyoto. The Shimazu suspected that Coelho was going to Kyoto to seek Hideyoshi’s help for Bungo against Satsuma.⁵⁴⁷

Some historians have blamed the naivety or ineptitude of Coelho for precipitating or even causing outright a crisis by what he said and agreed during the audience. According to Hubert Cieslik, Organtino Gnechi Soldo (1533–1609), who was present at the audience, was anxious about this meeting because he was aware that Coelho tended to mix secular matters with religion.⁵⁴⁸ Organtino offered to be the interpreter in place of Fróis, and during the meeting tried to divert the conversation to a different theme, but neither Coelho nor Fróis were to be deterred.⁵⁴⁹ Antoni Üçerler argues that Hideyoshi ‘had heard enough’ when in 1587 Coelho repeated his promises - made a year earlier in Osaka - to seek support not only

⁵⁴⁴ *História*, IV, ch. 27, p. 204.

⁵⁴⁵ *História*, IV, ch. 28, p. 211.

⁵⁴⁶ *História*, IV, ch. 27, p. 206.

⁵⁴⁷ *História*, IV, ch. 29, p. 216.

⁵⁴⁸ Hubert Cieslik, 2005. ‘Soldo Organtino: The Architect of the Japanese Mission.’ Retrieved from Francis Britto’s *All About Francis Xavier* see <http://pweb.sophia.ac.jp/~d-mccoey/xavier>, p. 10; see also *História*, IV, ch. 31. This same chapter is based on a letter by Fróis to Valignano (Shimonoseki, 17 October 1586) in *Évora Cartas*, II, pp.172r-186r.

⁵⁴⁹ See Cieslik, Hubert. 2005. ‘Soldo Organtino: The Architect of the Japanese Mission.’ Retrieved from Francis Britto’s *All About Francis Xavier* <http://pweb.sophia.ac.jp/~d-mccoey/xavier>, pp.10-1.

from the Portuguese but also from Christian *daimyo* in Kyushu.⁵⁵⁰ One must remember that Fróis's entire *História de Japam*, and therefore his recounting of this episode, did not receive Valignano's approval. The manuscript did not undergo further editing in Europe, as it never reached the continent, staying in its original form in which its author wished it to remain. As such, a careful analysis of Fróis's account offers an interesting view on this crucial episode, which is as significant for what he says as for what he omits. If Coelho was guilty of either naivety or incompetence, so was Fróis who as interpreter could have translated Coelho's words in a very diplomatic manner, as he was well versed with Japanese courtly manners, having spent many years in the Japanese capital. Fróis offers us very little regarding the dialogue and the important issues of the meeting, and instead expands on the irrelevant.

On the morning of 4 May 1586, around 30 members of the Society of Jesus anxiously prepared to be received in audience with Hideyoshi, by then the undisputed Lord of Japan. After the usual protocol, Coelho and the Jesuits were received by the *Kampaku* in a very affable manner, causing admiration 'pela familiaridade que mostrava ao Padre.'⁵⁵¹ Hideyoshi also recognised Fróis 'que era o interprete' and both talked for a while, reminiscing about the time when Nobunaga was alive. According to Fróis, the Lord of the *Tenka* expressed to the Jesuits his plans for the invasion of Korea and China and only requested 'que negociarem-lhe duas naos grandes bem aparelhadas, as quaes tão pouco queria de graça, senão pagá-las.'⁵⁵² Although Coelho imprudently promised to seek the support of the Portuguese and of the Kyushu Christian lords, Fróis highlights Hideyoshi's

⁵⁵⁰ See Üçerler, 'The Jesuit enterprise', in *Companion to the Jesuits*, ed. by Worcester, p. 160.

⁵⁵¹ *História*, IV, ch. 31, p. 229.

⁵⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 229.

agency but omits what Coelho said during the meeting. Coelho's presence all but disappears into the background, even though his participation was essential during the meeting.

Fróis centres this episode on Hideyoshi's self-absorbed and egomaniac personality: 'não pertendia mais que deixar nome de sy e cometer couza que nenhum senhor de Japão até agora intentou.' In Fróis's writing, Hideyoshi told the *padres* that what he most wanted was 'que deixar quando morresse nome e fama de seo poder.'⁵⁵³ Above all else, during the meeting the Lord of the *Tenka* promised the Society of Jesus, should he be successful in conquering:

[The] reynos de Corea e da China [...] levantaria em todas as partes igrejas e mandaria que todos se fizessem desta nossa ley [...] que ainda havia de fazer christãos a metade ou a mayor parte de Japam. E às vezes ouvia com grande attensão as respostas que o Padre Vice-Provincial lhe dava pelo Padre Luiz Froes, que era o lingua.⁵⁵⁴

Even though his grandiose plans were deluded, Hideyoshi was serious about the invasion of China at the time as his letters suggest.⁵⁵⁵ Fróis's account corroborates Hideyoshi's letter to the king of Korea.⁵⁵⁶ From the way that Fróis relates this episode it appears that Coelho, as well as Fróis himself, were in favour of the military conquest of China and Korea. More important is the emphasis that Fróis lays on Hideyoshi's promise to help with the expansion of Christianity into China and Korea, as well as in Japan. China's closure to foreign contact had left Valignano unsure as to how to proceed with the evangelisation of this country.⁵⁵⁷

Fróis had admitted previously that '[Korea] por ser habitada de gente barbara e inhumana,

⁵⁵³ Ibid., p. 228.

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 229.

⁵⁵⁵ 'My object is to enter China, to spread the customs of our country to the four hundred and more provinces of that nation, and to establish there the government of our imperial city even unto all the ages' see Mary Elizabeth Berry, *Hideyoshi* (Cambridge, MA: The Harvard University Press, 1982), p. 208.

⁵⁵⁶ 'My wish is nothing other than that my name be known throughout the three countries (of Japan, China, and India)', see *ibid.*, p. 208.

⁵⁵⁷ 'No se como podremos tener para entrar con esta gente (China)', see *Sumario*, I, p. 40*.

por nenhum cazo quer ter comercio conosco.⁵⁵⁸ He lamented the Korean stance not so much because it hindered trade with the Portuguese but because it impeded access for the establishment of a Jesuit mission. Fróis's treatment of this episode suggests that he was arguing that the Jesuits were presented with a unique opportunity by Hideyoshi, one potentially too profitable to turn down, an opportunity that could open the door to the evangelisation of the great Kingdom of China and Korea by the Jesuits, and ease their current precarious situation in Japan, and that the agreements made by the Jesuits at the meeting were in response to their circumstances and to the promises made by Hideyoshi.⁵⁵⁹

Fróis emphasises how pleasantly the audience proceeded and the warm welcome shown by Hideyoshi to the *Padres* 'a ninguem tinha feito [...] favores e honras, e gazalhados que nos mostrou.'⁵⁶⁰ So much so that he even excuses himself: 'Particularizamos de proposito estes favores tanto por extenso, para se melhor entender a volta que o mundo deo dahi a hum anno.'⁵⁶¹ Here he is writing with the knowledge that what was said during this embassy would be criticised a year later, when Hideyoshi's volte-face would leave the Jesuits trying to understand the reasons for the beginning of their demise at the hand of the same man who had bestowed upon them such honours. In the *História*, Fróis explained the *Kampaku*'s sudden change in 1587 as the devil's influence: 'o demonio tomou (Hideyoshi) por immediato instrumento desta perseguição.'⁵⁶² Michael Cooper is correct when he argues that to learn about this particular incident it is better to turn to Valignano's unpublished letter rather than to read Fróis's printed account.⁵⁶³ In a letter, Fróis clarified that there were differing opinions as to the reasons behind Hideyoshi's decree; for him it was sudden anger,

⁵⁵⁸ *História*, II, ch. 116, p. 512.

⁵⁵⁹ The Jesuits also enjoyed the friendship of Hideyoshi's nephew and adoptive son, Toyotomi Hidetsugu (1568-95) who as Fróis noted in 1588, 'que se presume ha de ser seu herdeiro', see Évora *Cartas*, II, p. 190v.

⁵⁶⁰ *História*, IV, ch. 31, p. 232.

⁵⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

⁵⁶² *História*, IV, ch. 53, p. 398.

⁵⁶³ Cooper, *Rodrigues*, p. 165.

‘digo que parece mais provavel que esta mudança foi de furor repentino.’⁵⁶⁴ He also notes that Hideyoshi himself proclaimed that he had been planning for a very long time to expel the Jesuits: ‘posto que elle dizia que era premeditada de muito tempo.’⁵⁶⁵

Fróis is very cautious regarding the meeting in Osaka castle. He does not give Coelho’s answers to Hideyoshi’s propositions in the *História*, and only notes that Hideyoshi ‘às vezes ouvia com grande attensão as respostas que o Padre Vice-Provincial lhe dava.’⁵⁶⁶ Thus, he diminishes the importance of Coelho’s replies and stresses the very hospitable reception (favores) shown to the *Padres*. Given the importance of Coelho’s answers - and indeed his own requests - to the Regent, these omissions are very striking, especially considering that Fróis was not merely an eyewitness to but also a protagonist of the event. He figures prominently in this chapter, and although there were other Jesuit fathers present, he named only the vice-provincial and himself.⁵⁶⁷ This is interesting, as Fróis was notorious for being extensive in his writings but in this case he is very economical on the protagonism of the Jesuits. Fróis tries to shift the guilt away from Coelho and himself by emphasising that the audience ended amicably and how well the Jesuits were treated, with no indication of Hideyoshi’s suspicion of the Jesuits and the Christians being considered as a potential fifth column to the political unity of the country.

It is clear that Fróis wrote this chapter with careful consideration. For example, when he refers to himself as the translator he is mindful of not being repetitive, by using first ‘interprete’ and then ‘o lingua’; he deliberately omits Coelho’s words; and he is very cautious of his own formulations. He prepares the scene through the previous chapters,

⁵⁶⁴ See Fróis (Arima, 20 February 1588) in Évora *Cartas*, II, p. 205r. See also Lach, *Asia in the making of Europe*, vol. I, pp. 304-5.

⁵⁶⁵ Évora *Cartas*, II, p. 205r.

⁵⁶⁶ *História*, IV, ch. 31, p. 229.

⁵⁶⁷ ‘Quatro Padres e quatro Irmãos, e alguns dogicos e meninos do seminario, que serão por todos passante de trinta pessoas’ see *História*, IV, ch. 31, p. 227.

tacitly guiding the reader to comprehend that what Coelho said through Fróis was the inevitable *corollary* to the hazardous, almost desperate, situations and the opportunity that was presented to the vice-provincial. Fróis's emphasis on the kingdom of Satsuma menacing the Christians *daimyos* can be viewed as an attempt at justifying Coelho's actions due to his and his confreres' unfortunate state of affairs, and their lack of options at the time:

[em Japão] em tão remotissimas terras [...] metidos no meio de tão estranha gentildade, carecemos [...] do frequente influxo e calor que os mais propinquos a Europa de lá recebem [...] carecemos também da protecção e amparo do favor e justiça secular da magestade real d'el-rey Felipe. E assim ficamos immediata e absolutamente dependendo da providencia paternal de Nosso Senhor Deos e Salvador.⁵⁶⁸

In the above sentence Fróis seems to hint at the political and military intervention by King Philip II (Philip I of Portugal) to aid the mission, but at the same time he points out the utter lack of support which left them with little choice but to meddle in politics for the sake of the mission. Alonso Sánchez is perhaps the best known Jesuit in favour of military conquest of China, but Fróis's *História* as well as Jesuits letters reveals that he was not alone, as it seems that some of the Jesuits in Japan entertained the invasion of Japan by Phillip II, such as Organtino, Mexia, and Coelho.⁵⁶⁹ Valignano had explicitly, in his *Sumario Indico*, advised the king of Portugal to conquer the Muslim kingdom of Dachen, as it represented a constant danger to Malacca and the expansion of the mission in the neighbouring areas.⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁶⁸ *História*, IV, ch. 36, pp. 269-70.

⁵⁶⁹ See Boxer, *The Christian Century*, pp. 257-9.

⁵⁷⁰ 'Y si S.A. no la remedia conquistando este enemigo (Dachen), corre grande peligro de perderse, y conquistando éste queda S.A. señor absolute de todas aquellas partes' cited in *Sumario*, I, p. 30*. As Dom João Ribeiro Gaio, bishop of Melaka (1579-1601), encouraged the crown to conquer Aceh and Johor, see A.R. Disney, *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), II, p. 189.

It has been suggested that Fróis was a timid, ‘simple and naive’ amanuensis and interpreter who was easily convinced by Coelho to act as a translator for the audience with Hideyoshi.⁵⁷¹ In 1587, at a very critical juncture for the mission, after the ‘Missionary expulsion order’ issued by Hideyoshi, Coelho held a consultation in Hirado with most of the Jesuits in Japan to determine what actions were the most appropriate. After this meeting, Coelho tried in vain to persuade Arima Harunobu (有馬 晴信, Dom Protazio 1567-1612) and Konishi Yukinaga (小西 行長, Agostinho 1555-1600), to convince all of the Christian *daimyos* to fight Hideyoshi.⁵⁷² He also requested the authorities in Goa, Macau, and Manila to send soldiers and firearms to support the Christian *daimyo* against Hideyoshi.⁵⁷³ In 1584, the Society of Jesus donated cannons to Arima Harunobu, as he and the Shimazu clan fought against Takanobu Ruizoji (1530-84) of Hizen province (Saga Prefecture). After gaining victory at the battle of Okinawate, Harunobu donated Urakami village in Nagasaki to the Society.⁵⁷⁴

Fróis copied almost word for word in his *História* a letter by father Lourenço Mexia who explained to the General that some actions were necessary in Japan:

Coelho [...] foi às terras de Vomura persuadindo e ajudando os christãos para que fizessem forte o porto de Nangazaqui [...] hé necessario para a conservação da christiandade e das terras, que eles (Fathers) se metão em semelhantes negocios para deffenderem das mãos dos lobos suas pobres e fracas ovelhas.⁵⁷⁵

⁵⁷¹ See Cieslik, Hubert. 2005. ‘Soldo Organtino: The Architect of the Japanese Mission.’ Retrieved from Francis Britto’s All About Francis Xavier see <http://pweb.sophia.ac.jp/~d-mccoey/xavier>, p. 11.

⁵⁷² Yamamoto Hirofumi, ‘The Edo Shogunate’s view of Christianity in the Sixteenth century’, in *Christianity and Cultures*, ed. by Üçerler, p. 257.

⁵⁷³ See *Jap. Sin.* 11, I, pp. 59-64. Boxer, *The Christian Century*, pp. 148-9. Francisco de Monclaro to Acquaviva (Lisbon, 19 February 1592) *Documenta Indica*, XV, p. 775-6. An interesting example of Jesuits persuading the neophytes to take arms to protect themselves is the fate of the Jesuit Diego de Alfaro (d.1639) Superior of the missions of Guairá in the province of Paraguay - who not only encouraged the defence of new Christians but took up arms himself and died protecting the natives, see Andrew Redden, ‘Priestly Violence, Martyrdom, and Jesuits: The Case of Diego de Alfaro (Paraguay, 1639)’ in *Exploring Jesuit Distinctiveness*, ed. by Maryks, pp. 81-113.

⁵⁷⁴ *História*, IV, ch. 10, p. 73.

⁵⁷⁵ *História*, III, ch. 19, pp. 138-9. See also Mexia to the General (20 October 1580) in Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 462v.

Under these circumstances, Mexia argues, it was necessary for the conservation of Christianity that the Jesuits become involved in such issues. The Jesuits clearly favoured Christian Lords or those who showed a positive disposition towards Christianity. Fróis writes that his companion, father Giovanni Battista de Monte, was sent immediately to Bungo with the veteran brother Fernandes because ‘era mui grande a necessidade que a Companhia tinha de ter aquelle rey propicio, por ser hum dos principaes de Japão e senhor de sinco reinos.’⁵⁷⁶ Even Valignano, who had condemned Jesuit involvement in military matters in Japan, was hesitant to totally prohibit it:

non devono procurare a nessun signore, benchè sia Cristiano, artiglieria o altri strumenti di guerra, perchè somiglianti cose ci fanno sempre danno e mai profitto [...] perchè alle volte qualità dei signori con cui si tratta, e le necessità che accadono, forzano a far altrimenti, nei casi occorrenti è necessario prendere molto buon consiglio, procurando, per quanto si può, di evitare tutte queste cose.⁵⁷⁷

Valignano was well informed of the difficult political situation during this period of endemic warfare, the so called ‘warring states’, especially when the lands of a friendly *daimyo* to Christianity were threatened with attack by a rival who was hostile to the Gospel. Under such circumstances, when the continuity of the mission was at stake, the missionaries sometimes took sides. An emphasis on how Japan differed from Europe is clearly made, one that enables the Jesuits to justify their actions, some of which are not in line with the Society’s rules. By the time Fróis was recording his *História*, many factors had rendered the Jesuits easy targets for criticism; to a large extent some of Fróis’s subtle statements and

⁵⁷⁶ *História*, I, ch. 47, p. 330.

⁵⁷⁷ *Advertimentos e Avisos* p. 151.

omissions were aimed toward justifying the behaviour of the Jesuits and the reasons behind their decisions.

II.3.6 Bring to a close

A close analysis of the *História de Japam* reveals that when Fróis deletes, adds, or makes changes to the sources, although, it is true that Fróis corrects his sources, there are instances in which he is inconsistent within the *História* itself, when, for example, he gives two versions of the same text. In chapter 2, he writes that in Kagoshima in 1561, when Luís de Almeida (1525-1583), met with the disciples of Ninjit (Ninjitsu, Ninshitsu, the superior Buddhist monk whom Xavier had met in 1549-50):

Muitas couzas, que (Xavier) passou em Saçuma, foi depois sabedor [...] Almeida, por lhas referirem por extenso huns bonzos, *discipulos deste sobredito Ninjit*, por se acharem presentes quando (Xavier) ahi estava.⁵⁷⁸

However, in chapter 33 when Fróis paraphrases Almeida's letter about the same event, he does not change Almeida's error:

Hum bonzo [...] homem já velho [...] da dignidade de Tôdó, *por nome Nenjit*, superior do principal mosteiro (Fucuxoji), *me fui ter com elle*. O bonzo [...] me recebeo [...] recitando-me algumas couzas que naquelles primeiros principios tinha passadas com [Xavier].⁵⁷⁹

Fróis was correct in chapter 2, as Ninjit died in 1556, and Almeida must have met one of Ninjit's disciples in 1561. It is not clear why Fróis does not correct Almeida; perhaps the above irregularity is merely an error, and the discrepancies are part of the practical realities of writing such a long document. Johannes Laures lays the blame on Fróis for these discrepancies, who 'had forgotten what he said before.'⁵⁸⁰ It is difficult to reconcile the

⁵⁷⁸ *História*, I, ch. 2, p. 27.

⁵⁷⁹ My own emphasis, *História*, I, ch. 33, pp. 216-7; see Alcalá *Cartas*, pp. 127r-127v.

⁵⁸⁰ Johannes Laures, 'Notes on the Death of Ninshitsu, Xavier's Bonze Friend', in *Monumenta Nipponica*, 8, 1/2 (1952), 407-411 (409).

above discrepancies when he writes two different versions of the same text within the *História*, especially when Fróis's retelling of events contradicts certain key episodes to the ones he gathered from eyewitnesses.

This is not the only time that Fróis is inconsistent in this manner, as will be seen below. However, more relevant to this study are the reasons for the changes which he makes, some of which may have been used by the author to tie up loose ends. The detailed account that follows and my imposition upon the reader's patience is justified in my view, because it shows that what may appear to be an inconsequential insertion in fact gives a greater impression of the organisation of the mission. A comparative analysis between the published letters and the *História* sheds light on his intentions.

The historiography of the Jesuit mission to Japan had generally agreed that Father Cosme de Torres was left as superior on 22 November 1551, when Xavier departed. Donald F. Lach wrote that in 1551 Xavier 'appointed him to be superior of the Japan mission.'⁵⁸¹ Hubert Cieslik S.J. pointed that Baltasar Gago (c.1520-83), was 'anxious to meet his *Superior* (Torres)' when he arrived in Japan.⁵⁸² Dauril Alden also considered Torres as superior from 1551-70.⁵⁸³ Diego Pacheco asserted Torres as being left in charge of the mission by Xavier, as did Michael Cooper.⁵⁸⁴ And Josef Wicki repeats that Xavier left Torres 'ficando no Japão em 1551 por superior da missão até sua morte, 1570.'⁵⁸⁵ But was Torres superior of the mission from 1551? Or was this a deliberate addition by Fróis, at a later date? To answer

⁵⁸¹ See Lach, *Asia in the Making of Europe*, ed. 1994, Book 1, p. 282 (n. 196). Lach calls him Cosmas de Torres.

⁵⁸² Hubert Cieslik S.J., 'Early Jesuit Missionaries in Japan 2: Baltasar Gago and the Japanese Christian Terminology', p. 2, < pweb.cc.sophia.ac.jp/britto/xavier/cieslik/ciejmj02.pdf.> [accessed 3 February 2017]

⁵⁸³ Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise*, p. 61.

⁵⁸⁴ Pacheco, S.J., *El Hombre que Forjo a Nagasaki*, p. 21. Cooper, *Rodrigues the Interpreter*, p. 45. Ruiz de Medina wrote that 'Xavier left Japan [...] making Cosme de Torres new superior of the incipient mission' see Juan Ruiz de Medina, 'The Role of Children in the Early Japanese Church' in *Portuguese Voyages*, ed. by Milward, p. 34.

⁵⁸⁵ *História*, I, ch. 1, p. 20. Rebecca Catz repeats the same: 'Francisco regressou à Índia, em 1551, deixou o padre Cosme de Torres como superior dos demais missionários', see *Cartas de Fernão Mendes Pinto*, p. 95.

this question one needs to look more closely at the letters of the time, and to anticipate my conclusion I argue that Fróis added the title retrospectively, from 1551, in his *História*, with rhetorical intentions.

In 1551, when Xavier departed from Japan, he left only Torres and Fernandes, both Spaniards. Torres was a priest and Fernandes a brother so there may have been no need to specify who was in charge: ‘En [Yamaguchi] queda Cosme de Torres y Juan Fernández.’⁵⁸⁶ In 1552, Xavier decided to send brothers Pedro de Alcáçova (1523-79) and Duarte da Sylva (1527-64): ‘Al Japón van [...] a estar en la ciudad de Amanguche (Yamaguchi), con el padre Cosme de Torres.’⁵⁸⁷ The very next day, in a letter to King John III, Xavier mentions that the above brothers were going to Yamaguchi ‘donde hay una casa de la Compañia, y un padre y un hermano.’⁵⁸⁸ So far, the title ‘superior’ does not appear in Xavier’s letters.

Xavier had intended to bring Father Gago to China, but he changed his mind and decided to send Gago to accompany the brothers ‘a Amanguche, donde están el padre Cosme de Torres y Juan Fernández.’⁵⁸⁹ Again, Xavier only says ‘el *padre*’ with no mention of superior. In fact, I have found no mention of the appointment or even a suggestion that Torres was the mission superior, in Xavier’s extant letters, neither in Torres nor Fernandes’s letters at the time.⁵⁹⁰ There is certainly epistolary evidence of Xavier naming other superiors in Asia, such as when he gathered the Jesuits from the Pescaria and Travancor and confirmed Antonio Criminali ‘que es superior de esta Costa.’⁵⁹¹ Likewise, in a letter he appointed

⁵⁸⁶ See Xavier to Francisco Perez (Singapur, 24 Diciembre 1551) in *X. Cartas*, p. 383.

⁵⁸⁷ Xavier to Simon Rodriguez (Goa, 7 April 1552) in *X. Cartas*, p. 435.

⁵⁸⁸ Torres and Fernandes, see Xavier to John III of Portugal (Goa, 8 April 1552) in *X. Cartas*, p. 443.

⁵⁸⁹ Xavier to Gaspar Barzeu (Singapur, 21 July 1552) in *X. Cartas*, p. 499. Gago and the brothers left Malacca 6 June 1552.

⁵⁹⁰ In 1555, when Nicolo Lancilotto wrote to the General, naming the Jesuits in Asia and their locations, he simply noted: ‘No Japão está o padre Cosme de Torres, o padre Baltasar Gago e o irmão João Fernandes e Duarte da Silva’. See Lancilotto to Loyola (Kollam, 12 January 1555) in *Cartas de Fernão Mendes Pinto*, ed. by Catz, p. 58.

⁵⁹⁰ *História*, I, ch. 15, p. 94.

⁵⁹¹ Xavier’s letter (Manapat, February 1548) in *X. Cartas*, p. 246.

Belchior Nunes Barreto as rector of the school of Bassein.⁵⁹² Henrique Henriques acknowledged that he was put in charge of Cape Comorin: ‘me mandam estar lá e que tenha cargo.’⁵⁹³

En route to Japan in Malacca, according to Alcáçova, Gago was designated as their superior by Xavier. But when Fróis copied Alcáçova’s letter in his *História* (1584-94), he removes this sentence:

Alcalá Cartas

Llegando a Malaca [Xavier] determino de enviar con nosotros al padre Baltazar Gago *por nuestro superior*.⁵⁹⁴

História

Partio o Padre [Gago], com estes dous Irmãos, em companhia do o P.e Mestre Francisco, de Goa, a 17 de Abril de 1552, e de Malaca se partirão para Japão.⁵⁹⁵

Alcáçova’s text is ambiguous. It could be interpreted as Xavier designating Gago as superior of the Japanese mission itself, or simply for the duration of the voyage to Japan. In 1549, when Xavier requested three priests to come to Japan, he asked Gaspar Barzeus to be in charge during the trip: ‘maestro Gaspar, Baltasar Gago y Domingo Carvalho, vengáis a Japán donde yo estuviere, que será, placiendo a Dios, en Miaco. Y vos [Gago and Carvalho] en el viaje tendréis obediencia a maestro Gaspar.’⁵⁹⁶ Since Xavier was hoping their arrival would coincide with his stay in Miaco (Kyoto), he designates Barzeus as being in charge during the voyage only.

In 1570, Francisco Cabral was sent explicitly as superior by the Provincial of India, to replace the aging Torres.⁵⁹² ‘Digo yo, Francisco, que confiando en la virtud y prudencia vuestra, Melchor Núñez, tengo por bien, y os mando en virtud de obediencia, que tengáis cargo de esta casa de Bazáin’ see Xavier to Nunes Barreto (Goa, 29 February 1552) in *X. Cartas*, p. 420.

⁵⁹³ See Henrique Henriques to Loyola (Cochin, 27 January 1552) in *Documenta Indica*, II, p. 300.

⁵⁹⁴ My own emphasis, see *Alcalá Cartas*, p. 53v; *Évora Cartas*, I, p. 23r.

⁵⁹⁵ see *História*, I, ch. 9, p. 64.

⁵⁹⁶ See Xavier to Gaspar Barzeus, Baltasar Gago and Francisco Carvalho in Goa (Kagoshima, 5 November 1549) in *X. Cartas*, p. 373.

In Alcáçova's letter, he fails to note that Torres was the 'superior' and only writes that the new arrivals (Gago, Alcáçova, and da Sylva) needed to speak to Torres because of his experience of Japan:

Alcalá Cartas

Teniamos necesidad de vernos con el padre Cosme d Torres, por ser mas antiguo y experimentado en la tierra.⁵⁹⁷

História

Tinhão necessidade de se ver primeiro com o P.e Cosme de Torres, *que alem de ser superior*, era mais antigo e experimentado na terra.⁵⁹⁸

When Fróis copies Alcáçova's letter in his *História* (1584-94), he inserts that Torres was already the superior. Likewise, Valignano also emphasised this when writing his own version years later, in his *História del Principio* [...] (1601-03): 'se fue él [Xavier] [...] encomendando la xpianidad de Japón al Padre [Torres] que dejava por *superior de todos* los que él embiasse.'⁵⁹⁹ When the second group of Portuguese Jesuits arrived in Japan (Gago, Alcáçova, and da Sylva), either there seems to have been confusion as to who was the superior, or for some reason they failed to mention that Torres was the superior in their letters. When Fróis wrote about the arrival of the new members in chapter 6 of the *História*, he explained that they went directly to visit Torres in Yamaguchi:

História ch. 6

Chegados ao porto de *Firando* [Hirado], *se forão logo dalli direitos ter com o P.e Cosme de Torres, que estava em Yamanguchi.*⁶⁰⁰

História ch. 9

E a primeira terra que tomarão foi a ilha de Tagoxima [Tanegashima] [...] Dahi seguirão sua viagem para *Bungo*, [...] *Torres soube em Yamanguchi* que estavam em Bungo.⁶⁰¹

⁵⁹⁷ Alcáçova to the Jesuits in Portugal (Goa, 1554) in *Alcalá Cartas*, p. 54r.

⁵⁹⁸ My own emphasis, see *História*, I, ch. 9, p. 63.

⁵⁹⁹ My own emphasis, see Valignano, *História del Principio*, p. 140.

⁶⁰⁰ *História*, I, ch. 6, pp. 48-9.

⁶⁰¹ *História*, I, ch. 9, pp. 63-4.

This suggests that as an act of obedience, they first went directly to visit their superior. But when Fróis copies Alcáçova's letter later, in chapter 9, he contradicts himself and the narrative is different: Gago and Alcáçova wrote, in their respective letters, that they arrived in Tanegashima first (and not Hirado), and then they went to Bungo (rather than Yamaguchi), where they stayed and departed separately en route to Yamaguchi.⁶⁰² It would be near Christmas in 1552 when all the foreign missionaries would finally be together, and when it was decided that Alcáçova should return to India to 'buscar algumas couzas necessarias.'⁶⁰³ We begin to see Cosme de Torres acknowledged as superior in the letters by 1559, for example by Vilela: 'Cosme de Torres nuestro superior.'⁶⁰⁴ That same year Francisco Cabral called Torres Rector: 'En Japam estão 3 Padres a 5 Irmãos, scl.: P. Cosmo de Torres por Reitor.'⁶⁰⁵

The lacunae of Torres being acknowledged as mission superior in the early letters could be just an omission on the part of all the above-mentioned Jesuits, who forgot to note this in their correspondence. However, it is more conceivable that there was a power vacuum left by Xavier in 1551, or that a hierarchy was not clearly addressed. What is definitely clear is that Fróis felt the need to address this in his *História*, whether to be more informative and precise, or with an exact agenda to give a neat image of the beginning of the mission. I am more inclined to believe that Fróis and Valignano intentionally inserted the title *superior*.

⁶⁰² Coimbra *Cartas*, p. XCIX; Alcalá *Cartas*, pp. 53r-v; Évora *Cartas*, I, pp. 23r-v.

⁶⁰³ *História*, I, ch. 9, p. 65. The reasons for Alcáçova's return are unclear, and in the Alcalá *Cartas* there are no letters from Japan for the years 1552-3. In fact, the title of Alcáçova's letter of 1554 states: 'cuenta algunas cosas de Japón de mil y quinientos y cinquenta dos y cinquenta y tres, que alla estuvo. Ponese aqui, porque destes dos años no ay cartas de Japón', see Alcalá *Cartas*, pp. 53r-v. In 1554, Nunes Barreto wrote: 'destas y otras muchas nos embiaran los padres de Jipón aquá al Hermano Pedro d'Alcáçova para que nos informe dellas, y de la mengua grande que allá avía de operarios, siendo la miesse tamta' see Nunes Barreto to Loyola (Between Goa and Cochin, May 1554) in *Documenta Indica*, III, p. 75; it must be noted that Barreto wrote that Alcáçova was 'sent by the fathers in Japan (Torres and Gago)' and not by the 'superior'.

⁶⁰⁴ See Vilela to the Goa College (Japan, 1 September 1559) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 93r.

⁶⁰⁵ Francisco Cabral to General Diego Lainez (Goa, 25 November 1559) in *Monumenta Historica Japoniae*, ed. by Schütte, I, p. 38.

Although this is a minor addition, it is quite an important one as it gives an image of the mission as being well-organised from the start and resolves any disputes that may have arisen during those early years. As commented previously, Fróis painstakingly reviews the sources. What is revealing is that this process is not just intended to provide more detailed and accurate information as he states in his paratext. It also included censorship and insertions when convenient, as well as conveying information in response to changes in the circumstances within the mission.

In a letter published in the Coimbra *Cartas* (1570), brother Luís de Almeida wrote that in 1566 he embarked in the port of Cochinoççu (Kuchinotsu) to travel to Goto to begin the evangelisation of those islands ‘quasi meado Ianeyro.’⁶⁰⁶ In the Alcalá *Cartas* (1575) the date is ‘a media do Enero.’⁶⁰⁷ And in the latter compilation Évora *Cartas* (1598) version, the copyist also wrote that he departed ‘quasi meado Ianeiro’ the date being the same as the Coimbra compilation.⁶⁰⁸ The three compilations of letters agreed that he stopped in Facunda or Fucunda (Fukuda), a port that had been made available for the Portuguese *nao* in the lands of the newly converted *daimyo* Omura Sumitada (Dom Bartholomeo). Due to the weather the boat had to stay in this port for one day. While waiting, some Christians came to visit him from two leagues away and asked him to baptise some ten children. The Christians agreed to bring the children to Fukuda the next day to be baptised. Almeida excused himself for not being able to go to their village ‘por ser o parao alheo’, literally meaning that the boat belonged to somebody else, or rather that he did not have the authority to decide where it could sail to (the three compilations are the same).⁶⁰⁹ However, because the weather was better in the early hours of the next morning, the captain of the boat decided to depart

⁶⁰⁶ See Almeida to the Jesuits (Shiki, 20 October 1566) in Coimbra *Cartas*, p. 558r.

⁶⁰⁷ Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 251r.

⁶⁰⁸ Évora *Cartas*, p. 214r.

⁶⁰⁹ ‘Por ser el parao ageno’ in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 251r.

immediately, and Almeida wrote: ‘e eu não pude fazer outra cousa’ but to go with him, with sadness because he could not keep his promise (the three compilations coincide).⁶¹⁰ The exception here, is that the Portuguese versions (Coimbra and Évora) add again ‘por ser o parao alheo’ he could not do anything when the captain decided to leave.⁶¹¹

In the *História* Fróis made silent changes to Almeida’s account. He wrote that the brother departed Kuchinotsu ‘a 15 de Janeiro’ giving a specific date which does not appear in any of the books. More importantly he changed that Almeida excused himself for not going to the village of the Christians because ‘ser a embarcação pequena.’⁶¹² This explanation is very different from the letters and it does not make sense in the context that he was not able to visit the Christians because the boat was small, since the boat was able to travel the long distance from Kuchinotsu to the Goto islands. It seems that Fróis was using the Alcalá version for this chapter, as the *História* it is closer to this version. If he had been following the Coimbra version, it would not have made sense when the captain decided to leave in the early morning that he could not do anything about it ‘because the boat was small’. Either Fróis misinterpreted ‘ageno’ for small or he considered *pequena* a better reason for the boat not travelling to the Christians’ village. It is difficult to know whether these changes were voluntary or involuntary; I am more inclined to believe in this case the latter. Either way, this highlights that a reading of the *História* should be complemented with a comparison with the extant letters.

II.4 Conclusion

In his intent to guide and inspire future missionaries, Fróis depicts the Jesuits under a positive light and demonstrates the superiority of the Christian doctrine. In this attempt to

⁶¹⁰ Coimbra *Cartas*, p. 558v. ‘no pude hazer outra cosa’ in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 251r.

⁶¹¹ Coimbra *Cartas*, p. 558v.

⁶¹² *História*, II, ch. 69, p. 124.

write an edifying account, his manuscript uses seafaring metaphors. The incipient knowledge of the country led to many errors in the Jesuits' methodology and to the narration of deficient and inaccurate accounts. Fróis argues that his *História* would help to minimise misinterpretations and previously written errors. It is true that he gives a more detailed account of the Japanese mission than previously recorded, and adds to the narrative with a specific rhetorical purpose. To a certain extent the *História* is an account of the learning process experienced by the missionaries in those first decades. Michael Cooper contends that when assessing the Jesuits' early reports from Japan, one should consider that this genre aimed to edify, but that the writers did not mean to deliberately distort the picture.⁶¹³ While Cooper is correct when he writes that the Jesuits wrote mainly with edifying purposes, and Fróis omits events or changes words when they were not edifying, I have demonstrated in this chapter that he does on occasion deliberately alter the picture. Previous errors are rarely mentioned in his work, and when they are, they are shown to be due to cultural misunderstandings, and his fellow Jesuits are always exonerated of any responsibility. And it is when the Jesuits were at fault that he shines the light onto other *dramatis personae*. In fact, he portrays the Jesuits as exemplary figures and worthy of imitation, so much so that they are described as beacons or *balizas* who can help to guide future missionaries in their 'spiritual navigation.' This reveals that Fróis purposely decided on the versions he wished to present in the *História* and he wrote with a very clear strategy. The examination of the strategies and methods of conversion explored and applied in the Japanese mission continues in the next chapter.

⁶¹³ See Cooper, 'The Early Jesuit in Japan and Buddhism', in *Portuguese Voyages*, ed. by Milward, p. 147.

Chapter III - Mission, conversion, and the Japanese society

In the first book of the *História*, there is a partial transcript from a letter by Belchior Nunes Barreto reporting what Juan Fernandes (Xavier's interpreter) revealed to him. According to Fernandes, Xavier was so severe in reproaching the vices and idolatries even of the *daimyo* of Yamaguchi Ōuchi Yoshitaka (大内 義, 1507-51) that, as he translated, 'tremia de ver a liberdade con que se havia, ainda com os senhores de Japão.'⁶¹⁴ Fernandes must have felt caught between a rock and a hard place, as he translated under the sharp gaze of Xavier and trembling in fear for his life, expecting to be slashed with a samurai sword.⁶¹⁵ Fróis carefully chose this passage as it serves both as an anecdote and for a pedagogical purpose.⁶¹⁶ As an interpreter himself, he would have understood Fernandes's predicament all too well. Fróis does not condemn Xavier's unbridled criticism of the warlord, but in the context, it is clear that such a confrontational approach as a method for conversion was not endorsed, and it must have ended as soon as Xavier left Japan or not long after, as the Jesuits appeared to follow different strategies afterwards.⁶¹⁷

⁶¹⁴ 'Reprehendendo de seos vicios' see *História*, I, ch. 16, p. 106. Xavier had a history of scolding even the king of Portugal. Before arriving in Japan Xavier had admonished John III in two letters, reminding him of his duties and that the hour of death is unexpected when he could find himself 'lo que Dios no quiera, fuera del paraíso' see Xavier to John III (Cochin, 26 January 1549) in *X. Cartas*, p. 291. In Mendes Pinto's *Peregrinação*, Xavier is depicted as a saintly crusader, zealous, brave, and confrontational: 'E o padre lhe tornou, se a cousa não esta em mais que no concerto das fustas, eu quero por honra de Deos & del Rey nosso senhor tomar esse concerto dellas a minha conta, & yr, se for nessesario, em companhia destes servos de Christo & irmãos meus a pelejar com estes inimigos da Cruz', see *Peregrinação*, ch. 203, p. 264v. Pinto's work contains hagiographic material and he seems to be promoting Xavier's deeds. The part that contains Xavier's revelation of the victory of the Portuguese forces against the Achenians for example appears in Lucena's biography of Xavier, see *M. X.*, p. 193.

⁶¹⁵ This passage features on the letter-books published in Coimbra 1570, Alcalá 1575, and Évora 1598 editions, although with slight differences. In the Alcalá *Cartas* the name of Fernandes is not given and only mentions 'el hermano que era su interprete' see Alcalá *Cartas*, pp. 78r-8v. In the Coimbra *Cartas* (pp. 133r-3v) and in the Évora *Cartas*, I (pp. 50v-51r) versions both mention the name Fernandes. In the Coimbra version, and in the Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 50v, it reads that Fernandes 'esperando polo cutelo obedecia' (he obeyed while waiting to be cut by the butcher's knife) see Coimbra *Cartas*, p. 133v. In the Alcalá version this detail is missing as it is in the *História*. See also Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier*, IV, pp. 156-7.

⁶¹⁶ As explained in chapter II, Fróis uses anecdotes or *exempla* for illustrative purposes and also provides a comical intermission. Exemplum was used in medieval sermons and his readership would be very familiar with this type of narrative.

⁶¹⁷ This evangelising approach is not mentioned in the subsequent letters or in the *História*. The Jesuits continued clashing with the Japanese monks but were less belligerent towards the *daimyo*.

This chapter explores Fróis's representation and discussion of conversion in the Japanese mission, as presented by Fróis in three main sections. First, it focuses on the manner in which the methods of evangelisation are described and understood through language. A close analysis of the *História* reveals that the missionaries encountered a series of problems and outlines the decisions which they took in response. It details how Fróis's text deals with the methods used by the Jesuits for conversion, such as the careful nurturing of a Japanese elite including the educated monks and the political and military leaders exemplified by the "fidalgos" and the *daimyo*. Subsequently during the first decades of the mission different approaches were trialled and tested in Japan. European customs that may have impacted negatively on the process of conversion were abandoned while the missionaries centred their efforts on what they considered the most effective process for the success of the Japanese mission.

Secondly, it uses the *História* to consider the challenges of conversion, such as the often-mentioned 'opposite customs' of the Japanese in this manuscript. What emerges from an examination of the *História* is that Fróis is insistent upon the antipodal culture of Japan in order to justify the Jesuits' adaptation to the local culture, because Japan was so different that to behave in any other way would have caused the rejection of the Gospel.

A third focus is on Fróis's representation of Japanese Christians and non-Christians such as the *bonzes*, and how he constructed a narrative that fits within the Christian past even when historical accuracy is neglected, which also points towards the fact that *historia sacra* predominates in the manuscript. As such the neophytes are depicted as model Christians while the enemies of the church are depicted using classical rhetorical devices, thus bringing their adversaries into contempt with the aim of evoking an emotional reaction from the reader.

III.1 Missionary troubles and opportunities

III.1.1 The limits of the mission

As discussed in chapter II, Fróis considered his work in part a text for teaching future confreres. It is therefore of value to analyse the emphasis he lays on specific issues he recognised to have been advantageous for the conversion of Japan. The manner in which Fróis presents the religious conversion process in Japan in the *História* is of great interest, as it sheds light on his mind set as to how he understood the mission.

On the other hand, Fróis is usually imprecise and often vague in his descriptions of the methods of conversion adhered to by the Jesuits in the archipelago, but through a close reading of his *História* a clearer picture emerges of the methods employed during those first four decades.

The Japanese mission presented the Jesuits with a series of advantages for the expansion of Christianity, such as the presence of only one native language, which facilitated translations, and the lure of the Portuguese *naus* to the *daimyo* (feudal lords), which was used as an incentive for conversion.⁶¹⁸ At the same time, however, Fróis constantly complaint of the many obstacles which the missionaries encountered such as the internecine wars and the enmity of the Buddhist monks. In reality, the Japanese political disunity allowed room for manoeuvre for the missionaries in their search for patronage. In fact, their demise began when a more centralised and unified government turned against this foreign religion, and when finding protection and refuge became more complicated.⁶¹⁹ Internally as well the mission personnel faced predicaments. George Elison summed them up as two main

⁶¹⁸ Renzo de Luca, S.J., 'The Politics of Evangelization: Valignano and his Relations with the Japanese Rulers of the Sixteenth Century', in *Alessandro Valignano*, eds. by Tamburello, et al., pp.149-50.

⁶¹⁹ Fróis shows signs of desperation after Hideyoshi's eviction edit, see *História*, IV, ch. 61, pp. 478-9.

problems: lack of finance and lack of manpower.⁶²⁰ These were certainly considerable impediments to their efforts, an adversity that becomes clear in the Bungo Consultation in October 1580, presided by Valignano.⁶²¹ Among the 21 points submitted by Valignano to the fathers for discussion, three are directly related to the lack of manpower (2-5), and three points specifically focus on the financing of the mission (13-15).⁶²² In this section attention will be given to the manner in which Fróis describes these two internal obstacles, as well as to the way the Jesuits distanced themselves from approaches that had a negative effect on the mission, while enforcing those methods they considered to be the most effective.

The image that Fróis outlines on the twin concerns of finance and manpower, while still particularly important, is downplayed in the *História*. I shall argue that Fróis avoids these themes in his text because some of the solutions to these issues may have cast the Jesuits in a bad light or cause further problems.

One case, is the way in which Fróis is silent regarding their involvement in the silk trade to finance the mission.⁶²³ In the early years, the Jesuits in Japan, Fróis points out, received assistance from the Goa College and the donations of the Portuguese merchants: ‘esmolos que os portuguezes lhe davão quando chegavão com seos navios a Japão, e do collegio de Goa erão providos do vinho das missas, seos vestidos, livros e alguns ornamentos.’⁶²⁴ This was, for example, the case with Fernão Mendes Pinto who lent money to Xavier to build a

⁶²⁰ Ellison, *Deus Destroyed*, p. 54. These two major issues were not particular to the Japanese mission as most missions suffered from these problems. By the last quarter of the sixteenth century the Jesuits realised that alms alone would not suffice to sustain themselves, but the solutions they adopted caused great harm, see Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise*, pp. 402-3.

⁶²¹ There were nine fathers: Francisco Cabral, Lourenço Mexia, Luís Fróis, Belchior de Figueiredo, Pedro Ramón, Francisco Laguna, Giovanni Battista de Monte, Antonio Prenestino, and Gonçalo Rebello. On the Bungo consultation see Évora *Cartas* 1598, p. 472r; Schütte, *Valignano's Mission Principles*, I, pp. 9-64, 301-47, 491-93.

⁶²² Schütte, *Valignano's Mission Principles*, I, pp. 9-13.

⁶²³ As opposed to Valignano who constantly alludes to the financial difficulties of the mission.

⁶²⁴ *História*, I, ch. 8, p. 60.

church in Yamaguchi, and later financed the trip of Nunes Barreto to Japan.⁶²⁵ In 1564 the Portuguese captains in Hirado ‘à sua custa querião alli fazer huma igreja nova.’⁶²⁶ Perhaps the most famous case is that of the merchant Luís de Almeida (1525-83), who in 1552 donated all his wealth, partly to be invested in the silk trade for the benefit of the Society in Japan.⁶²⁷ Even though ‘the alms from the China ship’ were against church law, the Jesuits in their attempt to keep the growing mission alive were forced to engage in trade.⁶²⁸ By 1580, the members of the Bungo Consultation recognised that the mission’s yearly expenditure was 8,000 *cruzados* and was soon to increase to 12,000.⁶²⁹ Fróis acknowledged Almeida’s contribution to the mission: ‘mais ou menos, tres mil cruzados.’⁶³⁰ However, he is silent on the amount of Almeida’s money that was invested in the silk trade and mentions Almeida’s donation only in passing: ‘tudo o que tinha deixou à companhia para sustentação dos Padres e Irmãos, e remedio dos pobres christãos.’⁶³¹ The vital importance of the *seda* trade in the *História* is conspicuous by its absence, and clearly Fróis goes out of his way to avoid mentioning this very crucial issue.⁶³² According to Moran, the Macau-Nagasaki silk trade was the missionaries’ best source of funding.⁶³³ Mihoko Oka argues that nearly all of the raw silk brought from Macau to Nagasaki passed through Jesuits’ hands.⁶³⁴ Fróis was aware that the Jesuit hierarchy knew of this embarrassing problem, a problem which ran

⁶²⁵ Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier*, IV, p. 279. *História*, I, Intro, p. 4.

⁶²⁶ *História*, I, ch. 52, p. 373.

⁶²⁷ Valignano wrote that Almeida donated ‘como quatro mil ducados’, see Alejandro Valignano, S.J., *Apología de la Compañía de Jesus de Japón y China (1598)*, ed. by José Luis Álvarez-Taladriz (Osaka: 1998), p. 189.

⁶²⁸ As called by Francisco Cabral, see Moran, *The Japanese and the Jesuits*, p. 117.

⁶²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁶³⁰ *História*, I, ch. 8, p. 59.

⁶³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

⁶³² According to D’Ortia the superior Cabral is almost silent in his correspondence on the subject of the Jesuit practice of selling a share of the silk brought from Macau, see Linda Zampol D’Ortia, ‘Purple Silk and Black Cotton: Francisco Cabral and the Negotiation of Jesuit Attire in Japan (1570–73)’, in *Exploring Jesuit Distinctiveness*, ed. by Maryks, p. 144.

⁶³³ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

⁶³⁴ See Mihoko Oka, ‘The Nanban and Shuisen Trade in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century Japan’, in *Global History and New Polycentric Approaches: Europe, Asia and the Americas in a World Network System*, eds. by Manuel Perez Garcia and Lucio de Souza (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), p. 173.

against the Constitutions of the Order and was forbidden by the Church.⁶³⁵ This is interesting, since in his *Sumario* (1583) Valignano could not have been more direct: ‘Y para que esto se entienda mejor, se ha saber [...] no tiene modo ahí [Japan] la Compañía para sustentar tantos gastos que el trato que cada año tiene en la nave de la China.’⁶³⁶ This very sensitive means of funding the mission remained a necessary evil which the Generals Francis Borgia (1510-72) and Everard Mercurian (1514-80) had wished to eradicate, and when Roman authorities agreed that the silk trade should continue sponsoring the mission it was ‘dispensa *ad tempus* y muy involuntaria.’⁶³⁷

Through the learning of the Japanese language and customs the Jesuits became mediators and interpreters in the silk trade between the Japanese and the Portuguese merchants, and used their prestige and church authority to influence where the *nau* landed. This in turn made them very important to the Japanese lords, who competed for their presence in their territories.⁶³⁸ Fróis does not expand upon the Jesuits’ financial investment on the silk trade, however, he is slightly more forthcoming when he presents the symbiosis between missionary presence and the landing of the Portuguese black ship. In 1564, when the *nau* of captain Pedro de Almeida was approaching Hirado, Fróis wrote that he journeyed in a boat to ask the captain not to land until the *Tono* ‘desse licença ao Padre para entrar em Firando [Hirado].’ Immediately the *Capitão Mor* obeyed ‘pelo amor que tinha aos da companhia, logo de sua parte o concedeo.’⁶³⁹ When the *Tono* realised ‘o perigo da perda que lhe podia sobrevir, deo licença para que o Padre entrasse e se podesse levantar igreja.’⁶⁴⁰ Valignano is very explicit on this subject: ‘entendendo que a melhor via que elles (*daimyo*) pudessem

⁶³⁵ See Moran, *The Japanese and the Jesuits*, p. 35.

⁶³⁶ *Sumario*, I, p. 334.

⁶³⁷ *Sumario*, I, pp. 41*-3*; Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise*, pp. 533-37.

⁶³⁸ On the Macau-Nagasaki silk trade see Moran, *The Japanese and the Jesuits*, pp. 115-28. See also Oka, ‘The Nanban and Shuisen Trade’, in *Global History*, eds. by Garcia and Souza, pp. 163-82.

⁶³⁹ *História*, I, ch. 52, pp. 373-4.

⁶⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 374.

buscar era ter Padres em sua terra.⁶⁴¹ The lack of a reliable source of income to sustain the mission's costs was mitigated by securing the support of local warlords, who allowed them to preach in their territories, gave them land on which to build churches and houses, or donated previously Buddhist temples.⁶⁴² On the other hand, the patronage of warlords restricted the movements of the missionaries who relied on their permission. At the beginning of the winter of 1556, when the Christians of Yamaguchi asked for the return of the *Padres*, Vilela wrote 'mas porque não costumamos fazer nada sem conselho del Rei de Bùngô, em cuya terra residimos', they had to wait until after the winter when 'elle (Ôtomo Sorin) nos ordenaria a ida.'⁶⁴³ This mutual need for collaboration was encouraged on both sides, but unlike the initial belligerent approach of Xavier, Fróis portrays the respect which the Jesuits showed to the local hierarchy.

The issue of funding was closely linked to the number of mission personnel. The growing of the mission required more manpower, but more missionaries required more funds. In 1578, Cabral asked Valignano to cease sending missionaries for the time being, as it was a struggle to find adequate funding for new recruits.⁶⁴⁴ At the same time, the expanding mission put extra pressure on the Jesuits already present to perform their evangelising and pastoral duties. The Japanese mission started with only two Jesuit priests and one brother in 1549. In 1564, when Fróis was sent to help Vilela in Kyoto he recognised 'e gli operai erano pochi.'⁶⁴⁵ But despite acknowledging the shortage of mission manpower, Fróis does not emphasise this clear problem throughout his manuscript.

⁶⁴¹ Valignano, *Historia del Principio*, p. 444.

⁶⁴² 'Alli estava hum mosteiro de bonzos desamparado donde se poderia fabricar (the church)' see *História*, I, ch. 47, p. 330.

⁶⁴³ Vilela to the Jesuits in India and Europe (Hirado, 29 October 1557) in Évora *Cartas*, p. 55r.

⁶⁴⁴ Ross, *A Vision Betrayed*, p. 55.

⁶⁴⁵ Copied in Giovanni Pietro Maffei, *Le istorie dell' Indie Orientali* (Bergamo: Pietro Lancellotti, 1749), I, p. 146.

While there are often references to the shortfall of mission personnel, one must remember that their often-used phrase ‘the labourers were few’ is biblical, and the Jesuits did not use this phrase only to complain. In Luke 10. 1-2 God sent disciples to every city and the ‘Lord said unto them: The harvest truly is great, but *the labourers are few*: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.’⁶⁴⁶ This is a call to prayer - *pray ye* - so the Lord would send more missionaries, as the missionaries, *labourers*, are sent from God. Most sixteenth-century missions had relatively low manpower. In China between 1583 until 1688 there were fewer than 40 Jesuits working at the same time.⁶⁴⁷ In Peru, the Jesuit Bracamonte complained of the lack of priests: ‘para cada cien mil indios no ai un sacerdote.’⁶⁴⁸ In Brasil Nóbrega wrote ‘tam paucos habet operarios.’⁶⁴⁹ This is often used in *historia sacra* narratives. When Fróis arrived in Japan he uses the same biblical language:

foi estranha a consolação que [...] Torres teve com sua chegada, como bem o significavão as lagrimas [...] de alegria, [...] dizendo que já não queria mais vida, pois Deos N. Senhor lhe tinha feito tanta mercê de lhe trazer em tempo de tanta necessidade companheiros para trabalharem em huma tão grande vinha.⁶⁵⁰

Torres is clearly described as being overjoyed. Valignano would also describe the arrival of Fróis and Battista de Monte in Japan as a very happy event for Torres: ‘se dobrou a alegria do P. Cosmo de Torres, vindo-lhe obreyros em tempo tão oportuno.’⁶⁵¹ This is not only because there were much needed new personnel in Japan, but to Torres, it was an answer to his prayers from God. He is quoted as saying that he did not want to live anymore, because

⁶⁴⁶ My own emphasis; Matthew 9. 37.

⁶⁴⁷ See Nicolas Standaert, ‘Jesuits in China’, in *Companion to the Jesuits*, ed. by Worcester, p. 171.

⁶⁴⁸ Diego de Bracamonte to the Society of Jesus (Lima, 21 January 1569) in *Monumenta Peruana*, I, ed. by Antonio de Egaña, p. 260.

⁶⁴⁹ See Manuel da Nóbrega to Martín de Azpilcueta Navarro (Salvador, 10 August 1549) in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, II, p. 142.

⁶⁵⁰ *História*, I, ch. 47, pp. 325-6.

⁶⁵¹ Valignano, *Historia del Principio*, p. 455.

God had heard his prayers. Nunes Barreto, en route to Japan, also quotes Luke (*la muchamies y los pocos obreros*) as he wrote to the Jesuits in Portugal: ‘Por tanto pedid, llamad, dad voces al cielo [...] y despues a vuestros superiores, que embien muchos y los mas esforçados.’⁶⁵² This is again a call to prayer, which is standard missionary rhetoric, first and foremost to heaven (*cielo*), and then later (*despues*), to the superiors to send missionaries. Gaspar Coelho argued that God replaced ‘a falta the pregadores com obras milagrosas, & sobre naturaes.’⁶⁵³ General Francis Borgia asked the Provincial of Peru Ruiz de Portillo not to despair for the shortest of personell: ‘no teman que falta gente que ayude como se desea, y en ello hago buena diligencia.’⁶⁵⁴ As it was with the financial problems, the lack of missionaries raised the issue from where the help could come from. Fróis may have felt that an insistence in the need for more missionaries could signal to the authorities in Rome that the newly formed Society of Jesus was in need of help from other religious orders. It is clear from Fróis’s letters that he was not keen on the help the mendicant orders could offer. And he was among the consultors in Bungo that agreed - by unanimous decision - for ‘the time being no advantage would accrue from the presence of members of other orders.’⁶⁵⁵

According to Fróis, in 1588 there were 113 members of the Society of Jesus in Japan: 66 European (40 priests and 26 brothers), and 47 Japanese brothers.⁶⁵⁶ By this year they had managed to convert approximately 150,000 Christians, and about 350,000 by the end of the century.⁶⁵⁷ Although the exact number is impossible to calculate especially when some were forcibly converted by warlords, or have received very little instructions after mass

⁶⁵² Melchior Nunes Barreto to the Jesuits in Portugal (Malacca, 3 December 1554) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 62v.

⁶⁵³ Annual letter of Gaspar Coelho (Nagasaki, 15 February 1582) in Évora *Cartas*, II, p. 18r.

⁶⁵⁴ General Francis Borgia to the Provincial Herónimo Ruiz de Portillo (Rome, 14 November 1570) in *Monumenta Peruana*, I, p. 402.

⁶⁵⁵ Schütte, S.J., *Valignano’s Mission Principles*, I, pp. 14-5.

⁶⁵⁶ Fróis’s letter (Arima 20 February 1588) in *Relacion de una gravissima persecuciō, que un tyrano de los Reynos de Iapon, llamado Cābucodono, ha levātado contra los Christianos, en los años de 88 y 89. Y de las maravillas que nuestro Señor ha obrado por medio della* (Madrid: Pedro Madrigal, 1591), p. 1v.

⁶⁵⁷ See Üçerler, ‘The Jesuit enterprise’, in *Companion to the Jesuits*, ed. by Worcester, p. 164.

conversions. The expansion of the mission owed much also to the teachings of the *dōjuku* and to the lay organisations.⁶⁵⁸ Here the role of the laity in maintaining the church must have been significant, a point that I develop next.

III.1.2 Misericórdias

By 1584, when Fróis began to write his *História*, the Japanese mission had a very considerable number of converts but a relative scarcity of European brothers and priests.⁶⁵⁹ This situation had not been helped by the unwillingness of the second superior, Francisco Cabral, to recruit native manpower.⁶⁶⁰ The mission was in the middle of constant conflict between warlords at the end of the Muromachi period (1336-1573) and during the Azuchi-Momoyama period (1573-1603).⁶⁶¹ This political upheaval, according to Fróis and his confreres, impeded and slowed the spreading of the Gospel. Fróis often complained about the constant disturbances in the archipelago: ‘Japão hé tão sogeito a continuas variedades e mudanças.’⁶⁶² Here I will focus on how Fróis presents the advancement of the Japanese mission based on the Christians’ ‘acquired virtue’ of charity and the portrait of charitable organisations.

⁶⁵⁸ They were modelled after the Buddhist Zen, who were men who had renounced the world; some joined the priestly vocation while others remained secular.

⁶⁵⁹ On the numbers of Jesuits in Japan and their nationalities see João Paulo Oliveira e Costa, ‘Os Jesuítas no Japão (1549-1598): uma Análise Estatística’, in *Portuguese Voyages*, ed. by Milward, pp. 301-9, and appendix 1, p. 329.

⁶⁶⁰ Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, p. 17.

⁶⁶¹ This period is usually referred to as the *sengoku jidai*.

⁶⁶² *História*, II, ch. 65, p. 92. As did other Jesuits: In 1556, Nunes Barreto decided to return to India ‘vendo que por então se podia fazer pouco fructo em Japão, por estar a terra revolta com guerras’ see *História*, I, ch. 16, p. 106. In 1557, Vilela wrote that he and Torres, due to the turmoil in Bungo, spent all the winter and Easter terrified, sleeping fully clothed and waiting to be killed, so many times eating ‘o bocado mesturado com o pensamento da morte hia para baixo’ see Vilela to the Jesuits in India and Europe (Hirado, 29 October 1557) in Évora *Cartas*, p. 56r.

Due to the political instability, the missionaries often had to flee at a moment's notice. In this respect, studying sixteenth century Jesuit letters and other accounts, such as Fróis's *História*, shows that - although not overtly implied - the missionaries directed their teaching efforts with the expectation that these Christian communities, sparse in a wide geographical area, would organise and maintain the faith even when the missionaries were absent for long periods of time.⁶⁶³ One means of organising the laity to support the nascent church was through Confraternities (*Confrarias*) or Brotherhoods (*Irmandades*). The sixteenth-century saw a substantial growth of the *Misericórdias* or 'houses of mercy' within the Portuguese dominions.⁶⁶⁴ João Paulo Oliveira e Costa argues that the Portuguese *Misericórdias*, scattered throughout the Portuguese Empire, took on a very distinctive flavour in Japan, where the Christian notion of *caritas* was absorbed by most of the converts, and significantly influenced the daily life of Japanese Christian communities causing social organisational changes. However, the notions of charity and alms giving were already present in the *Muromachi* religious culture.⁶⁶⁵ There was a long-standing Buddhist tradition of almsgiving, which was usually a daily affair that involved a monk going on an alms round collecting food from lay people. This is supported in Balthasar Gago's letter who wrote that there was a woman who before becoming a Christian collected alms: '[Clara] de idade de sesenta annos, que correo a maior parte de Iapão; esta tinha por officio ajuntar esmolas dos senhores para reedificar e fundar pagodes.'⁶⁶⁶

Caritas is one of the seven Christian virtues. This theological concept referred to the love of God and a manifestation of this love was the act of mercy to one's needy neighbour. Fróis

⁶⁶³ I have analysed mainly the letterbooks compiled in the Coimbra *Cartas*; Alcalá *Cartas*; and Évora *Cartas*. See also Fróis, *História*, 5 vols.

⁶⁶⁴ *Portugaliae Monumenta Misericordiarum: Crescimento en Consolidação de D. João III a 1580*, ed. by José Pedro Paiva (Lisbon: União das Misericórdias Portuguesas, 2005), IV, pp. 9-10.

⁶⁶⁵ See James Fujitani, 'Penance in the Jesuit Mission to Japan, 1549–1562', in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 67/ 2 (2016), 306-324 (311).

⁶⁶⁶ Gago to the Brothers of the Society in India (Japan, 1 November 1559) in Évora *Cartas*, p. 64v.

usually uses charity (*caridade*) word when describing, in a panegyric style, some of the founders of the mission: '[Xavier] com seo santo zelo e religioza caridade.'⁶⁶⁷ Torres, too is portrayed in such way: 'com sua muita caridade e paciencia,'⁶⁶⁸ and 'o amor e caridade, que em seo peito [Torres] ardia [...] era mui grande.'⁶⁶⁹ Almeida is also presented as an embodiment of this virtue: 'naquelle hospital dos pobres de Funai, do qual tinha, por sua caridade, mui particular cuidado [...] Almeida.'⁶⁷⁰ The complex relationship during the Renaissance between rich and poor, and even the tensions between charitable practices and social attitudes can be appreciated in Fróis's work. In the *História* he refers to the work of the often criticised hospital in Bungo:

em Bungo por quazi espaço de trinta annos, no qual tempo, trabalhando o que puderão para roçar este mato, nunca puderão abrir caminho nem tirar delle mais frutto que com alguns mancos, leprozos e aleijados.⁶⁷¹

This passage is very revealing in many ways, as it provides a valuable window into the social attitudes towards the poor and the sick. The Bungo mission is described metaphorically as a bush (*mato*) which is very different from the usual vineyard (*vinha do Senhor*).⁶⁷² There is a sense that the fruit of the missionaries' labour was unsatisfactory. They have only just managed to brush the bush (*roçar este mato*) in 30 years. The initial enthusiasm for the work done by the hospital in transforming the sick *gentios* into Christians had eroded over time.⁶⁷³ The converts were not seen as the pride of the missionaries, as they could only convert lames, lepers, and cripples. These 'lowest' members of society were the objects of social scorn, and yet also depicted as spiritual intercessors to Christ. Jesus had preached: 'When you give a

⁶⁶⁷ *História*, I, ch. 1, p. 17.

⁶⁶⁸ *História*, I, ch. 7, p. 58.

⁶⁶⁹ *História*, I, ch. 19, p. 124.

⁶⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

⁶⁷¹ *História*, III, ch. 22, p. 161.

⁶⁷² There are many references to *vinha* but see for example *História*, I, prol., p. 1. Fróis refers to Xavier as the 'descubridor desta vinha inculta [Japan]' see *História*, I, ch. 6, p. 46.

⁶⁷³ On the changing of attitudes to writing history over time see MacCormack, *On the Wings of Time*.

feast, invite instead the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind.⁶⁷⁴ After describing the deficient product of their proselytising efforts, Fróis continues, but he now changes the tone:

[lames, lepers, and cripples] aos quaes curando-os e ajudando-os com grande amor e caridade se convertião, de que os gentios tiravão mayor escandalo, porque, como gente que não entendia que couza era caridade e virtude.⁶⁷⁵

Here, Fróis argues that the sick were converted through the divine grace, the unmerited mercy from God, receiving God's love and *caritas*. These virtues are not extended to the *gentios* who are unable to understand them.

The virtue of *caritas* is then extended to the converts who are trained so they too could maintain and extend the Church.⁶⁷⁶ In the *História*, the Japanese Christians have a natural disposition for piety: 'e ainda que são pobres [...] têm naturalmente inclinação a obras de piedade e misericordia.'⁶⁷⁷ There are many passages in the *História* where Fróis points to the importance of individuals and Christian institutions to this subject. When the Jesuits left Bungo, due to Yoshimune's persecution, Fróis writes the missionaries 'tinha os Padres cometido [to Jorão and Jochim] catequizar os gentios e animar os christãos.'⁶⁷⁸ These laymen usually formed confraternities or brotherhoods, but the latter were adapted to the

⁶⁷⁴ Luke 14. 13.

⁶⁷⁵ *História*, III, ch. 22, p. 161.

⁶⁷⁶ The Jesuits appear to have prepared the laity from the beginning, so that the mission would endure based on the development of a well organised Christian community. The laity were taught how to administer baptism, for example in 1562, when Almeida visited Kagoshima he found an old man that Xavier 'le encargo que hiziesse Christianos a las criaturas que naciessen: y a asi lo hazia, porque yo halle aqui algunos que avia baptizado' see Almeida to the Jesuits (Yokoseura, 25 September 1562) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 126r, the title of this letter gives the date as 25 October, however at the end of the letter Almeida signs as 25 September.

⁶⁷⁷ *História*, IV, ch. 1, p. 6.

⁶⁷⁸ *História*, V, ch. 15, p. 123. In 1587, Hosokawa Tama (細川玉 - Hosokawa Gracia 1563 –1600) who, unable to leave her house, was told by the Jesuits that 'se podia baptizar por qualquier persona' and was baptised by her maid Kiyohara Kayo (Maria), see Frois's letter (Arima 20 February 1588), in *Relación de una gravissima persecuciō, que un tyrano de los Reynos de Iapon, llamado Cābucodono, ha levātado contra los Christianos, en los años de 88 y 89. Y de las mararvillas que nuestro Señor ha obrado por medio della* (Madrid: Pedro Madrigal, 1591), p. 83v. Maria also baptised Gracia's second son (Ivan), see p. 85r.

local needs and traditions in Japan. Writing for the years 1591 and 1592, Fróis acknowledges the importance of these *confrarias* to the mission:

Ajudou muito huma maneira de confraria ou congregação que se fez na fortaleza de Vomura, na qual entrarão perto de tres mil pessoas, fazendo huns capitulos que havião de guardar muito bons e proveitozos [...] E se aqui houveramos de recitar os cazos que se remediarão e as obras que fizerão com estes ajuntamentos, seria materia sobejamente difuza.⁶⁷⁹

However, and perhaps unconsciously, Fróis lets us see his Eurocentric approach here, clearly his voluminous work is more focused on the work of the missionaries and not on the work of the lay Christians, and although not entirely neglected, these lay Japanese houses of mercy are not fully discussed. The success of the mission is usually attributed to the missionaries' efforts. João de Lucena (c.1549-1600) Xavier's hagiographer, wrote about the pioneer's efforts in Yamaguchi: '[Xavier] Deixo muytos outros effeitos, & sinais do fervor da fé d'aquella christandade: que [...] estar per espaço de vinte, & cinco annos sem nehum religioso dos nossos, que a cultivasse, assi floreceo sempre.'⁶⁸⁰ Lucena emphasised the effect that the Navarrese had on the mission, but completely ignored the means by which the Church of Yamaguchi continued to flourish without Europeans missionaries.

In other instances, however, Fróis lets us see the roles that these laymen played within the Church:

[On the feast of Corpus Christi] se elegerão os mordomos da Mizericordia, cujo officio hé vizitar os pobres e enfermos [...] a [esmola] repartem pelos mais necessitados, e aos que estão em algum peccado publico trabalhão tirá-los delle, ou o fazem a saber ao Padre para que o faça. Fazem confessar os enfermos, acompanhão os que estam em artigo da morte, e dão avizo à Igreja para enterrar os deffuntos, e elles os vão amortallar [...] fizerão todos com o Padre juntamente oração ao Espirito

⁶⁷⁹ *História*, IV, ch. 53, p. 397.

⁶⁸⁰ Lucena, *História da Vida do Padre Francisco de Xavier*, II, p. 684. When Almeida visited Kagoshima 'treze años que no avian visto padre ni hermano de la Compañia' he found Christians, see Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 126r.

Santo [...] E dando seos votos, escolherão os mais aptos, e cada hum trabalhava por não ser inferior a seos companheiros, que erão 4 por todos.⁶⁸¹

Many unofficial *Misericórdias* would also spread throughout Japan, and these laymen *jihiyakusha*, as well as the *kanbó*, would have a deep influence on the mission.⁶⁸² Taking into consideration that most missions in the sixteenth century were understaffed in relation to the vastness of the territories they had to cover, local converts generally exercised a crucial role in preserving and expanding the Christian religion. The above passage points to the wide range of activities that members of these brotherhoods undertook as well as to the credit which these members received. Fróis writes that they were chosen amongst the most *aptos*, which indicates how well they were perceived by their peers and the social status which they already enjoyed. But more importantly the organisation of these brotherhoods helped and alleviated the burden of the missionaries. According to the author these congregations helped to keep the Christian community together. In Arie, Fróis notes, when a Christian woman practised abortion and the incident was known to the local Christian congregation they did not admit her to pray ‘em caza de hum christão dos antigos, aonde se ajuntavão (n) aos domingos e santos, dizendo que se fosse primeiro confessar e fizesse penitencia daquelle peccado;’ only when the woman confessed and did penitence was she reconciled with the congregation.⁶⁸³

⁶⁸¹ See *História*, II, ch. 64, p. 84. As early as 1555 a brotherhood was established in Funai (Oita) - officially founded as *Misericórdia* in 1557 - and another founded in Nagasaki in 1583, with Fróis giving an inside view on their duties, ‘Fizerão os christãos de Nangasaqui à sua custa huma igreja da Misericordia mui limpa e bem concertada. [...] E ordenarão seu provedor e irmãos da Misericordia, e as esmolos [...] repartem com os pobres, viuvras e orfãos, enfermos e necessitados. Fizerão ornamentos para a mesma igreja; tem seus comprimisso[s], sua bandeira, tumba e vestimentas para os irmãos acompanharem os defuntos e as procissões. [...] ordenarão fora da povoação caza para os lazarus, da qual têm dous irmãos da Misericordia cuidado’ see *História*, IV, ch. 1, p. 6.

⁶⁸² See Lopez-Gay, “Las organizaciones de laicos”, in *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu*, Roma, vol. XXXVI, 1967. The literal translation of the expression means the man (sha) who has the duty (yaku) of exercising compassion (jihi), see João Paulo Oliveira e Costa, ‘The Misericórdias among Japanese Christian Communities in the 16th and 17th centuries’, in *Bulletin of Portuguese - Japanese Studies*, 5 (2002), p. 71. The *kanbó* were those who had abandoned a secular life but did not take religious vows.

⁶⁸³ *História*, III, ch. 36, p. 303.

The practice of charity was already present in Japan before the arrival of the missionaries. But this *caritas* was considered an essential Christian virtue and therefore difficult to attribute to non-Christians, Fróis seems to endeavor when possible not to assign to the non-converts these Christian attributes. The Japanese Church was making progress, despite all the wars and the shortage of manpower, to cover a wide vineyard, thanks to - although this is not fully acknowledged, the efforts of laymen in the *misericordias*. Fróis seems to have come to the realisation that the conversion of Japan was going to be a very prolonged process, with *matos* taking a long time to become vineyards. This process required the restraining of religious zeal and a deep understanding of the Japanese culture which in itself represented a huge hurdle, to which I turn my attention next.

III.2. The challenge of conversion

III.2.1 Opposite customs

As argued by Michael Cooper, the Japanese mission was the first to break from traditional missionary methods employed in Africa, India, and Latin America, he calls it ‘the halfway mark in the development of missiological thought and practice’, with the Chinese mission reaching a higher degree of the accommodative method.⁶⁸⁴ In the Japanese mission the Jesuits deployed cultural and social adaptation methods and incorporated tested and novel approaches. Writing about the treatise on the opposite customs between Europe and Japan, *Tratado* (1585), George Elison stated it was the product of Fróis’s ‘nostalgia for Europe’.⁶⁸⁵

⁶⁸⁴ Michael Cooper, ‘A Mission Interrupted: Japan’ in *A Companion to the Reformation World*, ed. by R. Po-chia Hsia (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), p. 393.

⁶⁸⁵ Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, pp. 18-9.

Which took only the mind of Valignano to apply the lessons learned from this source.⁶⁸⁶ Most historians have argued in a similar vein, considering Valignano as the visionary mind who was able to elucidate a new method of accommodation almost independently.⁶⁸⁷ New research points to question such assumptions. For example, Linda Zampol D'Ortia questions the general impression of the second superior of the Japanese mission Francisco Cabral, as being the villain in the story.⁶⁸⁸

I argue that a method of accommodation had started from very early on and slowly developed, using tried and untried methods, culminating in the consultations organised by Valignano when a more drastic approach began.

The Jesuit's letters written from Japan were sometimes damaging to the image of the Society of Jesus as it mentioned issues that were not in line with the constitutions of the order.⁶⁸⁹ Fróis could be considered the 'editor' of the history of the Japanese mission, as he took it upon himself to revise the letters published and circulated in India and Europe and meticulously changed the rhetoric in his *História*.

Fróis writes that in 1563, when he had barely arrived in Japan, an invitation came for Cosme de Torres to visit a neighbouring land. But Torres was ill and wanted to send Fróis in his place:

⁶⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 18. Although Valignano has left Japan 3 years previously in 1582.

⁶⁸⁷ See Boxer, *The Christian Century*, pp. 72-90. See also de Luca, 'The Politics of Evangelization' in *Alessandro Valignano*, eds. by Tamburello et al, pp. 145-57.

⁶⁸⁸ See D'Ortia, Linda Zampol, 'The Cape of the Devil: Salvation in the Japanese Jesuit Mission Under Francisco Cabral' (1570-1579) (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Otago, 2016).

⁶⁸⁹ The Jesuits were not the only ones who struggle to behave according to their constitutions in Japan. In 1604, in a letter from fray Francisco Morales O.P. to his Provincial in Manila shows also the Dominicans' predicaments: 'Aquí procuramos guardar las constituciones de la Orden [...] pero en casos, con las circunstancias que a quí dire, sujetandolas a la censura de Vs. Reverencias.' See C.R. Boxer and J.S. Cummins, 'The Dominican Mission in Japan (1602-1622) and Lope de Vega', in *Jesuit and Friar*, ed. by Cummins, II, p. 86.

Quizera mandar em seo logar o P.e Luiz Frois, mas como não havia mais que hum mez e meio que chegou da India, e *assim na lingua como nos costumes, que são infinitos, não estava ainda instruido.*⁶⁹⁰

Therefore, Torres decided to wait until he could go himself once he had recuperated. Torres had come to believe that it was essential that this vast array of Japanese customs, traditions, formalities, conventions, ceremonies, rituals, and practices be learned before a new missionary could be trusted to engage by himself with Japanese people.⁶⁹¹ It was not only that the Japanese customs were ‘infinite’; but that the cultural distance separating the two civilisations seemed to be great, such that the cultures were often considered as diametrically opposed. This points to the level of preparation that was considered necessary for new missionaries and to the method of adaptation that was already firmly on display in Japan before Valignano’s arrival in 1579.

Wicki believed that Fróis was personally drawn to this idea of cultural antithesis, as he often used it, but Wicki did not elaborate on the reasons further.⁶⁹² But is this constant mention of Japan as a very different culture simply a result of the fascination with the polarised civilisations?⁶⁹³ Or is it an ever-present reminder to the reader that the Jesuits’ altered mode of behaviour was necessary, precisely because of the particularities of Japanese culture? I argue that the rhetoric utilised in the *História* aims to justify the Jesuits’ methodology in the archipelago and this is a constant undercurrent throughout the manuscript. A methodology that has been recorded and put into practice long before Valignano’s arrival.

In 1564, Almeida wrote, that together with Fróis, he stayed in Usuki in the house of an old Japanese Christian who ‘nos predico a nosotros [...] de la manera que se podia tener, para

⁶⁹⁰ *História*, I, ch. 48, p. 335.

⁶⁹¹ Fróis laments because there were very few missionaries ‘não houve logar para mais’ so Torres taught Balthazar Gago ‘por espaço somente de trinta e tantos dias’ before sending him with Fernandes to Bungo, see *História*, I, ch. 10, p. 66.

⁶⁹² *História*, II, ch. 89, p. 313, n. 25.

⁶⁹³ See Tolosana, *La Fascinación de la Diferencia*.

facilmente convertir los señores de Japon.⁶⁹⁴ This shows how the Jesuits were receptive and gathered information as to the best way to proceed. In 1565, Fróis acknowledging how ceremonious the Japanese were, noted: ‘para no errar entre gente noble, ay libros de cortesias, em que estudian.’⁶⁹⁵ In this statement, less than two years after his arrival in Japan, he is already aware of the existence of numerous manuals of good manners. When Fróis writes about his first meeting in 1568 with Nobunaga in Kyoto, perhaps the first meeting with a European, Fróis followed strict protocols. In his own letter he simply states he went to visit Nobunaga ‘yendo yo en una litera [palanquin].’⁶⁹⁶ Aware of how his casual statement may have been originally received, in the *História* he added he followed Vatadono’s (Wada-Igano 1536-73) advice, who recommended ‘que o Padre [Fróis] fosse em huma liteira porque assim convinha.’⁶⁹⁷

I believe that Fróis writes so often about ‘the opposite’ Japanese customs in an attempt to impress upon the reader that because this is so alien a culture, the missionaries had to learn about and to adapt to this new environment, often behaving against the constitutions of the order. Thus this rhetoric aims to defend the Jesuits’ ways of proceeding in Japan.

Fróis constantly reminds the reader of the dissimilarities with the European reality. This is very different to Xavier’s early impressions who found cultural commonalities between the cultures of Japan and Europe such as similar codes of honor, social hierarchies with nobles and *fidalgos*, and reasonable people.

Fróis opened his *História* with descriptions of the customs of Japan: ‘qualidades e costumes do Japão’. Clearly this issue was accorded great importance in the education of new

⁶⁹⁴ Almeida to the Jesuits (Fukuda, 25 October 1564) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 186v.

⁶⁹⁵ Fróis to the Jesuits in China and India (Kyoto, 20 February 1565) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 201r.

⁶⁹⁶ Fróis (Kyoto, 1 June 1569) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 290r. This letter was published in the letter-book printed in 1575 in Alcalá, which Fróis was revising while writing his manuscript.

⁶⁹⁷ My own emphasis see *História*, II, ch. 86, p. 270.

missionaries. For him the description of Japan's environment needed to be 'huma narração diffuza que dellas podesse dar mais clara noticia.' From the start, Fróis was very clear in his mind that his narrative would be comprehensive, because a brief account would not suffice to declare everything learned after years of experience: 'Passados 38 annos desta experiencia, e descobrindo o estudo da lingua e a comunicação dos homens, os segredos que somente a vista não podia alcançar.'⁶⁹⁸ Fróis calls attention to the first years, when the Jesuits were not well versed in the language and relied partly on visual observations, which could be very deceptive.

In the *História* Fróis copied his own letter from 1569 and printed in the Alcalá *Cartas*. He begins this chapter saying: 'por este capitulo ter dependencia de huma carta que o Padre [himself] escreveo [...] para que fique a materia mais clara recitaremos neste logar a mesma carta.'⁶⁹⁹ But he does more than simply copy his own letter:

Fróis's letter 1569

Del estilo de Japon, y quan diferente sea el modo de conversar desta Gentilidade de todos los otros modos del universo.⁷⁰⁰

História

Pelo que hé bem saber-se que o estilo de Japão e modo de conversar e tratar com esta gentilidade *hé o mais opozito a nossos costumes* de todos os que parece pode haver no universo, e isto não o pode saber em sua realidade senão quem com larga experiencia os tem conversados.⁷⁰¹

As seen above, again he made changes to his sources. For Fróis the addition is necessary. Although he had already stated the very different customs of Japan from any other non-Christian land, he felt the need to make the argument more forcefully. He presents Japan as an antithesis of Europe by adding *o mais opozito*. Thus, Japan is portrayed as an 'antipodal' civilisation, its inverted description in comparison to Europe. This prominence is related, in

⁶⁹⁸ *História*, I, prolog., pp. 2-3.

⁶⁹⁹ *História*, II, ch. 89, p. 303.

⁷⁰⁰ Fróis to Melchior de Figueiredo (Kyoto, 12 July 1569) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 305r.

⁷⁰¹ My own emphasis, see *História*, II, ch. 89, p. 313.

my opinion, to the early Jesuit missives regarding this country, some of which had created the impression of commensurable cultures, an image that Fróis clearly aimed to finally change.⁷⁰² The question that raises here is why he felt the need, in the mid-1580s, to use literary devices to convey more emphatically this idea.⁷⁰³ In the same letter, preceding the above passage, there is an apologetic paragraph in which he attempts to explain why he was copious in relating the honors he had received from Nobunaga: ‘porque parece que contar estas cosas tan a la larga, es señal de que me da algún gusto.’⁷⁰⁴ Anticipating criticism, he explained that such behaviour, that of receiving honours from *daimyo* lords, was essential to the increase of the Jesuits’ reputation and for the benefit of the church. The Dominican Japanese mission (1602-22) also followed the Japanese custom of offering and receiving guests with tea in the *zashiki* (camera for receiving guests), with Fray Francisco Morales writing, in 1604, uneasy as to whether this was the correct procedure: ‘Assi lo avemos hecho hasta agora, porque es mas cerimonia que otra cosa.’⁷⁰⁵

In this part of his manuscript, we see an example of intertextuality, in that to understand the *História*, or the hypertext, one must understand its relation with other texts.⁷⁰⁶ In this case, one of those texts is Fróis’s own letter written more than 15 years earlier, but this is not the only one. In the prologue or paratext of the *História* Fróis already states that the Japanese customs are ‘em tanta maneira oppozitas às nossas, e tão alheias e peregrinas dos costumes e modo de proceder de Europa.’⁷⁰⁷ Later, at the beginning of the chapter he stated that he wanted to use his own letter, or hypotext.⁷⁰⁸ The events related in this missive transpire during his time in exile. Through a combination of diplomacy and following Japanese

⁷⁰² See Subrahmanyam, *Courtly Encounters*, p. xiv, and pp. 209-15.

⁷⁰³ Such as antithesis and hyperbole.

⁷⁰⁴ Fróis to Melchior de Figueredo (Kyoto, 12 July 1569) in Alcalá *Cartas*, pp. 304v-305r.

⁷⁰⁵ See Boxer and Cummins, ‘The Dominican Mission’, in *Jesuit and Friar*, ed. by Cummins, II, p. 87.

⁷⁰⁶ Allen argues that a text can only ever be understood in relation to other texts, see Allen, *Intertextuality*, pp. 104-10.

⁷⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁷⁰⁸ A hypotext is a text ‘whose form and/or content inspires – or is reflected – in a later text or hypertext’ see Martin and Ringham, *Key terms in Semiotics*, p. 100.

etiquette, he receives an audience, for the first time, with the Japanese hegemon, something he must still remember. This event was special for Fróis, since after the meeting he was granted permission to return to Kyoto. This was not just a personal accomplishment but was of greater importance to the mission as well, as the Jesuits were accepted by the most powerful warlord of the land. However, this does not explain the need for the intensity of the message to increase from ‘different’ to *mais opozito*.

I believe a series of events that had occurred between the writing of the letter and of the *História*, as well as the influence of other texts from this time period, offer an insight on the rhetorical changes. In 1569 Torres was still in charge of the Japanese mission. Cabral would replace Torres as superior in 1570, and a number of missionary policies were implemented.⁷⁰⁹ Francisco Cabral reproached the level of respect which the Jesuits aimed to acquire: ‘estas honras y dignidades [...] podian hacer mucho mal a los nuestros.’⁷¹⁰ Cabral was in favour of the key Jesuit principles of humility and obedience, which he considered in need of urgent attention when he arrived in Japan.⁷¹¹ At the same time Cabral dismissed the Japanese culture as inferior and expected the converts to follow western practices.⁷¹² The visitor Alessandro Valignano arrived in 1579, and conducted a series of meetings and consultations with the *padres*, which had a lasting impact on the mission.⁷¹³ Fróis played an influential role in developing the policies, not only as superior of Bungo and one of the

⁷⁰⁹ On Cabral’s policies see D’Ortia, *The Cape of the Devil* (2016); Pedro Lage Reis Correia, ‘Francisco Cabral and Lourenço mexia in Macao (1582-1584): Two Different Perspectives of Evangelisation in Japan’, in *Bulletin of Portuguese-Japanese Studies*, 15 [online] 2007 (December) [consulted 10 November 2017], pp. 51-64. Available <<http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=36112010004>>.

⁷¹⁰ *Sumario*, p. 269.

⁷¹¹ Some of these practices included the level of humility shown by the early Jesuits which caused great problems, as it was difficult for the ruling classes to associate themselves with a clergy that valued humbleness so highly. Therefore, it was argued that the Jesuits needed to abandon the impression of humility and instead portray an image that could be accepted by the ruling classes, on Cabral’s attitude to poverty and obedience see D’Ortia, ‘Purple Silk and Black Cotton’, in *Exploring Jesuit Distinctiveness*, ed. by Maryks, pp. 137-55.

⁷¹² See Lach, *Asia in the Making of Europe*, I, Book 1, p. 293. Carneiro described Cabral when he was 26 years old as ‘noble [...] del pueblo es mal dispuesto [...] un poco colerico’ see Melchior Carneiro to General Diego Lainez (Goa, 20 November 1559) in *Documenta Indica*, IV, p. 419.

⁷¹³ See Schütte, *Valignano’s Mission Principles*, I.

most experienced in the mission, but as an advisor to the visitor, whom he served as interpreter.

When Fróis wrote about Valignano's first consultation, he presents it as a collective effort:

O P.e Visitador como vinha dezejozo de pôr as couzas da companhia em ordem e as reduzir, quanto lhe fosse possível, a hum decente e acomodado modo de proceder, mandou chamar todos os Padres [...] *fez com elles huma diffuza e larga consulta por espaço de alguns dias*, na qual se concluirão muitas couzas para o serviço de nosso Senhor e bem da companhia e para o governo della.⁷¹⁴

As described in the *História*, the accommodative method implemented by the visitor Valignano could only be done with the advice he received from fathers like Fróis, and a degree of compromising and agreement among the consultants.⁷¹⁵ Fróis highlights that the consultation was done 'com elles', the fathers who had been working in Japan for many years. In *Il Cerimoniale*, Valignano urged also 'to consult the Japanese brothers or our prudent friends on every matter [...] This is because the Japanese customs and courtesies are so diferente from those of the Nanban.'⁷¹⁶ The consultation of Nagasaki, after Hideyoshi's decree, is described in the *História* in the following manner:

Occorreo a todos [fathers] in domino que, porquanto eram já passados sette ou oito annos deposes da consulta que o Padre Visitador Alexandre Valignano fez em Bungo [Usuki, 1580] e no Miaco [Azuchi, 1581], e se offerecião de novo couzas graves e de muito momento para se consultar [...] se partirão os Padres para Nangazaqui a fazer esta consulta.⁷¹⁷

Fróis, who was writing soon after the above events in 1587, again he highlights the agency of the *padres* rather than being the result of the vice-provincial's decision. He considered that the pressing issues of the Japanese mission was a matter to be discussed among all the members.

⁷¹⁴ My own emphasis, *História*, III, ch. 22, p. 163.

⁷¹⁵ Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, pp. 54-84.

⁷¹⁶ De Luca, 'The Politics of Evangelization' in *Alessandro Valignano*, eds. by Tamburello, et al., p.148.

⁷¹⁷ My own emphasis, *História*, IV, ch. 61, p. 478.

Clearly by 1569, Fróis was already an advocate of *accomodatio*. Fróis's arrival in Japan in 1563, shows Torres preparing new arrivals into a process of inculturation to learn and behave according to Japanese modes. Among other procedures, the Jesuits has adopted the use of silk in their garments as it was appropriate to their status.⁷¹⁸

In his *Advertimentos e Avisos acerca dos Costumes e Catangues de Jappão* (1581), Valignano put in place a more drastic method of accommodation.⁷¹⁹ In it he is drawn to highlight the differences between the cultures of Europe and Japan: 'porque em Japão são os costumes tam diferentes dos nossos que em nenhuma cousa consertão.'⁷²⁰ A statement already mentioned in Fróis's letter in 1569.⁷²¹ Two years after the *Advertimentos*, in his *Sumario* (1583), Valignano goes further: 'Japón es un mundo al revés de como corre en Europa; porque es en todo tan diferente y contrario, que quasi en ninguna cosa se conforman con nosotros.'⁷²² The visitor uses antithesis for the sake of emphasis and his views are akin to those expressed in Fróis's *História* as if the Jesuits had decided to increase the emphasis on this subject.

Another supplement to Fróis's *magnum opus* that we must consider as a hypotext is the *Tratado das Contradições e Diferenças de Costumes Entre a Europa e o Japão* (1585). Historians has generally followed Josef Franz Schütte's conclusion of Fróis's being the author of the *Tratado*. Schütte based this on the location of Fróis at the time and the

⁷¹⁸ The use of silk in their costumes would change with the arrival of Francisco cabral in 1570.

⁷¹⁹ Also known as *Il Cerimoniale per i Missionari del Giappone*. On Valignano's methods of acculturation see Schütte, *Valignano's Mission Principles*, I; Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, pp. 54-84; *Alessandro Valignano*, eds. by Tamburello, et al.

⁷²⁰ Valignano, *Advertimentos e Avisos*, p. 284.

⁷²¹ And again in the same text Valignano wrote: 'o governo de Japão e seus costumes e catangues são tão diferentes do governo dos senhores de Europa.' *Ibid.*, p. 300.

⁷²² My own emphasis, see Valignano, *Sumario*, p. 33. On the next page, he makes this point again: [the Japanese] en todo van al revés de Europa' see *ibid.*, p. 34. Valignano also utilises similar devices: 'parece que (the Japanese) estudiaron de proposito como no conformar con ninguna gente', see *Sumario*, p. 33.

knowledge he considered required to write this treatise.⁷²³ Geoge A. Sioris also agrees with Schütte's statement of authorship and praise for the treatise.⁷²⁴ George Elison assumes Schütte's conclusion but considered this work as a 'booklet of amazing banality.'⁷²⁵

Referring to Fróis's qualifications to be the author, Reff argued: 'Fróis was perhaps the only Jesuit who had the knowledge of Japanese language and culture that is evident in the *Tratado*.'⁷²⁶ In 1585, the date of the *Tratado*, Fróis had spent 22 years in Japan, but so had Giovanni Battista de Monte who arrived with Fróis.⁷²⁷ Two other Portuguese Jesuits had joined the Jesuit mission before Fróis's arrival and were still in Japan: Brother Guilherme Pereira (Portuguese), admitted to the Society in 1556; and Brother Aires Sanches (Portuguese), admitted in Japan in 1562. Besides, the content, or distich, used in the *Tratado* are not the product of in-depth scrutiny of the Japanese culture, but rather simple daily observations of what is different between Japan and Europe, and sometimes exaggerated generalizations. For example, to observe that: 'In Europe tailors are men; in Japan they are women'⁷²⁸ or 'We use swords; the Japanese use cutlasses,' does not require an expert in Japanese culture to notice.⁷²⁹ True, some distich required more knowledge of the Japanese culture, but not necessarily the work of an expert.

⁷²³ See *Tratado Em que se contem muito susinta e abreviadamente alguãs contradições e diferenças de custumes Antre a gente de Europa e esta provincia de Japão [...] Em Kanzusa aos 15 de Junho de 1585 Annos* – Published with a critical introduction and German translation by Josef Franz Schütte S.J.: *Kultugegensätze Europa-Japan* (1585), *Monumenta Nipponica* 15 (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1955).

⁷²⁴ George A. Sioris, 'Chronicler and Interpreter of Japan, a Jesuit Between Two Countries' in *Luís Fróis*, ed. by van Ginkel, p. 9.

⁷²⁵ Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, p. 17.

⁷²⁶ Luís Fróis, *The First European Description of Japan, 1585: A Critical English-language edition of Striking Contrasts in the Customs of Europe and Japan by Luis Fróis, S.J.*, trans., eds., and annotated by Richard K. Danford, Robin D. Gill, and Daniel T. Reff (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), p. 7.

⁷²⁷ Battista de Monte died in Japan in 1587.

⁷²⁸ Fróis, *The First European Description of Japan*, eds. by Danford, et al., p. 77.

⁷²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

Reff also states: ‘we believe Fróis and his Jesuit superior, Alesandro Valignano, drafted the *Tratado*’.⁷³⁰ It is not clear on what basis Reff includes Valignano in the drafting of the *Tratado*. Valignano visited Japan three times in 1579-82, 1590-92, and 1598-1603. The untitled manuscript is dated: ‘feito em Canzusa [Kazusa] aos 14 de Junho de 1585 Annos.’⁷³¹ Valignano has left Japan three years before. However, looking at Fróis’ extant letters, it appears that Fróis could have been in Kazusa, Arima at the time. We find him in the Kazusa Jesuit college from a letter dated 29 November 1584, and a final letter on 02 January 1585. His next letter is from Nagasaki 20 August 1585.⁷³² Therefore, it is possible that he was in Kazusa on 14 de Junho de 1585. Although, by 14 June 1585 Fróis was already busy writing his *História*, stating he finished the first part (1549-78) on 30 December 1586.⁷³³

In the case of authorship, assuming the *Tratado* was written by Fróis, one could argue whether he was the only writer or if he was a compiler – as he was with the annual letters and the *História* - of documents or table talk from European Jesuits over the years, expressing what they have found so different to their own culture. The author of the *Tratado* wrote ‘in Europe’, ‘us’, ‘our’, ‘among us’ which indicates the fallacy that all Europeans were the same. At the same time, it shows that this manuscript was written with a European audience in mind. By 1585, there have been Spanish, Portuguese, and Italians Jesuits in Japan and the manuscript could have been based on a summary of their observations. The Japanese brothers, the *Doyuku* and in general the Japanese Christians would also have pointed out what they found strange in the European modes and behaviour.

⁷³⁰ Ibid., p. 3.

⁷³¹ Ibid., p. 4.

⁷³² See *História*, I, Intro., p. 39.

⁷³³ ‘Acabou-se esta primeira Parte da História de Japão aos 30 de Dezembro do anno de 1586, e nella se gastarão perto de 4 annos para se poder fazer com alguma mediocridade, e vai repartida [em] 153 capitulos, sc. 37 das couzas proprias de Japão, e os 116 da Historia da propagação do sagrado Evangelho nestas partes [...] A honra e gloria da Santissima Trindade e da Virgem glorioza e todos os Santos. Amen. Luiz Frois’ see *História*, II, ch. 116, p. 516 and *História*, I, Intro., p. 12.

The changes in rhetorical approach must be analysed in the context of the implementation of more drastic methods of accommodation during this time. The criticism, both within the Society and externally, that such guidelines, at least outwardly, transformed the Jesuits into Zen monks, must also be taken into account.⁷³⁴ His emphasis on the opposite cultures is also a justification of the methods adopted in the archipelago. It was this situation, Valignano argues, that had forced the Jesuits to adopt different modes of proceeding: ‘son las costumbres y calidades de los japos tan contrarias y diferentes a las nuestras, que es forzado hacer ahí muchas cosas que representadas en Europa se podían extrañar mucho.’⁷³⁵ In this statement Valignano forewarns his readers – his European readers – that the Jesuits’ policies implemented in Japan may bemuse them. This method of adaptation, which sometimes deviated from the Constitutions of the order, was a clear dilemma for the missionaries which is demonstrated in the theological questions sent by the Jesuits in Japan to Goa.⁷³⁶

Besides the internal debates and changes in the Jesuits’ ways of proceeding, external pressure was looming large on the horizon.⁷³⁷ Several decades after their arrival in Japan,

⁷³⁴ Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, p. 64. Besides the architecture of the Jesuit houses and Churches and the copying of the Zen sect, Valignano asked: ‘es necesario aprender a hablar, a sentarse, a andar, a comer y hacer otras mil cosas nuevas, las cuales al principio parecen muy extrañas y fuera de razón, mas después que hombres se acostumbra a ellas parécenle bien’ see *Sumario*, p. 51.

⁷³⁵ *Sumario*, p. 269.

⁷³⁶ Ana Fernandes Pinto and Silvana Remédio Pires, ‘The “resposta que alguns padres de japão mandarin perguntar”: a clash of strategies?’, in *Bulletin of Portuguese-Japanese Studies* [online] 2005, 10-11 (June-December): [2 August 2018]: <<http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=36101102>> ISSN 0874-8438.ISS

⁷³⁷ By 1551, there were already problems brewing between Dominicans and Jesuits in India. Gaspar Barzeus wrote of the problems regarding doctrinal differences between the orders: ‘não deixão os domynicos de sigirem os seus custumes, em nos quererem ir à mão em alguma[s] virtudes’ see Barzeus to Loyola (Goa, 16 December 1551) in *Documenta Indica*, II, pp. 261-2. The Jesuits arrived in Goa 6 May 1542, and relations between the Friars and the Jesuits seemed to be amicable at the beginning, however, Xavier became aware of the problems when he returned to Goa from Japan: ‘guardaros de desavenencias (with the friars) [...] Digan ellos lo que a sus caridades se les ocurra; vosotros en callar [...] Pero, si viereis que se siguen ofensas contra Dios de las desavenencias [...] ellos una cosa y vosotros otra, en tal caso, hablaréis con el señor obispo’ see Xavier to Barzeus (Goa, 6 and 14 April 1552) in *X. Cartas*, pp. 475-6.

the Society of Jesus was still the only religious order evangelising in that country.⁷³⁸ The Society of Jesus wished for other religious orders to be excluded from Japan and to keep the mission entirely as a monopoly, expecting that, ‘governándose Japón de esta manera [...] se hará la mayor y mejor cristiandad que en el mundo se halle, y se salvarán más almas de esta provincia sola que de muchas otras juntas.’⁷³⁹ Valignano succeeded in obtaining papal support on this matter in a brief issued by Pope Gregory XIII on 28 January 1585. Valignano argued that ‘no es aún Japón capaz del modo de proceder que tienen otras religiones de Europa.’⁷⁴⁰ Here he implies the Jesuits’ ways of proceeding were correct and the most appropriate for Japan.

Fróis defends the Society’s position on blocking their entry, arguing that their inclusion into the Japanese mission would destroy all their work.⁷⁴¹ His stress on the upside-down world in comparison to Europe was meant to raise a symbolic threshold between these cultures. When future missionaries would cross this threshold, they would be expecting to encounter a very different country where things were done in a very contrary manner and therefore they should be prepared to adapt – especially, to adapt to different methods of behaviour dissimilar from any other mission.⁷⁴² The changes in the rhetoric applied by Fróis must be

⁷³⁸ Until 1593 when the friars of the *Ordo Fratrum Minorum*, Franciscans, began settling and preaching in the isles. In 1584 the first Spanish Augustinians that landed in Japan were Francisco Manrique and Mateo de Mendoza; their Portuguese junk from Manila to Macau was hit by a storm and landed in Hirado.

⁷³⁹ See *Sumario*, p. 180. See also Üçerler, S.J. thesis, ‘Sacred Historiography and its Rhetoric in Sixteenth-Century Japan: An Intertextual Study and Partial Critical edition of Principio y Progreso de la Religion Christiana en Jappon (...) (1601-1603) by Alessandro Valignano’, p. 84. On Valignano’s dream of a native clergy in Japan see Boxer, *The Christian Century*, pp. 86-90.

⁷⁴⁰ *História*, V, app., p. 641.

⁷⁴¹ ‘O que pertendem os Padres [...] não hé não querer companheiros nem querer impedir que os outros não se [em]pregem na conversão de Japão: mas hé somente entender que cada couza se há-de fazer a seo tempo, e que correndo-se em Japão e na China com mais pressa e fervor do que convem, não somente se não acrescentará a conversão de Japão, mas com grande facilidade e sem remedio se deitará a perder o que está feito’, see *História*, V, ch. 55, p. 422.

⁷⁴² The Chinese mission would surpass the Japanese mission on its notoriety for the method of accommodation practiced by the Jesuits, but it only started in 1579 with Michele Ruggieri, and later expanded by Matteo Ricci who dropped his Buddhist dress and adopted the *literati* dress and grew his hair and beard in January 1595, see R. Po-Chia Hsia, ‘The Jesuit Encounter with Buddhism in Ming China’ in *Alessandro Valignano*, eds. by Tamburello, et al., pp. 19-43; Spence, *The Memory Palace*; R. Po-Chia Hsia, *A Jesuit in the Forbidden City: Matteo Ricci 1552-1610* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

analysed in the context of the implementation of more drastic methods of accommodation during this time. As well as a justification for the methods adopted in the archipelago. Among these changes, it was argued that the Jesuits needed to abandon the impression of humility and instead portray an image that could be accepted by the ruling classes which would facilitate conversion downwards from above, to which I turn next.

III.2.2 Conversion from above: The most effective method

‘Conversion from the top’, the strategy of converting first the lord of a heathen territory, or at least winning his friendship and patronage, was highly encouraged by the Jesuits.⁷⁴³ It is easy to see why the missionaries used this method in Japan. Previous mission experience pointed at its success, such as in Kongo at the end of the fifteenth century and the sixteenth century.⁷⁴⁴ Although the *História* does not explain a step-by-step methodology of how the Jesuits approached and attempted to convert, sometimes successfully, the ruling classes of Japan, through a comparison between certain passages of the *História* with the letters, a picture develops of how the Jesuits actively sought and even manipulated circumstances to convert the upper echelons of Japanese society.

The conversion of nobles and *fidalgos* in Japan was often followed by the baptism of their retainers and family, such as in the case of Ōmura Sumitada (Dom Bartolomeu): ‘Dom Bartholomeu [...] se fez christão na hera de 1562, e à sua sombra se fizeram todos vassalos.’⁷⁴⁵ This was also true of the conversions of Takayama Ukon (Dom Justo Takayama

⁷⁴³ Madalena Ribeiro, ‘The Christian Nobility of Kyushu: A Perusal of Jesuit Sources’, in *Bulletin of Portuguese-Japanese Studies* [online] 13 December 2006 [16 May 2018] <<http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=36101302>>ISSN 0874-8438.

⁷⁴⁴ Present day Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo; in 1491 both the king Nzinga a Nkundu (João I) and his son Mvemba a Nzinga (Afonso I) were baptised, see Roland Oliver and Anthony Atmore, *Medieval Africa, 1250–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 169.

⁷⁴⁵ *História*, IV, ch. 46, p. 343-4.

1552/3 -1615); Kuroda Yoshitaka (Dom Simeão 1546-1604); and Arima Harunobu (Dom Protásio 1567-1612). When Ōtomo Sorin (Ōtomo Yoshishige – Dom Francisco) finally converted to Christianity in 1578, Fróis wrote that his subjects said that they did not need to hear the preaching of the Jesuits ‘que basta verem a el-rey christão e seo modo de proceder para elles o serem.’⁷⁴⁶ Fróis states that because ‘as tres cabeças destes tres reynos (Bungo, Fiunga and Bugen) erão christaons, não havia duvida em sua conversam.’⁷⁴⁷

This was, perhaps, the most successful achievement by the Jesuits: the sympathy and benevolence of the ruling politico-military powers of a hierarchical society meant, amongst other benefits, that the missionaries were granted the freedom to preach and were given donations of land to establish churches, houses, and seminaries in strategic areas such as Kyoto, Shimo, and Bungo.⁷⁴⁸ Fróis was given freedom to preach unmolested in the capital, after his exile in Sakai, with letters from both Nobunaga and the Shogun.⁷⁴⁹

In areas where the Jesuits did not convert or acquire the favour of the nobles and *fidalgos*, the mission withered away or disappeared altogether, as for example in Kagoshima and Yamaguchi. En route to Kagoshima Almeida wrote that he felt pity for some Japanese who having heard the Gospel wanted to convert but could not as they ‘temian al Señor de la tierra.’⁷⁵⁰

At almost the beginning of the mission Xavier attempted a visit to the Japanese emperor Go-Nara (1495-1557) in Kyoto, but did not follow protocol and learned a hard lesson.⁷⁵¹ Fróis

⁷⁴⁶ *História*, III, ch. 5, p. 39.

⁷⁴⁷ *História*, IV, ch. 45, p. 342.

⁷⁴⁸ Shimo (Lower part) mainly Nagasaki prefecture and surrounding areas, and Bungo present day in Oita prefecture; both areas are in Kyushu (九州, Kyūshū, literally ‘nine provinces’), the most southwesterly of Japan’s four main islands. See Üçerler, ‘The Jesuit Enterprise’, in *The Cambridge Companion to the Jesuits* ed. by Worcester, p. 158.

⁷⁴⁹ Boxer, *The Christian Century*, p. 60.

⁷⁵⁰ See Almeida to the Fathers and Brothers of the Society of Jesus (25 September 1562) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 125v.

⁷⁵¹ ‘Vó, rey universal de todo Japão’ see *História*, I, ch. 4, p. 36.

tells us of this failed attempt very briefly: ‘E porque o Padre hia vestido pobremente, perguntarão-lhe se trazia presente com que o houvesse de vizitar.’⁷⁵² Inadequately dressed and bearing no gifts Xavier was rejected. However, he would re-direct his efforts to one of the most powerful *daimyo* lords of the time, Ōuchi Yoshitaka (1507-51) of Yamaguchi ‘a qual dizem que era tamanha como Lisboa’, this time following the appropriate protocol.⁷⁵³ This method of establishing a connection with society’s elite would be adopted and followed repeatedly by his successors. In 1559, Cosme de Torres decided to renew the Jesuits’ efforts at the ‘empresa das partes do Miaco.’⁷⁵⁴ Gaspar Vilela, who was chosen to lead the mission to the capital, would probably have also failed were it not for the letters of introduction given by the *daimyo* of Bungo Ōtomo Sorin to influential people around the capital ‘pera que o favorecessem, cō o qual favor, & como q já no Miáco se sabia que este rei favorecia os padres, se pode ali plantar a lei de Deos.’⁷⁵⁵ According to Francisco Cabral the fact that Sorin was friendly to the Jesuits in Kyushu increased their reputation in the capital. Likewise, when Nobunaga was favorable to the missionaries in the Gokinai, he made Christianity more respectable in Kyushu, where he exercised no authority.⁷⁵⁶

It becomes clear, through the reading of the *História*, that the Jesuits made every effort to gain the friendship of the Japanese elite. To this effect they sought the close acquaintance of people with wealth, power, or social position. Fróis writes that Xavier learned early the importance of first approaching the lords of Japan in order to receive license to proselytise: ‘Rogou o Padre a hum fidalgo principal que lhe alcansasse d’el-rey o quizesse ver e, ouvindo a ley que pregava, lhe desse licença que a ministrasse em seo reino.’⁷⁵⁷ On his return from

⁷⁵² *História*, I, ch. 4, p. 36n.

⁷⁵³ Nunes Barreto to the Brothers in Portugal (Cochin, 10 January 1558) in Évora *Cartas*, II, p. 49r.

⁷⁵⁴ *História*, I, ch. 22, p. 137.

⁷⁵⁵ Francisco Cabral to General Acquaviva (Japan, 15 September 1581) in Évora *Cartas*, II, p. 9r.

⁷⁵⁶ Gokinai were the five provinces around the capital. Arima Harunobu took into consideration the friendship of Nobunaga to the Jesuits when he converted, see Murdoch, *A History of Japan*, II, p. 187.

⁷⁵⁷ *História*, I, ch. 3, p. 31.

Japan, Belchior Nunes Barreto, aware of the local customs, wrote that he had tried to work from above: ‘Em chegando a Bungo, trabalhei por ver a el-rey, porque em Japão tudo depende das cabeças, e procurei com muitas rezões trazê-lo a nossa santa fé.’⁷⁵⁸ These examples demonstrate the depth of the Jesuits’ desire for acceptance by the Japanese elite. This process of winning over the local elite was a slow and lengthy one. For many years it proved impossible to convert them, a fact that considerably hindered the Jesuits’ work with the rest of the population. An exception took place in Hirado, in the province of Hizen, where, by the late 1550s, the Jesuits had baptised members of the Koteda lineage and all their vassals.

In 1565 Fróis wrote that Gaspar Vilela focused on renting a house in the area of *Miaco de Riba* (the higher part of Kyoto) ‘por ser o logar onde rezide a gente nobre e esperar que com isso se faria lá muito fructo.’⁷⁵⁹ Living among the nobles did not only give access to the Japanese elite it was also vital for their reputation. Later in the castle-town of Azuchi, Organtino hoped to receive a house for the Society in the area inhabited by the nobles: ‘tendo a Companhia a casa entre tantos senhores na principal fortaleza de Nobunaga, cobraria grande credito y autoridade pera com os Iapões.’ On the other hand it seemed that they would receive an area among the ‘povo, ficávamos afastados da gente nobre, & parecia, que a Companhia entrava ali com pouco credito.’⁷⁶⁰ There is a tactic here to target the *gente nobre* by living among them.⁷⁶¹ Already, 16 years after the beginning of the mission, the Jesuits are specifically targeting the upper echelons of the capital’s society. In 1580, in the best part

⁷⁵⁸ *História*, I, ch. 16, p. 105; see also Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 78r.

⁷⁵⁹ *História*, II, ch. 65, p. 89. The Dairi (Japanese emperor), also lived in this area, see Fróis to Acquaviva in Évora *Cartas*, II, p. 66v.

⁷⁶⁰ *Annua* of Gaspar Coelho to the General Acquaviva (Nagasaki, 15 February 1582) in Évora *Cartas*, II, p. 36r.

⁷⁶¹ Ana Fernandes Pinto, ‘Japanese Elites as seen by Jesuit Missionaries. Perceptions of Social and Political Inequality among the Elites’, in *Bulletin of Portugues-Japanes Studies* [online] 2000 (December) [15 September 2018] Available <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=36100103> ISSN 0874-8438, p. 31.

of Arima, Valignano decided to start a seminary for Japanese children: ‘huma das mais importantes couzas [...] experiencia o ter mostrado que sem o adminiculo dos naturaes não podiamos efeituar nosso intento,’ Fróis adds that ‘os mais delles filhos de fidalgos nobres.’⁷⁶² In Azuchi too, Organtino focused on finding boys from noble families for the school.⁷⁶³ By 1588, in a letter, Fróis writes that they have in their seminaries – schools – ‘setenta y tres hijos de hombres nobles.’⁷⁶⁴ Fróis provides further evidence in the *História* when he describes how they sought to ingratiate themselves with the powerful in the hopes of being under their aegis and to help them to intercede in times of need:

Costumava o Padre [Vilela] todos os annos no Miaco convidar huma vez em nossa caza alguns senhores dos principaes da Corte do Cubosama para os ter benevolos para o tempo de qualquer necessidade.⁷⁶⁵

Fróis, who worked with Vilela in Kyoto, endorsed the method of conversion from the top down and states that the favour of the nobles was the most effective method for conversion:

Para se fazer fructo na gente [...] *hum dos meios mais efficazes he terem-se primeiro adquiridas e ganhadas as vontades dos reys, principes e senhores* [...] para que claramente conste a todos e veção o amor, reputação e credito que as cabeças tem aos regadores do sagrado Evangelho [...] porque sem este meio [...] pouco ou nenhum fructo se fara nelles.⁷⁶⁶

Without gaining the patronage of the nobles very little could be achieved in Japan. Fróis emphasised this method when he writes that he was the first Jesuit to reach Echizen province in 1581 and that soon after arriving he went to visit the lord of the land ‘sem cuja autoridade se não podia alli fazer nada.’⁷⁶⁷ This method would be further consolidated from 1581

⁷⁶² ‘Dos melhores sitios de Arima’, see *História*, III, ch. 20, p. 150. On Japanese children see Medina, ‘The Role of Children in the Early Japanese Church’ in *Portuguese Voyages*, ed. by Milward, pp. 30-50.

⁷⁶³ Moran, *The Japanese and the Jesuits*, pp. 13-4.

⁷⁶⁴ Fróis’s letter in *Relación de una gravissima persecuciō, que un tyrano de los Reynos de Japon, llamado Cābucodono, ha levātado contra los Christianos, en los años de 88 y 89. Y de las mararvillas que nuestro Señor ha obrado por medio della* (Madrid: Pedro Madrigal, 1591), p. 1v.

⁷⁶⁵ *História*, II, ch. 65, p. 90.

⁷⁶⁶ My own emphasis, see *História*, II, ch. 89, pp. 313-4.

⁷⁶⁷ *História*, III, ch. 32, p. 265.

onwards, in Valignano's treaty *Advertimentos e Avisos*, which primarily focuses on gaining 'credito e autoridade dos Padres.'⁷⁶⁸

A good example of how the Jesuits, and especially Fróis, used this method can be appreciated in Bungo. In 1578, war loomed in Kyushu between the Ōtomo and the Shimazu clan. The Bungo army had in their possession European cannons which they called *kunikuzuri* (destroyer of provinces), and also benefitted from the support of the Jesuits. The Provincial Francisco Cabral together with a few Jesuits followed the Bungo army with the hope of converting the whole of Hyûga province, as promised by Ōtomo Sorin should he be victorious.

An example that shows how Fróis took great care in writing his manuscript is his depiction of the attempt to baptise Ōtomo Yoshimune's wife. According to Fróis, Yoshimune wanted his wife to be baptised in a quick and hushed ceremony before he departed for war. But the Jesuits considered this an opportunity to make a public display and desired the christening of the princess to be as public and ostentatious as possible rather than a hurried and closed-door ceremony, and to be taken as an example to be followed: '[the] Rainha aviaõ de ser exemplo, & espelho em tudo [...] que pelo tempo a diante se fossem fazendo Christãos.'⁷⁶⁹ In the letters, Fróis describes how Yoshimune showed a good predisposition towards the *padres* and Christianity, which is reiterated in the manuscript.⁷⁷⁰ In a letter he confides with Francisco Cabral how he manipulated the circumstances in their favour. Fróis had been tactfully delaying baptism for Yoshimune and his wife, stating: 'me ajudei dos meos que vossa reverencia sabe serem neccesarios pera com principes, & senhores grandes.'⁷⁷¹ But here the letter differs from the *História*. In the letter he tells Cabral that his aims were to

⁷⁶⁸ Valignano, *Advertimentos e Avisos*, p. 304.

⁷⁶⁹ Fróis to Francisco Cabral (Cuchinotsu, 10 December 1579) in Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 431r.

⁷⁷⁰ *História*, III, ch.1, p. 7.

⁷⁷¹ Fróis to Francisco Cabral (Kuchinotsu, 10 December 1579) in Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 431r.

increase the reputation of Christianity by making as public as possible the baptism of Yoshimune and his wife and by building a chapel within Usuki's fortress as a strong visual symbol of their adherence to Christianity. Yoshimune is depicted as being very anxious about the war and wishing for his wife to be baptised before his departure, 'elle dezejava grandemente deixá-la feita christã.'⁷⁷² In the *História* Fróis is very subtle and the postponement of baptism is due to 'righteous' reasons 'o Padre (Fróis) por muitos e justos respeitos lhe diffirio então o baptismo.'⁷⁷³ Yoshimune kept insisting that his wife should become a Christian, and in the end Fróis convinced him to build a chapel in the European style within the castle: 'tomei occassiao pera lhe dizer como os Reis & Rainhas estimavão em tanto o misterio da missa [...] que pera com mais facilidade poderem fazer isto tinhao igreja no paço.'⁷⁷⁴ Fróis is following a strategy, perhaps adapted to Japan and designed to accommodate the *senhores grandes*. Regarding how specific was this method Fróis does not go into detail, but clearly Cabral is fully aware of what Fróis was implying. We can infer from the above two tactical manoeuvres by Fróis with a similar aim. First, he delayed the baptism of the princess, since up until then their religious education had been secretive and low-profile, similar to Yoshimune's.⁷⁷⁵ The Jesuits encouraged the belief in the supernatural power of relics and Christian objects among the neophytes, which is depicted when Fróis describes how Ōmura Sumitada (Dom Bartholomeu), wore a gold cross that he believed 'por virtude daquella cruz que sempre trouxera comsigo, lhe tinha dado N. Senhor muitas victorias e livrado de muitos perigos.'⁷⁷⁶ In a letter, Fróis describes how Yoshimune wanted to see a relic of the True Cross – *lenho da Cruz* – a small piece of the cross upon which Jesus

⁷⁷² *História*, III, ch. 6, p. 45.

⁷⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁷⁷⁴ *História*, III, ch. 6, p. 45. See Fróis to Francisco Cabral (Cuchinotsu 10 December 1579) in Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 431r.

⁷⁷⁵ 'O principe o meteo (brother João de Torres) dentro de huma camara muito secreta e trouze alli a princeza sua mulher para juntamente com elle ouvir' see *História*, III, ch. 4, p. 30; see also *História*, III, ch. 6, p. 44.

⁷⁷⁶ Sumitada sent his cross to Cosme de Torres, hoping to receive another from him, see *História*, I, ch. 55, p. 393.

was crucified, that apparently the Jesuits had in Bungo, and he asked the *Padre* to tell the princes of a ‘certo milagre que a Cruz de Christo nosso Senhor fizera em Europa.’⁷⁷⁷ Fróis portrays Yoshimune as being apprehensive and keenly interested in miracles ‘E perguntou muito miudamente pela vida e *milagres* do P. Mestre Francisco.’⁷⁷⁸ Finally, Yoshimune was shown the relic as he knelt with his hands in the air and asked Fróis to put the relic on his head, saying ‘que se tinha por ditosso partirse pera guerra com adorar primeiro tal reliquia.’⁷⁷⁹ All of the above points towards Yoshimune believing in the power of the relic to protect him and to hand him victory in the battlefield. The prince is depicted as wishing to carry the relic on his neck as he was going to war, but he could not as he was not yet baptised. However, in the *História* some of the above description of events is missing, specifically the reasons for delaying the baptism of the princess and the relic of the True cross being put upon Yoshimune before war. The latter was most likely omitted because despite the alleged power of the relic, the Bungo army suffered a catastrophic defeat at the battle of Mimigawa.⁷⁸⁰ Pope Sixtus V sent a relic of the True Cross to Japan with the Tenshō embassy, and the Jesuits must have emphasised its potent powers as seen in Fróis’s depiction of the reaction of some Christian *daimyo* lords, such as Ōtomo Sorin who after enquiring about the relic called ‘felices aos que nesta vida alcansavão possuir tamanho thezouro.’⁷⁸¹ And when it was given to Arima Harunobu (Dom Protásio 1567-1612), he hoped ‘nella que os havia de livrar de todos estes perigos.’⁷⁸²

⁷⁷⁷ Fróis to Francisco Cabral (Kuchinotsu, 10 December 1579) in Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 430v.

⁷⁷⁸ My own emphasis, see *História*, III, ch. 4, p. 30.

⁷⁷⁹ Fróis to Francisco Cabral (Cuchinotsu 10 December 1579) in Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 432r. Even to this day during some important holy days, some *Kakure Kirishitan* put the relics ‘on a tray and held up to the believers’ foreheads so that the spiritual properties of these objects can be absorbed into the believers’ bodies’ see Dorothea Filus ‘Secrecy and *Kakure Kirishitan*’ in *Bulletin of Portuguese – Japanese Studies* [on line] 2003 [December] 20 August 2018, p. 98 <http://redalyc.org/artivculo.oa?id=36100705>.

⁷⁸⁰ On 10 December 1578. Pieces of the true cross were considered one of the most important relics of the time.

⁷⁸¹ *História*, III, ch. 3, p. 23.

⁷⁸² *História*, V, ch. 45, p. 345. Apparently Arima also ‘dizia que tremia de trazer couza tão santa ao pescoço, sendo elle tão peccador’ see *História*, V, ch. 44, p. 338.

Frois's second tactical manoeuvre regarding conversion from above, a chapel within the castle ground, was based on the fact that this was typical practice in Europe, and that in Bungo it would show the full endorsement of Christianity by the lord of the land and consequently of the conversion of his subjects.⁷⁸³ In the *História* the building of the chapel comes about almost organically as if the idea were born out of a conversation that led to the recommendation by Fróis that a chapel within a fortress was the usual practice among princes in Europe 'athé que se veio a tratar que seria bom no paço do Usuqui [Usuki] dentro na fortaleza, se fizesse huma capella.'⁷⁸⁴ But in the letter, Fróis states that he had been planning this: 'eu nisto pretendia tambem levalos a outra cosa que desejava.'⁷⁸⁵ Yoshimune's father – Ōtomo Sorin - had a Buddhist monastery built in front of Usuki's fortress when he gave his endorsement to the Zenshu Buddhist sect (Jenxus), and granted one of the highest incomes of the kingdom to the monks.⁷⁸⁶ In turn 'os fidalgos e senhores principaes do reino para mais agradarem a el-rey fazião-se jenxus, e outros persuadia elle que o fossem.'⁷⁸⁷ Therefore, Fróis was very conscious of what he was doing by persuading Yoshimune to build a Christian building within Usuki fortress. He must have expected the same outcome as above such as the receipt of a healthy stipend for the chapel and the conversion of the upper echelons of the Bungo society.

For the Christian clergy the most important aspect of the 'conversion from above' method was that for their main purpose – the salvation of souls – it facilitated the conversion of whole fiefdoms and thus the wider acceptance of Christianity. Fróis was well aware of this when he stated that by turning against Christianity Hideyoshi 'Perverteo e totalmente

⁷⁸³ 'Dizem que não ha duvida senão, que não ha de ficar pessoa nenhuma em todo Bungo que se não faça Christam' see Fróis to Francisco Cabral (Cuchinotsu, 10 December 1579) in Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 431v.

⁷⁸⁴ *História*, III, ch. 6, p. 45.

⁷⁸⁵ Fróis to Francisco Cabral (Kuchinotsu, 10 December 1579) in Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 431r.

⁷⁸⁶ 'No Usuqui defronte da sua Fortaleza fez outro mosteiro muito sumptuoso' see *História*, III, ch. 1, pp. 8-9.

⁷⁸⁷ *História*, III, ch. 1, p. 9.

impedio a mais effluente conversão [...] por estarem quatro ou cinco reynos na ultima dispozição para se converterem, pois já erão bautizados os senhores dos mesmos reynos.⁷⁸⁸ When in Yono the Christian *tono* Curondono (Kuroda) died and his wife became cold towards Christianity, Fróis explained that ‘os vassalos tamben despargirão e esfriarão, e alguns retrocederão.’⁷⁸⁹ He understood that once the lords of the land had converted, it was only a matter of time before their subjects would follow in a domino effect ‘porque, convertidos os nobres, a demais gente não tem difficuldade.’⁷⁹⁰ At the same time if the elites were not supportive or showed animosity very little could be accomplished.

III.2.3. Dealing with the elites

In 1550, Gaspar Barzeus wrote a letter in reply to António Gonçalves who wished to join the Society of Jesus. The former thanked him for his desire to follow him, but he warns Gonçalves of the difficulties that a missionary had to endure. Barzeus summarised that the *Companhia* consisted of three things: extreme poverty, extreme chastity, and extreme obedience. For extreme poverty, he explained, was understood ‘não ter dinheiro [...] homras, nen contentamentos do mundo no comer, beber, vistir, calçar e dormir [...] avorrecendo tudo, desejar de ser pobre.’⁷⁹¹ In practice, turning away or refusing honours proved very difficult, especially in Japan where the Jesuits operated without hope of political or military protection from either Portugal or Spain, and had to rely upon the patronage offered by the *daimyo* lords. The Jesuits were welcomed and honoured at the court of the most prominent lords of Japan, including Oda Nobunaga (織田 信長, 1534-82), and Toyotomi Hideyoshi (豊臣 秀, 1537-98). Nobunaga bestowed upon Valignano a very

⁷⁸⁸ *História*, IV, ch. 61, p. 481.

⁷⁸⁹ *História*, I, ch. 39, p. 268.

⁷⁹⁰ *História*, I, ch. 46, p. 324. See Alan Strathern, *Kingship and Conversion in Sixteenth-Century Sri Lanka: Portuguese Imperialism in a Buddhist Land* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 113.

⁷⁹¹ Gaspar Barzeus to Antonio Gonçalves (Ormuz, 1 October 1550) in *Documenta Indica*, II, p. 62.

expensive folding screen, *byobu*, one apparently coveted by the Japanese emperor himself. Nobunaga told Valignano that ‘this gift was a proof of his friendship for him and a public expression of the regard in which he held the fathers.’⁷⁹²

Fróis was conscious that being the recipients of such honours from Japanese lords could damage their reputation. After describing the public expression of Nobunaga’s regard, he emphasised that due to the Japanese reality the missionaries needed to accept the honours offered to them:

Pode-se aqui offerecer huma duvida a qualquer pessoa [...]: que sendo nos outros homens que professamos desprezo do mundo [...] e resignação de todas as honras e couzas temporaes, que nos moveo nesta carta recitar com tantas particularidades os gazalhados, favores e honras que deste rey gentio e dos de sua Corte recebemos, porque parece que explica-las tão diffuzamente esta indicando complacencia e gosto na mesma material.⁷⁹³

Fróis seems to be worried about hypocrisy, about following one rule in Europe and another in Japan. But by admitting and describing at length that they were held in such high regard, they were also leaving themselves open to criticism from European readers. For men who had forsaken worldly goods and effects, admitting in extensive and specific detail that they were the beneficiaries of such honours, that even lesser *daimyo* lords or high-level monks were not accorded, was likely to cause disapproval from within as well as from outside the Order, as it gave the erroneous impression that the Jesuits welcomed such treatment. In this passage Fróis pauses to explain why they accepted being honoured by Nobunaga, and how it was vital to their survival to find powerful allies. Realising that the often-detailed accounts describing the favours bestowed by Japanese lords could be misinterpreted, he explains that this was for the greater good. Without the protection of the ruling classes, Fróis felt that they

⁷⁹² See Schütte, *Valignano’s Mission Principles*, I, p. 128.

⁷⁹³ *História*, II, ch. 89, pp. 313-4.

would have fallen prey to their enemies. Schütte argues that it was precisely because of the hostility of their enemies, especially the Buddhist monks, that the Jesuits were encouraged to get closer to the ruling class in order to seek protection.⁷⁹⁴ However, this does not imply that the Jesuits neglected the common people.⁷⁹⁵

The Jesuits' elevated profile, thanks to the patronage received from *daimyo* lords, made them easy targets and they were accused by their Japanese adversaries of causing all kinds of disasters.⁷⁹⁶ Fróis wrote that in 1561, as Christianity began to spread in the Japanese capital under the guidance of Vilela, in a street of Kyoto called *Banochó*, a rumour instigated by the Buddhist monks began to circulate that the *Padre* 'havia de queimar todo Miaco [Kyoto] sem ficar caza nenhuma.'⁷⁹⁷ And as punishment of the Japanese Gods the monks said 'que dentro em tres annos havião de morrer os christãos.'⁷⁹⁸

In the six years that Torres stayed in Yamaguchi, the Jesuits made approximately two thousand conversions, though seemingly with much opposition from the monks. In 1556, when Mori Motonari (1497-1571) destroyed the city, Nunes Barreto wrote that the monks of Yamaguchi blamed the Jesuits for the wars: 'persuadem los bonzos al pueblo, que ha sucedido por los que se han hecho Christianos, y por nuestros padres, que tienen a sus dioses muy airados.'⁷⁹⁹ Fróis copies parts of this letter in the *História* using quotation marks, but silently adds *falsos* to 'seos *falsos* deozes mui irados.'⁸⁰⁰

⁷⁹⁴ Schütte, *Valignano's Mission Principles*, I, p. 113.

⁷⁹⁵ Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, p. 65.

⁷⁹⁶ In 1608, in Madurai the Caniachi from the Cokkanātan temple accused the Jesuit Nobili of causing drought, see Županov, *Disputed Mission*, pp. 202-3.

⁷⁹⁷ *História*, I, ch. 29, p. 194.

⁷⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

⁷⁹⁹ Nunes Barreto (Maestro Melchior) to the Brothers in Portugal (Cochin, 10 January 1558) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 77r.

⁸⁰⁰ My own emphasis, see *História*, I, ch. 16, p. 103. This addendum is particular to Fróis, to emphasise that they are not really gods but creations of the monks. This can be seen later in the same letter by Nunes Barreto printed in the Évora *Cartas* in 1598 where *falsos* is not present 'seos deozes estarem tão irados', see Nunes Barreto to the Brothers in Portugal (Cochin, 10 January 1558) in Évora *Cartas*, p. 49r. The same copyist, in

The *História* describes in many passages how the Jesuits were the recipients of great honours from Japanese lords, such as when the vice-provincial visited Ashikaga Yoshiaki, the former Shogun: ‘Foi o Padre [Coelho] visitá-lo com seo presente. Fez-lhe o Cubosama (Ashikaga Yoshiaki) extraordinarios gazalhados.’⁸⁰¹ Receiving public honours from *daimyo* lords had also the benefit of protecting the missionaries and deterring attacks by their many enemies. Public displays of friendship from *daimyo* lords and the receipt of honours had the effect of signalling that the missionaries were welcomed and served to dissuade their opponents from causing them harm. However, the Jesuits’ enemies accused them of causing catastrophe through arousing supernatural or divine revenge from the Japanese gods. According to Torres this unfavourable reputation already existed in 1551, when the Jesuits were in Yamaguchi. As the missionaries were trying to find refuge they passed near soldiers (*esquadrões de gente armada*) who blamed them for the disturbances of the land and wanted to kill them:

Dizião huns aos outros: «Matemos a estes tenchicujins, pois por sua cauza veio tanto mal: porque elles disserão que os fotoques se não poderão salvar a sy mesmos nem aos outros e, offendidos os fotoques disto, permitem esta guerra».⁸⁰²

Fróis made a few changes to Torres’s letter in his manuscript: Antonio is not mentioned in the *História*; *Chensicus* is changed to the most used form *tenchicujins*. Torres uses erroneously the term *Pagodes* which Fróis amends to *fotoques*; and Fróis changes *dioses* again for *fotoques*.⁸⁰³

the Évora *Cartas*, instead of using *persuadem* changes it for *publicar* which appears in neither the Alcalá nor in the *História* versions, see Nunes Barreto to the Brothers in Portugal (Cochin, 10 January 1558) in Évora *Cartas*, p. 49r.

⁸⁰¹ *História*, IV, ch. 52, p. 391. Fróis wrote that even though he had been deposed by this time (1587) Yoshiaki was still respected as a figure head after the Emperor, see *ibid.*, p. 391.

⁸⁰² *História*, I, ch. 7, p. 52. see Torres to Xavier (Bungo 20 October 1551) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 50r.

⁸⁰³ See Torres to Xavier (Bungo 20 October 1551) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 50r.

The inauspicious reputation that the missionaries began to gain can be appreciated in the *História*. Yokoseura, domain of Ômura Sumitada (Dom Bartolomeu), was a new port where the *nau* landed in 1562 and 1563 as the Portuguese merchants sought a safe harbour to protect their ship and its cargo, and where the Jesuits had built a church. In 1563, news came to Yokoseura that upheavals had begun in Ômura, and many pointed at the Jesuits as having caused this bad luck:

pela fama que os bonzos têm semeada: que não entramos em terra, que logo não seja destruída com guerras, alegando com certos logares, nos quaes estando alli os Padres, forão assolados, e alguns lhe dão credito.⁸⁰⁴

Ironically, that same year Yokoseura was *feita em cinza*.⁸⁰⁵ The missionaries were labelled as cursed by the monks, bringing misfortune wherever they went ‘dizem elles [monks] que tudo veio por nossa cauza.’⁸⁰⁶ The Jesuits, in turn, responded by writing an apologetic treaty in their defence, now seemingly lost, where they argued that calamities, upheavals, and wars had been very frequent in Japanese history before the ‘propagação do sagrado Evangelho’, and instead they lay the blame on the ‘false sects’ and on the ‘perversa e injusta persuacão dos bonzos.’⁸⁰⁷ Probably the same treatise, which Wicki thought was written by Vilela, is mentioned by Fróis in 1578, when he is talking to the prince Ôtomo Yoshimune of Bungo, prior to the destruction of his army by the *daimyo* of Satsuma Shimazu Yoshihisa:

Tendo o principe [...] mandado chamar o P.e Luiz Frois [...] pedio-lhe o Padre quizesse fazer ouvir [...] hum Tratado que se tinha feito de certas rezões em deffensa de nossa santa ley e de seos pregadores. E o que particularmente provavão era, como nem a ley de Deos nem os Padres erão cauza da destruição e guerras de Japão, porque isto principalmente nos impugnaõ os gentios, que todos os reinos onde entramos se assolavão e todos os senhores que nos favorecião e erão nossos deffensores ou

⁸⁰⁴ *História*, I, ch. 43, p. 295.

⁸⁰⁵ *História*, I, ch. 48, p. 339.

⁸⁰⁶ *História*, I, ch. 7, p. 53.

⁸⁰⁷ *História*, I, ch. 43, p. 295.

perdião seos estados, honras e dignidades, ou ficavão destruidos, e isto dizem elles que hé castigo dos camis e fotoques.⁸⁰⁸

Interestingly, Fabian Fucan in his refutations (1620) gave the example of the demise of Ōtomo Sōrin, arguing that while Sōrin relied on the ‘gods and buddhas’ his military power spread throughout Kyūshū but once he converted to Christianity ‘his military fortune deserted him.’⁸⁰⁹

One interesting feature of the *História* is the amount of time Fróis devotes to Luís de Almeida. Almeida was heavily criticised by fellow Jesuits for his hospital in Funai, as discussed in chapter II, but among the sources that Fróis used most frequently in the *História* are Almeida’s letters (see Appendix 1). Fróis is full of praise for his compatriot: ‘huma das mais fortes colunas, e hum dos melhores obreiros que em quarenta annos passarão a Japam.’⁸¹⁰ The profile depicted in the *História* is of someone trustworthy, a reliable agent entrusted with the reconnaissance of new missionary fields ‘por elle ser o primeiro que descobria as portas da conversão com muitos trabalhos e perigos seos.’⁸¹¹ Superiors of the Japanese mission believed that Almeida had a natural disposition for new enterprises.⁸¹² He was a successful merchant in Asia before joining the Society in Japan. Perhaps this background helped him in the use of diplomacy to deal with traders and nobles from different lands and to negotiate difficult situations. We see a similar example in the case of Fernão Mendes Pinto who Rebecca Catz considered ‘um diplomata consumado.’⁸¹³ According to the former’s *Peregrinação*, he managed to navigate many perilous situations

⁸⁰⁸ *História*, III, ch. 9, p. 67.

⁸⁰⁹ *Refutation of Deus*, trans. by Hibbard, pp. 6-8.

⁸¹⁰ *História*, I, ch. 8, p. 60.

⁸¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

⁸¹² *História*, II, ch. 81, p. 222.

⁸¹³ See *Cartas de Fernão Mendes Pinto*, ed. by Catz, p. 14.

and often was sent to establish diplomatic contacts. One of these is precisely as a Jesuit novice in the ambassadorial mission to Japan:

Vai [Mendes Pinto] ainda con seus vestidos ricos e há-de apresentar a embaixada e negociar a coisas que pertencem ao serviço de Deus con toda *polícia cortesana*, diante daqueles reis de Japão, de que é mui conhecido, e para que tenha mais autoridade a embaixada e nos possamos melhor negociar com aqueles reis.⁸¹⁴

The above paragraph from Nunes Barreto signals the benefit, which the Jesuits had already recognised by 1554, of a person knowing how to deal appropriately with the *reis* of Japan.

In 1563, when Almeida visited the *tono* of Ximabara, Fróis writes that the latter was so impressed:

admirando-se, sendo homem estrangeiro, de o achar tão versado e corrente nos costumes e policia da *gente nobre* de Japão, por serem raras as pessoas que, nas taes cerimonias e pontualidades, sejam expeditos.⁸¹⁵

Seventeen years after the beginning of the mission, this predisposition is displayed in Almeida's account copied in the *História*,

Chegamos a [...] Goto [...] e quiz logo fazer saber ao tono [...] como hé costume da terra, mas não desembarquei até saber sua vontade. Responderão-me que o tono não estava na vila [...] e assim me foi forçado estar hum dia e huma noite esperando no paró que viesse [...] me consolou o Senhor com vir-me hum recado do tono [...] que dezejava que logo desembarcasse [...] Eu [Almeida] o fui vizitar com a mais autoridade que pude, porque elles segundo o exterior assim têm em estimação as pessoas. E [...] logo me tornou a vizitar, agradecendo-me a visita que lhes tinha feita. E acabados nossos cumprimentos por então [...] por ser este tempo perto de seo anno novo, em que todos andão ocupados, não lhes pregamos [...] porque [...] não tinha ainda licença, e depois da festa não se falla em couzas da salvação por quinze dias, por se não lembrarem da morte, nem de couzas que lhes cauzem tristeza.⁸¹⁶

⁸¹⁴ Nunes Barreto to Loyola (Cochin, May 1554) in *ibid.*, p. 26-7. Mendes Pinto was also bringing 'umas armas mui ricas e outras peças' p. 26.

⁸¹⁵ My own emphasis, see *História*, I, ch. 44, p. 302.

⁸¹⁶ *História*, II, ch. 69, pp. 124-5. See also Alcalá *Cartas*, pp. 251r-51v.; Évora *Cartas*, pp. 214r-14v. Fróis writes that talking about death was avoided among Japanese non converts: '(A Japanese Christian) sempre fallava da morte, sendo pratica que os gentios abominão' see *História*, II, ch. 65, p. 92.

By this time, Almeida was well-versed in Japanese customs and their strict social etiquette. He was aware of the need to constrain evangelical zeal by respecting local customs and following protocol. These efforts were appreciated by the Japanese in return. Here Fróis describes Almeida demonstrating not only his sound knowledge of Japanese culture and considerable tact, but also gives a lesson in diplomacy to future Jesuits. This underlines a key reason behind Fróis approach. The above description is in stark contrast to Xavier's approach which was merely touched upon in the first chapters of the *História*. For example, after Xavier was dismissed by the daimyo of Yamaguchi Ōuchi Yoshitaka for condemning the sin of sodomy amongst the Japanese people, without wasting any time the next day and with Fernandes as his interpreter, 'sem esperar por mais chapa nem licença d'el-rey, determinou o Padre de pregar pelas ruas de Yamanguchi.'⁸¹⁷ Another example is Fróis's description of the coming and going of Xavier 'sem ser convidado dos bonzos nem chamado' in the Buddhist monasteries of Kagoshima. Lisón Tolosana analyses this passage as Xavier feeling at ease in this cultural encounter: '[Xavier] Está realmente en su ambiente.'⁸¹⁸ But my reading of this passage is that Fróis is actually silently critical of such behavior, because Xavier's behavior is not repeated by the missionaries. As always, Fróis does not directly criticise his coreligionist in his manuscript; but preaching is subsequently described as occurring in churches or in the Jesuit houses, sometimes in the converts' or would-be converts' houses, but not standing at the crossroads of a city and without the permission of the local lord. Also, as described in Almeida's behavior, when visiting non-converts, and even converts, the Jesuits followed the Japanese strict social protocols such as requesting an audience, bringing gifts, and respecting the local culture.

⁸¹⁷ *História*, I, ch. 3, p. 32.

⁸¹⁸ Tolosana, *La Fascinación de la Diferencia*, p. 24.

While on the one hand Fróis attempts to explain how far the Jesuits have progressed through being welcomed by the Lords of Japan, on the other he was aware that detailing such favours could be misinterpreted as their indulgence in such treatment, or worse still as a deviation from their ministry. In seeking the support of the ruling classes in Japan the Jesuits often became embroiled in political issues, and if they did not intentionally deviate from their ministry, they certainly walked a fine line and undeniably occasionally crossed it. Indeed, the Jesuits themselves criticised their own brethren for such inappropriate behaviour.⁸¹⁹ But under extreme circumstances, some Jesuits proved to be sympathetic, even favourable, to political intrusions. Having achieved the patronage or indeed merely the friendly reception of powerful lords in Japan was a huge step for their survival and the advancement of the mission. Fróis was fully aware of the importance of daimyo patronage, constantly writing that without the support of the lords of the land their enemies would kill them.

III.3. Non-Christians and converts

III.3.1 The bonzes

The way in which Fróis presents non-Christians is revealing. Here focus is given to the description of how the Jesuits approached the Japanese monks, as they were considered key elements in the conversion process of Japan because of their authority over the populace. Due to the missionaries' disputes, teachings, and violent acts a mutual hatred grew between both clergies, which could be observed in the missionaries' descriptions of the monks; these monks are said to have attacked the missionaries.⁸²⁰

⁸¹⁹ Moran, *The Japanese and the Jesuits*, p. 72. See also Joseph Jennes, *A History of the Catholic Church in Japan* (Tokyo: Oriens Institute for Religious Research, 1973), pp. 58-61.

⁸²⁰ Xavier wrote about the hostility of the monks of Kagoshima, see Xavier to the Jesuits in Europe (Cochin, 29 January 1552), in *X. Cartas*, p. 388.

It is clear that at the beginning of the mission, many of the monks, as much as the lay people were friendly towards the missionaries. But the description of the Japanese Buddhist monks in sixteenth-century Jesuit writing is meant to be edifying. It is divided mainly between the description of the immoral and vicious enemy and those who, recognising their ‘errors,’ convert or at least are friendly to the missionaries. From the very beginning, Xavier describes the monks as committing more sins than the lay Japanese.⁸²¹ The monks are considered depraved people, especially for committing the sin of sodomy. On the other hand, Xavier considered Ninjit, the superior of the Zen Buddhist temple Fukushô-ji, his friend, even though the latter never converted: ‘he tanto meu amigo, que he maravilha.’⁸²² Fróis also ascribes good qualities to Ninjit, even though he never personally met him: ‘naturalmente homem affavel, benigno e inclinado a obras de piedade, e tinha outras boas partes naturaes.’⁸²³ However, despite acknowledging Ninjit’s virtues, Fróis condemns him to the inferno for not converting: ‘mizeravel e infelicemente, hir desembarcar no inferno.’⁸²⁴

One of the first approaches used by the Jesuits in Japan was to follow Xavier’s initiative of engaging in disputations with the monks in order to convince them of their errors and to convert them to Christianity. A disputation was an academic exercise, a debate of a thesis.⁸²⁵ Henrique Henriques, full of confidence from his mastering of the Malabar language and the legitimacy of the Gospel demanded: ‘Ayuntense 100 y 200 bragmanes de los vuestros

⁸²¹ Cooper, ‘The Early Jesuits in Japan and Buddhism’, in *Portuguese Voyages*, ed. by Milward, pp. 147-8.

⁸²² Xavier to the brothers in Goa (Kagoshima, 5 November 1549), in Évora *Cartas*, I, pp. 9v-10r. See Xavier to the brothers in Goa (Kagoshima, 5 November 1549) in *X. Cartas*, p. 357.

⁸²³ *História*, I, ch. 2, p. 26.

⁸²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁸²⁵ Famously Martin Luther (1483-1546) demanded a disputation on his 95 theses or *Disputatio pro declaratione virtutis indulgentiarum* (31 October 1517), on the 95 theses by Luther see Michael Mullett, *Martin Luther* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 67-76.

Padres, muy viejos y de mucho saber, y yo solo, mancebo como soy, quiero disputar con ellos y hacerles conocer la verdad.⁸²⁶

The monks were considered intelligent, reasonable, and well educated. As a former university student from the University of Paris, where he would have engaged in scholarly debates, Xavier showed confidence in his knowledge and the ‘truth’ of his Christian doctrine to defeat the Buddhist scholars.⁸²⁷ Xavier noted that due to the answers that they gave to the Japanese regarding the Earth’s shape (redondo), the course of the sun, comets, lightning, rain and snow they were considered ‘hombres doctos, lo que ayudo un poco para dar credito a nuestras palabras.’⁸²⁸ The Jesuits considered that if their counterparts converted to Christianity the laity would follow, due to the credit and prestige that the monks enjoyed among the Japanese society.

The monks, following their long tradition, welcomed debate with the missionaries; this was taken by the Jesuits as a sign of true interest and a desire to know the ‘true God’. But debate has figured prominently in the history of Buddhism even from its beginnings. Born in a multireligious environment in India, the Buddha was both confronted by the other religious teachers and often challenged to defend his teachings against his rivals. Religious disputations among Buddhist monks were very common during the *sengoku jidai*.⁸²⁹ The Yamaguchi sectarian debates ‘Yamaguchi no shūron’ between the monks and Juan Fernandes is described by the latter in a letter to Xavier in 1551.⁸³⁰ According to Fróis in 1558 the Japanese brother Lourenço (1526?-92) defeated a monk who was preventing and

⁸²⁶ Henrique Henriques to Loyola and the Jeuit in Europe (Vembar, 31 October 1548) in *Documenta Indica*, I, p. 288.

⁸²⁷ One of the most influential Christian theology books in the early modern period, the *Summa Theologiae*, was written in the form of disputations by Thomas Aquinas (1225-74) who was also a student and teacher of the University of Paris.

⁸²⁸ Xavier to his companions in Europe (Cochin, 29 January 1552) in *X. Cartas*, p. 393.

⁸²⁹ See Lamers, *Japonius Tyrannus*, p. 180.

⁸³⁰ *A Cultural History of Japanese Buddhism*, eds. by William E. Deal and Brian Ruppert (Chichester: Wiley, 2015), p. 179.

prohibiting people from converting to Christianity in the lands of Don Antonio (Koteda Yasumasa) retainer of Matsura Takanobu (松浦 隆信, 1529 - 99) of Hirado. Instead of stripping the cloak (coromo) as was the custom in Japan ‘quando algum fica vencido em disputa acerca das seitas [...] que hé grandissimo abatimento e vituperio do vencido’ brother Lourenço was happy ‘com saberem todos que se dava elle [the monk] por vencido.’⁸³¹ Organtino wrote about the disputation in Azuchi in front of Nobunaga between ‘fotqueixos & Iodoxós.’⁸³² The Jesuits encouraged these disputations with the purpose of convincing the populace through first the conversion of the highly esteemed and respected Buddhist priests. This approach is corroborated by Luís de Almeida who on his first visit to Kagoshima in 1562 wrote that he tried to convert using this method:

Gentiles me venian a oyr muy pocos, porque obedecen mucho en esta tierra a sus Bonzos [...] Esto me hizo tomar amistad, y travar conversacion con algunos Bonzos principales: para ver, si teniendo alguna entrada con ellos, y procurandolos induzir a la verdad, la podria tambien tener con el pueblo que tan sujeto les esta.⁸³³

Here Almeida directly points to the influence that the monks exercised on the Japanese population. He understood that by making an effort and gaining the sympathy and the friendship of the monks some advancement could be achieved. While some monks converted to Catholicism, this method did not turn out to be the most effective, as some monks later developed a hatred for the Jesuits and became their most staunch opponents.⁸³⁴ C.R. Boxer argues that the hatred the Jesuits felt towards the monks was *odium theologicum*, in other words enmity born out of the heated theological disputes between the Christian and Buddhist clerics. The ‘cultural dialogue’ that occurred between the Japanese people and the

⁸³¹ *História*, I, ch. 18, p. 119. Lourenço, the almost blind troubadour born in Hizen, baptised by Xavier in 1551, became a Jesuit brother in 1558, and was instrumental to the Japanese mission. Pacheco argues that Lourenço was born in Hirado, see Pacheco, *El Hombre que Forjó a Nagasaki*, p. 31.

⁸³² Organtino to Fróis (Kyoto, 1579) in Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 450r.

⁸³³ Almeida to the Fathers and Brothers of the Society of Jesus (25 October 1562) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 127r.

⁸³⁴ Such as Fukun, see *Refutation of Deus*, trans. by Hibbard, pp. xii-xiii.

missionaries was heavily influenced by Jesuit zealotry. As noted by Rubiés, the literary form of this dialogue had its roots in the classical culture.⁸³⁵ Cicero recommended the kind of rhetoric one should use with the enemy: ‘We shall force hatred (odium) upon them by adducing some base, high-handed, treacherous, cruel, impudent, malicious, or shameful act of theirs.’⁸³⁶ Schurhammer observed that Fróis ‘ao falar dos bonzos emprega palavras azedas e duras.’⁸³⁷ The enmity was reciprocated between monks and Jesuits, and this is clearly seen in the *História*, aggravated by the fact that the Jesuits initially were mistaken for Buddhist monks.⁸³⁸ There is an undeniable display of animosity, one that seems to intensify into loathing as years go by, which can be appreciated in the pages of the *História*.

The agency given to the monks by the Jesuits is one of being aware of the Christian ‘truth’ but because of the worldly benefits which they received, these monks cannot abandon their errors; Fróis relates what some monks seemingly told Belchior de Figueiredo: ‘tendes rezão [...] que nossas seitas não são nada, antes enganozas, mas nós as não podemos deixar, por não deixar juntamente com ellas as rendas de que nos sustentamos.’⁸³⁹ In the first part of the *História* Fróis devoted 22 chapters to Buddhism, but unfortunately only the titles of these chapters have survived.⁸⁴⁰ And although these two groups of religious clerics, the Jesuits and the Buddhist monks, shared similar interests, a real enmity developed between them which is transmitted by the letters and through the *História*. Fróis copies a letter by Nunes Barreto who argued: ‘me parece que hum dos maiores impedimentos, que temos contra a

⁸³⁵ Joan-Pau Rubiés, ‘Real and imaginary dialogues in the Jesuit mission of Sixteenth-Century Japan’, in *JESHO*, 55/2-3 (2012), 447-94 (448). Fróis details the humanistic studies the Jesuits studied in Goa: ‘Nos estudos de humanidade ahí tres clases [...] Começou agora por S. Lucas a ler na sua classe rhetorica, pela menha lê ad Herenyum com huma oração de Cicero, e, à tarde, hum dia Salustio de Bello Iugurtino e otro dia Virgilio’ see Fróis to Francisco Rodrigues (Goa, 30 November 1557) in *Documenta Indica*, III, pp. 704-5.

⁸³⁶ See Cicero, *Ad C. Herennium*, pp. 15-7.

⁸³⁷ In his introduction to the *História do Japão*, pp. XVI-XVII.

⁸³⁸ Boxer, *The Christian Century*, p. 64.

⁸³⁹ *História*, II, ch. 64, p. 86. See Figueiredo to the Fathers and Brothers of the Society (22 October 1565) in Alcalá *Cartas*, pp. 238v-9v.

⁸⁴⁰ Cooper, ‘The Early Jesuits in Japan and Buddhism’, in *Portuguese Voyages*, ed. by Milward, p. 150.

pregação do Evangelho, são estes ministros do demonio.⁸⁴¹ ‘Ministers of the devil’ was a typical description used by missionaries to describe clerics from other religions whom they encountered. The monks were also considered an ‘integral element in the theory of diabolic imitation.’⁸⁴² We see this not only in Japan but also in other parts of the world and in different religious orders. In Pernambuco, António Pires called the *feiticeiros* ‘legos ministros de Satanás.’⁸⁴³ It was indeed routine to dismiss any religion outside Christianity as originating from Lucifer. This is not surprising as the Jesuits considered the Japanese gods an invention of the Devil which implied that the Japanese clergy venerated the Devil: ‘camis, que erão invensões do demonio.’⁸⁴⁴

It can be deduced, by noting the great respect with which the monks were considered in spite of their lives not being models of appropriate behaviour, that Xavier was hinting at how much more highly the Christian priests would be regarded, as in his opinion their behaviour was more pious and their religion holier and righteous. Xavier referred to the Japanese Buddhist nuns as *bonzas*, but Fróis gives them the appropriate name: ‘elles chamão bicunins.’⁸⁴⁵ These nuns received the same treatment as their male counterparts. Fróis describes the *Bikuni* as ‘mulher rapada como freira’ and instruments of the Devil, as well as living appalling lives: ‘são freiras no nome mas abominaveis na vida.’⁸⁴⁶ But unlike the monks they are barely mentioned in the *História*.

Among the Buddhist sects, ‘perversas ceitas’, Fróis differentiates between those who were easier to convert and those who proved more difficult. This was based on the study and

⁸⁴¹ Nunes Barreto continues arguing that Xavier ‘a estes (monks) tinha pelos maiores contraditores’ see *História*, I, ch. 16, p. 106.

⁸⁴² Barreto and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, p. 130.

⁸⁴³ António Pires to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Pernambuco, 2 August 1551) in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, II, p. 253.

⁸⁴⁴ *História*, I, ch. 22, p. 138.

⁸⁴⁵ *História*, V, ch. 31, p. 244.

⁸⁴⁶ *História*, I, ch. 39, p. 267.

observations of their Japanese counterparts. According to the author the worst sect in the missionaries' views were the followers of Nichiren lineage of Buddhism, founded by the Japanese Buddhist monk Nichiren Xonin (1222-82). Fróis called the sect Hokke-shū '[*Foquexus*] a mais perversa e maldita seita que há em Japão [...] destes poucos se fazem christãos, e são grandissimos inimigos de nossa santa ley.'⁸⁴⁷ These monks are the ones who most strongly condemned and persecuted Christianity, and Fróis does not pull any punches when he describes them 'entre todos os outros são os mais distraidos, e que pior vivem que todos os outros [...] são os mais duros e difficultozos de entrarem no gremio da Igreja catholica.'⁸⁴⁸

The Zen sect was, according to Fróis, the one mostly followed by the warrior classes: 'seguem commumente os fidalgos para que, extinguido o remorcio da consciencia, vivão libertos e conforme a seos apetitos.'⁸⁴⁹ Since this sect - *jenxus* [*Zenshu*] did not believe in the afterlife 'mais que nascer e morrer, e que não há outra vida, nem castigo de males, nem remuneração dos bens', he argues that it liberated them from feeling guilty for their sins.⁸⁵⁰ More importantly, as these monks, nuns and their followers did not believe in the immortality of the soul, God, the glory of heaven or the sorrows of hell, it took longer to convert them: 'era necessario mais tempo para desbaratar e desfazer as rochas de sua infedelidade e ignorancia.'⁸⁵¹ From 1581, when Valignano wrote his *Advertimentos e Avisos*, the Zen monks became the Jesuits' external model to follow in Japan. Valignano considered that if the *Padres* could achieve the respect that the Zen monks had attained, this would facilitate conversion.

⁸⁴⁷ *História*, IV, ch. 47, p. 350.

⁸⁴⁸ The hokke-shū see *História*, I, ch. 27, pp. 180-1. 'Foquexus, que hé a mais dura e perversa seita de Japão' see *História*, IV, ch. 27, p. 219.

⁸⁴⁹ *História*, III, ch. 26, p. 23.

⁸⁵⁰ *História*, I, ch. 2, p. 26.

⁸⁵¹ *História*, III, ch. 32, p. 267.

The Ikkō-Ikki (single minded school) adhering to the Jōdo-shinshū (The True Pure land) school were a militant Buddhist movement that were eventually defeated by Nobunaga. Called the *Icoxos* in the *História*; according to Fróis Hideyoshi considered Christianity worse than this sect for the peace of the *Tenca*.⁸⁵² This rhetorical comparison used by Hideyoshi was damning. The *Icoxos* were considered an obstacle to the unification of Japan and Nobunaga fought a long battle against them, eventually defeating them.

Fróis does not waste any opportunity to attack the monks who are described as constantly trying to derail the Jesuits' efforts. He saw the *bonzos* as a major obstacle to the conversion of Japan, and the constant feuds and arguments with them are depicted in the *História* as an ongoing battle between the forces of good and evil.

Here it will be worth attending to Fróis's word choice as a means of evoking emotion in the reader, as an appeal to *pathos*. Grant Boswell argues that scholarly analysis must try to uncover the objectives and strategies that the Jesuits themselves would have recognised.⁸⁵³ Wicki noticed that, for example, Fróis adds the word *intrinseco* quite often, but does not develop further the context in which he uses it.⁸⁵⁴ Upon reviewing the cases in which Fróis uses or adds the word *intrinseco* in the *História*, one finds that this expression is mostly employed in relation to the hatred that the monks and certain Japanese individuals exhibit towards Christianity. In fact, Fróis often uses this word just before or after the word *odio* or a synonym thereof.⁸⁵⁵ The construing of the monks as an enemy to be conquered, and the amplification of the hatred felt by the monks, were intended to further motivate and inspire

⁸⁵² 'Nossa ley hé ainda peor para a paz da Tenca que a seita dos icoxos' see *História*, IV, ch. 59, p. 463. 'Icoxûs' in the *Évora Cartas*, II, p. 229r.

⁸⁵³ Boswell, 'Letter Writing', in *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 247-262.

⁸⁵⁴ *História*, I, ch. 10, p. 69.

⁸⁵⁵ Such as *odio intrinseco* in vol. I ch. 35, p. 233; II, ch. 76, p. 189; ch. 108, p. 452; III, ch. 1, p. 9; ch. 2, p. 12; and *intrinseco odio* in vol. I, ch 45, p. 316; ch 50, p. 348; II, ch. 113, p. 483; III, ch. 7, p. 54; IV, ch. 9, p. 69.

would-be missionaries to go to Japan, and to give grandeur to missionary struggles. As an extrapolation, by depicting certain Japanese individuals as possessed of a malicious nature he concludes that therefore they would inevitably hate and oppose Christianity.

By comparing the sources used by Fróis in his *História*, one finds that he is deliberately adding the word *intrinseco* with a clear rhetorical objective. He describes these individuals as having an innate enmity towards Christianity; given their very own ‘bad’ nature they are compelled to feel animosity toward the missionaries, as in the following example: ‘Tavara no Chicacata [Tawara Shikasada] senhor [...] rico, cobiçozo [...] o primeiro ou 2.º depois de sua irmã Jezabel, dos que mais *intrinseco* odio tinham à ley de Deos e à obra da conversão.’⁸⁵⁶

In his attempt to engage his audience’s emotions, Fróis uses an ethical appeal by first describing certain individuals with a nefarious nature, followed by their opposition to Christianity. Fróis exercises a moral judgement; intrinsic evil is invoked to emphasise that these individuals’ acts are not morally justified.

As one approaches this manuscript, we must remember how the Jesuits understood the use of rhetoric and how Fróis uses his text to persuade his readers.⁸⁵⁷ For example, in the *Alcalá Cartas*, Pedro de Alcáçova’s describes the *bonzos* as *malos*, but for more impact, Fróis changes *malos* for *pessimos* to this letter in his narrative:

Alcalá Cartas

Porque los bonzos de esta tierra
(que son muchos y muy malos) nos
quieren mal.⁸⁵⁸

História

Os bonzos daquela cidade de
Funai erão *pessimos* e querião mal
aos nossos.⁸⁵⁹

⁸⁵⁶ *História*, II, ch. 113, p. 483.

⁸⁵⁷ Boswell, ‘Letter Writing’ in *Huntington Library Quarterly*, p. 262.

⁸⁵⁸ *Alcalá Cartas*, p. 55v.

⁸⁵⁹ My own emphasis, see *História*, I, ch. 10, p. 69.

Likewise, in the Évora *Cartas*, when an ex-monk, Yacuin (Tocuun), was sent to Arima to procure mistresses for Hideyoshi, the girls he found were Christians and resisted, and as a consequence Yacuin developed a hatred towards the Christians. In the *História*, Fróis changes the wording:

Évora *Cartas*

Ficou este gentio frustado de seu desejo [...] que logo disse con muita ira, [...] elle faria [...] que não ouvesse daqui a diamte em Iapão, nem Christandade, nem tal doutrina.⁸⁶⁰

História

Indignou-se muito o velho e, como era *intrinseco* inimigo dos christaons [...] disse [...] que elle trabalharia [...] que extinguisse a christandade que já era feita.⁸⁶¹

As seen by the above example, by adding the word *intrinseco*, Fróis is able to develop a more convincing rhetorical appeal. Since the Gospel was intrinsically good, those who opposed it could naturally only be bad.

Fróis fails, however, to directly specify that the enmity was obviously stimulated by the antagonistic approach of the Jesuits themselves. When he does mention this approach, he describes it as a triumph of Christianity: ‘estava alli (Kyoto) hum Padre do Tenjicu, que reprovava sem nenhuma excição todas as seitas de Japão.’⁸⁶² And the destruction of Buddhist property for the missionaries’ benefit:

Era grande a destruição [...] em as varelas e mosteiros dos bonzos [...] seos idolos derribados [...] erãõ forçados fugirem [...] obrigarem-nos que com suas proprias mãos derribassem os fotoques e os templos, para que a madeira delles se levasse ao edificio da igreja.⁸⁶³

⁸⁶⁰ Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 23r.

⁸⁶¹ My own emphasis, see *História*, IV, ch. 53, p. 400.

⁸⁶² *História*, I, ch. 27, p. 175.

⁸⁶³ *História*, III, ch. 5, pp. 39-40.

By Fróis's own admission, the arrival of the Christian missionaries signified the ruin of some monks and their monasteries.⁸⁶⁴ Despite the monks having very good reasons to dislike the missionaries, he portrays their hatred as from within, intrinsic to the 'ministers of the devil'. I now turn my attention to Fróis's representation of those outside the church.

III.3.2 Non-Christians and the enemies of Christianity

When writing *historia sacra*, authors of the Renaissance looked at the biblical past in search of inspiration and of analogies with the primitive church.⁸⁶⁵ Writers also combined these analogies with an influx of classical texts. The rhetoric used by Fróis in writing his manuscript seems to follow Quintilian's advice that the writing of history should not be dry.⁸⁶⁶ To some extent such advice gave him some literary license when he felt emphasis was needed to drive home the point. In describing the enemies of Christianity Fróis indulges in rhetorical flourish. For example, the Satsuma clan are not just described as the enemies of Christianity: 'Sacçuma, que hé o reyno dos mais intrinsecos e figadaes inimigos que a ley de Deos tem em Jappão.'⁸⁶⁷ His narrative depicts those who opposed or committed a crime against a Christian, missionary, or the Church in a very unfavorable and hostile way. We see very little of Luke 6. 27 in the *História*.⁸⁶⁸ Instead, the author follows Cicero's rhetorical

⁸⁶⁴ Among the issues mentioned by Toyotomi Hideyoshi in his edict expelling the missionaries appears the destruction of Buddhist temples and houses: 'Diz o tirano no edicto [...] que nos lansa de Japão [...] porque pregamos contra as seitas dos camis e fotoques seos idolos [que] ab initio adorão os japoens, destruindo seos templos e cazas' see *História*, IV, ch. 59, p. 463.

⁸⁶⁵ See Simon Ditchfield, 'What Was Sacred History? (Mostly Roman) Catholic Uses of the Christian Past after Trent' in *Sacred History: Uses of the Christian Past in the Renaissance World*, eds. by Katherine Van Liere, Simon Ditchfield, and Howard Louthan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 73-96.

⁸⁶⁶ Quintilian, *On the Teaching of Speaking and Writing, Translations from Books One, Two and Ten of the Institutio Oratoria*, eds. by James J. Murphy & Cleve Wiese (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2016), 2nd edn., book II, pp. 98-9. On how missionaries and writers in the sixteenth century used classical concepts to forge new understandings see Sabine MacCormack, *On the Wings of Time: Rome, the Incas, Spain, and Peru* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007).

⁸⁶⁷ See *História*, IV, ch. 29, p. 216.

⁸⁶⁸ 'Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you'.

advice: ‘We shall bring our adversaries into contempt by presenting their idleness, cowardice, sloth, and luxurious habits.’⁸⁶⁹ Indeed, the missionaries’ adversaries are described in such a way with the aim of evoking an emotional reaction from the reader. After the eviction decree by Hideyoshi, Fróis proceed to compare the hegemon to the enemies of the primitive church: ‘em seo genero [Hideyoshi] não hé inferior aos crueis tiranos e pristinos perseguidores da primitiva Igreja, senão quanto em algumas couzas parece que os excede.’⁸⁷⁰

The Bible and the history of the early church provide abundant examples of characters hostile toward the church. The names of these individuals carry with them high-inference meaning. Fróis’s appeal to *logos* is marked by a series of comparisons with historical or biblical events. In this section, we shall examine how he presents the enemies of the mission through the use of analogies with classical and biblical characters in order to stress and emphasise his point.

Ōtomo Sōrin’s third wife whom he married in 1550 is only known by the derogatory label of *Jezabel*.⁸⁷¹ In the bible Jezebel was the Phoenician wife of king Ahab; she was a pagan who encouraged the cult of Baal in Israel.⁸⁷² She is synonymous with idolatry and infamous for persecuting and killing prophets of Yahweh. With a characteristic rhetorical flourish Fróis described Sōrin’s wife:

(Jezabel) sobremaneira ella era intimamente affeçoada ao culto e veneração dos camis e fotoques [...] hia pelo contrario crescendo [...] o *odio intrinseco* que tinha

⁸⁶⁹ See Cicero, *Ad C. Herennium: De Ratione Dicendi* (Rhetorica ad Herennium), trans. by Harry Caplan (London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1964), p. 17. The authorship of *Ad Herennium* is still disputed by scholars.

⁸⁷⁰ *História*, IV, ch. 61, p. 482.

⁸⁷¹ Her real name is unknown. Jezabel was the daughter of Nata Akimoto, on the marriages of Ōtomo Sōrin see Kataoka Chizuko, ‘Ōtomo Sōrin no konin-mondai (The Marriage Problem of Ōtomo Sōrin)’, *Kirishitan-bunka-kenkyūkai kaihō* 11 (1968) 19-35. Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier*, IV, p. 254. Haruka Nawata Ward, *Women Religious Leaders in Japan's Christian Century, 1549-1650* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate publishing, 2009).

⁸⁷² Reference to Jezebel in the Bible see 1 Kings 18. 4; 21. 5-16; 19. 1; 21. 23; 21. 25; 2 Kings 9. 7; 9. 10; 9. 22; 9. 30-37; Revelations 2. 20.

a todas as couzas de nossa santa fé e aos christãos, dessuadindo [...] e fazendo instancia com os já baptizados que tornassem atraz [...] se diante della vinhão alguns christãos com contas e veronicas ou reliquias ao pescoço, alevantava-se donde estava assentada e com grande indignação lhas tomava e as metia no fogo. Acumulando crimes e falsidades contra a ley de Deos e contra a Igreja [...] contra os Padres.⁸⁷³

Fróis paraphrases his own letter written in 1578, but he adds in the *História* that for all the above reasons ‘he vierão *os christãos* a chamar J[e]zabel, de maneira que fallando della se corre com este nome.’⁸⁷⁴ It is known that the missionaries called her by this epithet, and he felt here that it was necessary to explain how she received such an appellation.⁸⁷⁵ Biblical Jezebel is not a very important figure in the Scriptures and the Japanese converts would have had to be very conversant with the Old Testament to make a direct comparison between both women. According to Mayu Fujikawa, the historian Ide Katsumi found that the Jesuits taught Japanese seminary students only the basics of religious and philosophical ideas.⁸⁷⁶ Therefore, it is unlikely that it was the local Christians who came up with this sobriquet and more plausible that it was started by the missionaries.⁸⁷⁷

In the Bible, for those who have lived in defiance of God, at the time of death sorrow is a common denominator, as in (Psalms 116. 3) ‘The sorrows of death encompassed me, and the pains of hell got hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow.’ For the wicked, their deaths are usually portrayed as full of anguish, misery, and pain followed by the beginning of an eternity of torment. Jezebel suffered a terrible death, thrown from a window, her body

⁸⁷³ *História*, III, ch. 2, pp. 12-3. ‘Jezebel – infestissima inimiga da christiandade’ see *História*, V, ch. 5, p. 43.

⁸⁷⁴ My own emphasis, see *História*, III, ch. 2, p. 13. See Fróis to the Jesuits in Portugal (Usuki, 16 October 1578) in Évora *Cartas*, I, p. 418v.

⁸⁷⁵ See Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier*, IV, p. 254.

⁸⁷⁶ Mayu Fujikawa, ‘Studies on the Jesuit Japan Mission’, in: *Jesuits Historiography Online*. Consulted online on 30 January 2019 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2468-7723_jho_COM_196472>

⁸⁷⁷ Jezebel is not a very important biblical figure, for the Christians to make such analogies they would have to have been well versed with the Old Testament.

trampled by a horse; fulfilling Elijah's prophecy of her corpse being eaten by dogs and 'no one will bury her.'⁸⁷⁸

Christians must have wished that the Japanese Jezebel would end her days in as a bad manner as her biblical namesake. Although Fróis is very vague about her death, he wrote that she was sick and 'mizeravelmente acabou seos tristes e desaventurados dias' because, according to the author, when she died everyone in the fortress of Usuki had become Christian, and her servants had to find some monks 'que *a enterrassem*, não com a pompa funeral que ella esperava mas oculta e pobrememente.'⁸⁷⁹ We see an attempt here to fit the Japanese Jezebel's death to the biblical one. Later in the *História* the description of her death is even closer to that of the biblical Jezebel. Fróis wrote that when the Satsuma army attacked the fortress of Usuki *Jezebel* 'morreo tão infelice e desaventuradamente *no tempo do cerco* [...] *que nem havia quem a enterrasse* nem quem se compadecesse de sua miseria.'⁸⁸⁰ In the Bible Jezebel died when Jehu attacked the royal palace at Jezreel; in the *História* Jezebel dies during the siege of the Usuki fortress by the Satsuma army. He is portraying her death as occurring under circumstances similar to those of the Biblical character, with no one available or willing to bury her corpse.

Fróis's style of writing follows that of the early Christian father Lactantius's (c.250-c.325) *De Mortibus Persecutorum*. Lactantius aims to deliver a moral message about the terrible death suffered by the persecutors of Christians. One must thus conclude that the above event is more of a rhetorical construction with edifying purposes. Lactantius's work was studied in the Jesuit classrooms. *De studiis humanitatis et rhetoricae* in the Jesuit college in Coimbra proposed that the students should study: 'Lactancio y de S. Cypriano [...] para se ir

⁸⁷⁸ II Kings 9. 10.

⁸⁷⁹ My own emphasis, see *História*, IV, ch. 45, pp. 341-2.

⁸⁸⁰ My own emphasis, see *História*, V, ch. 24, p. 180.

mesclando la lición de ellos con las cosas de los gentiles.’⁸⁸¹ In Shimabara, according to the *História*, there was a Yakunin (official) ‘Guiobundono, inimigo intimo dos christãos’, who scheming with the monks, ordered brother Ayres Sanches that the Christians should participate in the local religious festivities, but when Sanches refused to do this he was expelled from Shimabara and the church was given to a non-Christian. A few days later the Yakunin had to go to war and ‘com grande ignominia e deshonra sua, lhe forão atadas as mãos detraz com huma corda de hum cavalo, e alli lhe cortarão logo a cabeça’; his ‘infelice e desastrada morte’ happened ‘dous mezes e doze dias’ since he exiled Sanchez and desecrated the church; here for more emphasis and drama, time is given precisely.⁸⁸² The evildoers’ demise after offending God is usually prompt; their days are numbered. The narrative of the tragic end or divine punishment met by those who opposed Christianity in the *História* is so frequent that one must question how many of these were factual, especially as this is not unique to Fróis. Very similar cases are found in other Jesuit missions. In Brazil, Nóbrega tells that when a Christian was killed by a pagan, the murderer was soon put ‘en la boca de um tiro y fue hecho pedaços.’⁸⁸³ Vicente Rodrigues wrote that a *soberbio* and blasphemous native chief in Bahia rejected conversion, and four days later he suffered ‘una muerte terrible.’⁸⁸⁴ This rhetoric is constant; Fróis describes an old woman ‘inimiga da ley de Deos’ upon seeing that a cross was put up in Omura, mocked the Christians for venerating a piece of stick. The next night, her house caught fire and she died ‘viva queimada e foi pagar no inferno o temerario atrevimento de suas blasfemias e obstinação em suas idolatrias.’⁸⁸⁵

⁸⁸¹ *Monumenta Paedagogica Societatis Jesu 1586* eds. by Cecilio Gómez Rodeles, Mariano Lecina, Frederci Cervos, Vincentio Agusti, Aloisio Ortiz (Madrid: Augusto Avrial, 1901), p. 668.

⁸⁸² *História*, I, ch. 46, p. 319.

⁸⁸³ Manuel da Nóbrega to Martín de Azpilcueta Navarro (Salvador, 10 August 1549) in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, I, p. 142.

⁸⁸⁴ Vicente Rodrigues to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Bahia, 17 May 1552) in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, I, p. 304.

⁸⁸⁵ *História*, II, ch. 99, pp. 387-8.

In India, near Travancore, the Jesuit Emmanuel de Morais gives three examples of God's justice *contra Ecclesiae persecutores*: When a powerful ruler burned a church he suddenly felt ill 'y luego murió una muerte muy espantosa.'⁸⁸⁶ When a man wanted to kill a Jesuit brother 'a pocos días murió muerte supitania'; and when a man broke a Christian cross and stepped on it 'aconteció también un caso grave.'⁸⁸⁷ Similarly, Fróis writes that when a Japanese man cut a cross, as he was returning to give news of what he had just committed 'para comprir com suas necessidades corporaes, se meteo por huma sementeira de trigo'. His own people, upon passing by, confused him with the enemy as he seemed to be hiding and shot him. After realising that they had just killed one of their companions 'sendo gentios, disserão [...] que aquillo fora castigo de Deos por aquelle homem cortar a cruz.'⁸⁸⁸ Fróis puts in the mouths of the Japanese that God had punished those who had affronted him. The similarities are striking in all the above examples: God's revenge is swift upon those who offend him: 'similhantes adversarios nunca ficao sem retribuição.'⁸⁸⁹ The enemies died very soon after their transgressions, usually within days and their deaths are invariably ghastly. Fróis follows the scriptures in describing the anti-Christian Japanese meeting unforeseen and awful deaths.

Jezebel's son Ōtomo Yoshimune, eventually baptised as Constantino in 1587, perhaps with the hope that he would emulate Constantine I (A.D. c. 280 -337) in expanding Catholicism in Japan, is described initially by Fróis in 1578 as very receptive to Christianity and encouraging those around him to listen to the Gospel.⁸⁹⁰ However later he is described as 'submerso em suas idolatrias e mui alongado de Deos.'⁸⁹¹ But when Yoshimune turned

⁸⁸⁶ Emmanuel de Morais to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Goa, 3 January 1549) in *Documenta Indica*, I, p. 459.

⁸⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 459.

⁸⁸⁸ *História*, II, ch. 99, p. 387.

⁸⁸⁹ See *História*, II, ch. 85, p. 267.

⁸⁹⁰ The first Roman emperor to profess Christianity and to stop the persecution of Christians. See *História*, III, ch. 4, pp. 29-36; ch. 6, pp. 44-51; ch. 7, pp. 52-58.

⁸⁹¹ *História*, IV, ch. 45, p. 340.

against Christianity and expelled the missionaries from Bungo in 1589, Fróis describes him in the following manner:

pela desenfreada soltura de seos vicios desamparado de Deos, ajudado da corrupção de sua natureza depravada, submerso no centro das idolatrias, impugnando a verdade conhecida, seguindo o caudalozo rio de suas iniquidades e os conselhos de pessimos e diabolicos apostatas, que o persuadem a cometer tão graves e abominaveis delictos, esquecido dos immensos beneficios que sempre recebeo da poderosa mão de Deos [...] elle se perdeo de maneira, que em sua proporsão ficou sendo outro Juliano Apostata.⁸⁹²

Here one can appreciate not only the accomplished writer but also the preacher. In fact, the climax of the analogy with the Roman Emperor Julian (Julian the Apostate, c. 332-63 A.D., who tried to bring back paganism to the Roman Empire) in itself could have been enough for his readers. But he builds a negative *enumeratio* to make his point more forcefully. The sense of disillusion and anger that Fróis felt with Ōtomo Yoshimune are evident, especially given that he had been very close to and actively worked on the conversion of Yoshimune in 1587.⁸⁹³

Animosity is also shown toward the so called second unifier of Japan Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Fróis refers to Hideyoshi as Faxiba, or Quambacu (Kampaku – Imperial Regent) a title Hideyoshi received around the time Fróis began composing the *História*.⁸⁹⁴ And this is what he calls him until the night of the expulsion edict in 1587. From this day onwards Fróis begins to call the hegemon ‘tirano’ and other loaded terms.⁸⁹⁵ *Tyrannus* usually means an illegitimate or oppressive ruler. According to the Jesuit Francisco Suárez (1548-1617) while

⁸⁹² *História*, V, ch. 24, p. 179.

⁸⁹³ Fróis himself taught Yoshimune the Gospel and he clearly expected more from the ruler of Bungo.

⁸⁹⁴ On Hideyoshi’s biography see Berry, *Hideyoshi*. See also Stephen Turnbull, *Toyotomi Hideyoshi* (Oxford: Osprey, 2010).

⁸⁹⁵ *História*, IV, ch. 53, p. 400; ch. 56, p. 427. Other Jesuits also began to call him tyrant, Valignano calls him ‘el tirano Quabacundono’ in a letter Valignano to General Acquaviva (Macau, 30 October 1588) in *História*, I, app. 5, p. 402.

a ruler may pursue a just war he should also consider whether this involves the harming of his subjects' common good. If he should ignore this consideration, in this case the ruler acts as a tyrant.⁸⁹⁶

Josef Wicki considered Fróis's account covering the time of the expulsion decree of 'exceptional value' because the latter was an eyewitness and more than likely advised the vice-provincial Coelho.⁸⁹⁷ Perhaps this fact has mostly predisposed historians to assume that because he was present, his detailed accounts are the most knowledgeable and trustworthy available. But this account is very biased, and although Hideyoshi had been friendly to the Jesuits for some years, Fróis decides to give a full description of the hegemon after his volte-face.⁸⁹⁸ Not surprisingly his physical appearance is portrayed as 'muito roim' and he is said to have six fingers on one hand.⁸⁹⁹ Hexadactyly (six fingers or toes) is a physical anomaly that appears in the Old Testament; the Philistine Gath who was killed by Jonathan when he taunted Israel had six fingers on each hand.⁹⁰⁰ In England, Ann Boleyn was also rumored to have had six fingers on one hand by her detractors.⁹⁰¹ As well as denigrating his physical appearance Fróis brings him into contempt through the portrayal of his character. The number of negative features that he attributed to the hegemon is very high, making use of biblical references. Like Nobunaga Hideyoshi is 'soberbo em supremo grao.'⁹⁰² Hideyoshi

⁸⁹⁶ On views on tyranny see Pablo Font Oporto, 'Juicio, Deposición y Occisión del Tirano en Francisco Suárez' in *Cauriensia: Revista Annual de Ciencias Eclesiásticas*, XIV [2019], 239-63. On the right to depose a tyrant in Luis de Molina in *De iustitia et iure*, see Annabel Bert, 'Luis de Molina on Law and Power', in *A Companion to Luis de Molina*, ed. by Matthias Kaufman and Alexander Aichele (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014), p. 170. See also Gabriele Pedullà, 'Machiavelli's Prince and the Concept of Tyranny', in *Evil Lords: Theories and Representations of Tyranny from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, ed. by Nikos Panou and Hester Schadee (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 192-210.

⁸⁹⁷ *História*, IV, ch. 53, p. 406.

⁸⁹⁸ 'Quambacu favorecia a Igreja e aos Padres', see *História*, IV, ch. 31, p. 235.

⁸⁹⁹ *História*, IV, ch. 53, p. 398.

⁹⁰⁰ 'And six toes on each foot' see II Samuel 21. 20-21.

⁹⁰¹ Bordo concluded that this is pure fabrication, see Susan Bordo, *The Creation of Anne Boleyn: A New Look at England's Most Notorious Queen* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, 2013), pp. 29-30.

⁹⁰² '(Hideyoshi) escreveu diversas cartas como outro Nabucodenezor aos reys e senhores vizinhos, mandando-lhes com soberbo e absoluto imperio, e grandes ameaças, que o viessem reconhecer por senhor' see *História*, V, ch. 55, p. 416. 'Who is God except Nebuchadnezzar?', see Judith 6. 2.

is portrayed as succumbing to the deadly sin of *luxuria*.⁹⁰³ He is not only possessed by a demon, but according to the author ‘parece que entrou alguma ligião de demonios na alma daquelle mao e perverso tirano.’⁹⁰⁴ Fróis uses excessive synonymia to describe the hegemon: ‘sagaz, ardilozo’; ‘envejozo, falso, enganador, mentirozo, mudavel’; and ‘Hé muito fingido e cheio de versucias, e jacta-se em fazer enganos.’⁹⁰⁵

In the Bible, there are many references to wicked rulers.⁹⁰⁶ As the Jesuits were sundered, and scattered after the expulsion edict, Fróis copied a long letter from Organtino: ‘por ser de edificação a recito aqui como de lá veio.’⁹⁰⁷ Organtino was hiding in Shōdoshima in 1588, and wrote in order to console and hearten his confreres during those hard times. Organtino uses loaded terms such as Herod, the king of Israel who was a biblical king responsible for the killing of children, but Fróis made slight changes to the letter for more emphasis: ‘(Hideyoshi) como Herodes, por medo de perder o estado temporal da Tenca, que elle agora *injustissimamente* uzurpa.’⁹⁰⁸

While the enemies of Christianity are depicted in a very hostile manner by describing them with names with strong negative connotations and as having suffered terrible and sudden deaths, those who are helpful to the Church even if they do not convert receive a favourable treatment. This is the case for Shogun Ashikaga Yoshiteru (Cubosama, 1535-65) who after the Dairi was the highest ranking in Japan; he was friendly to the Jesuits, and is described as valiant, prudent and ‘ter dado patente ao Padre para poder rezidir no Miaco, sempre à sombra de tão bom principe, ainda que gentio, viverão os nossos com esperança de se fazer

⁹⁰³ See *História*, IV, ch. 53, pp. 398-9. Cicero, *Ad C. Herennium: De Ratione Dicendi* (Rhetorica ad Herennium), trans. by Harry Caplan (London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1964), p. 17.

⁹⁰⁴ *História*, IV, ch. 53, p. 404.

⁹⁰⁵ *História*, IV, ch. 53, pp. 398-9.

⁹⁰⁶ Proverbs 28. 15

⁹⁰⁷ *História*, IV, ch. 59, p. 455. Organtino to the Jesuits in Hirado (Kyoto, 25 November 1588) in Évora *Cartas*, II, p. 229r.

⁹⁰⁸ My own emphasis, see *História*, IV, ch. 59, p. 463. Organtino wrote ‘injustamente’ (unjustly) in his letter but Fróis silently changes it to the superlative *injustissimamente* (most unjustly).

fruto.⁹⁰⁹ The Shogun's mother is portrayed as a venerable matron who had favoured the Jesuits.⁹¹⁰ On the death of Koji-jû, the Shogun's illegitimate wife, Fróis appears to either invent or follow oral sources. This event is based on his own letter written in 1565, and both stories begin in similar fashion, but in the *História* our author seems to go out of his way to present Koji-jû under a very positive light and prompt the reader to be sympathetic towards her, even though she was not a Christian. There are a number of additions in the *História* that are missing in his letter, first that Koji-jû was pregnant, so when she was executed 'matarão a duas pessoas.'⁹¹¹ In his letter, he calls her *Reyna*, but in the *História* she is not the queen, although she is portrayed as a noble woman who was going to become the Shogun's new wife. When the enemy discovered her hiding in a Buddhist monastery, she calmly wrote a very touching letter to one of her daughters that 'qualquer pessoa que a ouvia não se podia conter de lagrimas.'⁹¹² In the manuscript she is then transported to another monastery and there is a conversation with its superior which is non-existent in the letter. This conversation echoes a Christian one; she shows contrition for her sins and is absolved. Her death by the executioner is similar to that of a martyr; she calmly got on her knees and when the *soldado* missed her neck and instead pierced her face, rather than crying or showing signs of pain, she composedly asked him 'desta maneira executais tão mal o officio para que vos aqui mandarão?'⁹¹³

⁹⁰⁹ The *Padre* is Gaspar Vilela see *História*, II, ch. 65, pp. 89-100. Fróis to the Jesuits in Bungo (Kyoto, 19 June 1565) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 218v.

⁹¹⁰ 'Huma veneravel matrona de quem os Padres tinhão recebido muito favor e bom tratamento' see *História*, II, ch. 65, p. 96. 'Una venerable matrona, de quien teniamos nosotros recebido mucho regalo y favor' see Fróis to the Jesuits in Bungo (Kyoto, 19 June 1565) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 219v.

⁹¹¹ See *História*, II, ch. 65, p. 100.

⁹¹² This appears in both the letter and the *História*, see *História*, II, ch. 65, p. 98.

⁹¹³ *História*, II, ch. 65, p. 100.

While the enemies of Christianity are depicted in a hostile manner by comparing them with characters with strong connotations who suffered terrible and sudden deaths, we now turn to Fróis's descriptions of the Christians themselves.

III.3.3 Representations of Christians and the good death

Even after the council of Trent, Catholic theologians remained divided on controversies concerning doctrines of grace and of free will.⁹¹⁴ It was especially the Jesuits and Dominicans who clashed on these issues. The Jesuits found in *scientia media* (middle knowledge) a way to reconcile man's free will and the efficacy of grace.⁹¹⁵ This important issue extended to the missions, and we see it explicitly in the conversion of pagans. It was believed that conversion occurred by the grace of God, which is an unmerited gift of the divine favour in the salvation of sinners.⁹¹⁶ Therefore, grace comes from God's initiative, but as God also cooperates with decisions and acts freely made by humans, at the same time conversion can be freely resisted. Many examples are given in the *História* that specifically point to the grace of God during conversions. Fernandes wrote that man, recognising that by his own strength he could not be saved, searched for ways to receive such a gift: 'que hé rogar humildemente ao verdadeiro Deos [...] os livre e salve; e assim recebem a graça neste mundo para serem livres do demonio.'⁹¹⁷ In the voyage of Father Belchior de Figuereido the boat came perilously close to sinking and 'tres marineros mouros nelles, a quem o Senhor concedeo a vida e lhe deo graça para que se convertessem.'⁹¹⁸ Fróis also refers to some

⁹¹⁴ Raphael M. Huber, 'Recent Important Literature regarding the Catholic Church during the Late Renaissance Period, 1500-1648', in *Church History*, 10/1 (1941), 3-37 (15), *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/3160724.

⁹¹⁵ The Jesuit Luis de Molina's (1535-1600) book *Liberi Arbitrii cum Gratiae Donis, Divina Praescientia, Providentia, Praedestinatione et Reprobatione Concordia* (1588) increased the tensions between Jesuits and Dominicans, to the point that in 1597 Pope Clement VIII intervened by establishing the *Congregatio de Auxiliis* (Comission on Grace) in Rome. Ten years later, without reaching an agreement, Pope Paul V issued a decree which allowed Jesuits and their opponents to defend their own position.

⁹¹⁶ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Grace" *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2020.

⁹¹⁷ *História*, I, ch. 7, p. 56.

⁹¹⁸ *História*, I, ch. 52, p. 372.

Japanese *fidalgos* ‘os quais sem especial graça de N. Senhor não se podião convencer.’⁹¹⁹

In Almeida’s letter God illuminated ‘a veynte cavalleros [...] para que conociessen la verdad: los cuales pidieron el bautismo.’⁹²⁰

Once baptism has been received the Japanese Christians are generally described as exemplary. In general, the Japanese converts are presented as the embodiment of chivalric and Christian values; like Lancelot they are faithful and honourable. In *Ad Herennium* Cicero set forth the rhetoric that must be used in order to secure goodwill for ourselves. In the case of the Japanese mission, this applied also to the body of the church as a unified whole. Cicero argues that to influence the audience one shall set ‘forth our disabilities, need, loneliness, and misfortune.’⁹²¹ Fróis often depicts the Christians with numerical inferiority faced with their enemies, but always as carrying out heroic acts. When Isafai attacked Nagasaki in 1573, Fróis writes that when the sister of one Christian saw the imminent mortal danger, she begged her brother to eat something, but:

respondeo o valeroso cavaleiro e soldado de Christo: Não hé este o dia em que eu haja de comer [...] senão na outra vida com Deos [...] vingada a offensa que aquelles perversos gentios le tem feita em queimarem sua igreja.⁹²²

Among the first to attack the enemy were four Japanese Christians from Xiqui, who, according to the author, courageously had exiled themselves for not wanting to recant Christianity. Among these was ‘un velho pequenino de corpo mais de mui grande e valeroso animo’ with his two sons and a son-in-law ‘esquecidos de sua pouquidade.’⁹²³ The panegyric narrative displays the Christians fighting with ‘tão varonil e esforçado animo’ and the body

⁹¹⁹ *História*, I, ch. 7, p. 51.

⁹²⁰ Almeida to the Goa college (Hirado, October 1570) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 309v.

⁹²¹ *Ad Herennium*, p. 15.

⁹²² *História*, II, ch. 100, p. 394.

⁹²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 394-5.

of one of them, after receiving mortal and ‘cruéis feridas’, was found with ‘seo rosto em extremo bem assombrado e rizonho.’⁹²⁴ While the description of those who suffered death due to persecution or martyrdom because they refused to renounce their Christian belief is gruesome, the martyr is portrayed as showing no signs of pain or distress. For example, the tale of the death of the Japanese Christian martyr Jorão is the story of a just man who faced martyrdom with ‘alegre semblante’. After saying his confession, and as his attackers gave him three blows, he invoked three times ‘os santissimos nomes de Jesus, Maria.’⁹²⁵ This clearly conforms to a general missionary trope of the good death. Anchieta tells of the death of a new convert, who was executed saying in his last moments ‘el sacratíssimo nombre de Jesú’ and tells us that his soul went to heaven.⁹²⁶ This is a typical description of a martyr’s death; according to Peter Brown there is almost suppression of suffering, their heroism to endure torture is beyond human capabilities.⁹²⁷

On the other hand, those wavering Christians, *fracos christãos*, who doubted and became cold, *esfriar*, and distanced themselves from the church, began to experience a series of unfortunate events.⁹²⁸ Such is the case in the description of Ōtomo Yoshimune in 1579 who ‘começando a apartar de Deos, foi couza estranha ver como as couzas de seos reynos hião cada dia de mal em pior.’⁹²⁹ Yoshimune’s wife was encouraged to renounce Christianity by her husband and ‘comessou de perder o juizo natural e ficou meia douda.’⁹³⁰ According to Fróis by 1589 she had been about nine years ‘gravemente avexada do demonio e a tem posta nos ossos, sem lhe aproveitarem immenso numero de idola[t] rias, deprecações e feitiços.’⁹³¹

⁹²⁴ *História*, II, ch. 100, pp. 394-5.

⁹²⁵ *História*, V, ch. 15, p. 122. Jorão and Jochim are called ‘varões apostolicos’ see p. 123.

⁹²⁶ José de Anchieta to Diego Laynez (St. Vincente, 1 June 1560) in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, III, p. 262.

⁹²⁷ Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, pp. 69-85.

⁹²⁸ See *História*, I, ch. 37, p. 249

⁹²⁹ *História*, III, ch. 49, p. 99.

⁹³⁰ *História*, V, ch. 24, p. 181.

⁹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

This is a warning to the converts to remain firm in their faith and not to waver as those who do find themselves in terrible conditions. When Curondono's Christian wife drew away from the church she 'ficou assentada na sombra e região da morte.'⁹³² A lukewarm Christian woman 'sendo na fé mui tibia, entrou nella o diabo.'⁹³³

While the enemies of Christianity are depicted as suffering terrible and sudden deaths, the Christians are described as meeting a peaceful end or *mors beata*. When Don Quixote felt that death was near, Cervantes wrote, he 'died in his bed so calmly, and in such a Christian way'. The fictional *hidalgo* died surrounded by his friends, giving his testament to a notary, and repenting for his sins to a priest. Philippe Ariès called this kind of end a tamed death, in that the would-be deceased realised that they were going to die and started to make arrangements.⁹³⁴ In the *História* when Gaspar Coelho 'realised' that his end was close 'determinou mui de propozito entender em seo aparelho e preparação para o tranzito.'⁹³⁵

As described by the Jesuits and by many others, life in the *Estado da Índia* was a perilous enterprise.⁹³⁶ Even the *carreira da Índia* alone, with its voyage that lasted up to six months aboard the Portuguese ships, called *naus*, cost many lives.⁹³⁷ Frequently this hazardous life left little time for the people involved to prepare to 'poner el ánima en carrera de salvación.'⁹³⁸ In Goa, the Jesuits were called to confess the sick and 'os ajudar a bem

⁹³² *História*, I, ch. 39, p. 267. Isaiah 9. 2.

⁹³³ *História*, III, ch. 23, p. 174.

⁹³⁴ Philippe Ariès, *Western Attitudes toward Death: From the Middle Ages to the Present*, trans. by Patricia M. Ranum (London: Marion Boyars, 1974), pp.1-25.

⁹³⁵ *História*, V, ch. 28, p. 213.

⁹³⁶ Just getting to Goa from Portugal was so dangerous that a death-rate of fifty percent during the voyage was not unusual, see C.R. Boxer, *From Lisbon to Goa 1500-1750* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1984), p. 58 and p. 71.

⁹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 33. On Portuguese galleons, see N. Fonseca, T. A. Santos, and F. Castro, 'Study of the Intact Stability of a Portuguese Nau from the Early XVII Century', in *Maritime Transportation and Exploitation of Ocean and Coastal Resources*, eds. by Guedes Soares, et al. (London: Taylor & Francis, 2005), pp. 841-79.

⁹³⁸ Quoted in James Casey, *Familia y Sociedad en el Reino de Granada durante el Antiguo Regimen* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2008), p. 213.

morrer.⁹³⁹ Fróis wrote that ‘quando algum christão estava para morrer, era vizitado e amoestado como se havia de aparelhar para bem morrer.’⁹⁴⁰ According to Eamon Duffy *Mors improvisa* was one of the most dreaded deaths in the early modern period as it did not give time to prepare for the afterlife.⁹⁴¹ It was while facing death and contemplating those possible final dramatic moments that men prepared the best they could for their salvation.⁹⁴²

On 2 December 1552, Francis Xavier died in a poor hut suffering from fevers in the island of Sanghuan. Xavier is depicted by António, his Chinese companion, as suffering ‘todo con mucha pacientia, sin le oyr palabra en que se quexasse o pidiese alguna cosa.’⁹⁴³ This is a very typical description of a good death in that the dying person does not complain, and does not sin against charity by becoming restless and abusing those attending their death beds.⁹⁴⁴ As Xavier felt that death was approaching he asked António to make preparations. Fróis stated that Xavier himself had requested lime from the Portuguese so that his dead body could be transported back to India. According to Wicki Fróis is the only source which

⁹³⁹ See Sebastian Fernandes to General Francis Borgia (Goa, end of November 1569) in *Documenta Indica*, VIII, p. 48.

⁹⁴⁰ *História*, I, ch. 14, p. 88.

⁹⁴¹ See Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, p. 310.

⁹⁴² Among the numerous accounts of last minute contritions by many contemporary writers, Xavier wrote that en route to India from Malacca he suffered a storm of three days and nights: ‘Muchos fueron los que lloraron en vida sus muertes, con prometimientos grandes de jamas navegar, si Dios nuestro Senor de esta los librase’ see Xavier to the Jesuits in Rome (Cochin, 20 January 1548) in *X. Cartas* p. 235. Mendes Pinto tells how before a shipwreck ‘vendo então o Capitão & toda a mais gente o triste estado em que nossos pecados nos tinão posto, nos so corremos a hua imagen de nossa Senhora, a qual pedimos com muytas gritas que nos alcancasse do seu bento filho perdão de nossos peccados, porque da vida não avia ja quem fizesse conta’ see *Peregrinação*, facsimil of the 1614 edition (Maia: Castoliva editora, 1995), p. 165v. Alonso de Contreras remembered that before a battle they asked the chaplain of the ship, a Calced Carmelite, ‘Father, give us a blessing, for it is our last day’ see *The life of Captain Alonso de Contreras: Knight of the Military Order St John, native of Madrid, written by himself* (1582-1633), trans. by C.A. Phillips (London: Jonathan Cape, 1926), p. 36.

⁹⁴³ Antonio to Emmanuel Teixeira (Cochin, 4 September 1557) in *Documenta Indica*, III, p. 663.

⁹⁴⁴ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, p. 316. A very good example of this is the death of the vice-provincial of India Gaspar Barzeus as described by Aires Brandão: ‘na cama onde fazia, o martirizavão com remedios que lhe fazião, bem pouco necessarios, huuns mestres de huma maneira, outros doutra; mas o bom Mestre lhe tinha já dado o verdadeiro remedio. E elle a tudo o que lhe fazião com tanta pascientia estava, que mais parecia cordeiro ou pompa no sofrimento, que homem de carne’, see Aires Brandão to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Goa, 23 Deember 1554), in *Documenta Indica*, III, p. 170.

mentions this, and this is very different from the eye-witness account of Antonio, who recalls that it was Jorge Mendez's idea to add lime at the last minute.⁹⁴⁵

Xavier passed away on a bed, facing the heavens and a crucifix, constantly praying, and with 'el nombre de Jesus en la boca.'⁹⁴⁶ Fróis's account of Xavier's death is brief and coincides in the main with Antonio's account.⁹⁴⁷ Fróis writes that prior to his death Xavier said many times: 'Jesus! Filho de David, tende misericordia de mym! Madre de Deos sober[a]na, lembrai-vos de mim!'⁹⁴⁸ According to him God wanted to take him, because of his righteous behaviour, to a safer port than Macao where he was aiming to go.⁹⁴⁹ The metaphor is clear; the safer port is heaven, thus suggesting that Xavier had enjoyed a saintly life and death. The iconography of the *Ars moriendi* points to the anxiety of the last moments on one's bed, the graphic description shows on one side God and his court and on the other side devils tempting the dying person.⁹⁵⁰ The church put a great deal of emphasis on the dying moments, as this threshold was vital for salvation.⁹⁵¹ Fróis writes that a few days before Coelho's death he requested the Fathers and Brothers to pray to God during their masses 'que na hora de seo transito o livrasse da vizão dos demonios e das insidias e cavilações, com *que naquele tempo* trabalhão por perturbar e angustiar as almas.'⁹⁵² It was believed that at this important

⁹⁴⁵ *Documenta Indica*, III, p. 666. After three months when Xavier's body was disinterred, the witnesses claimed that they found him exactly as the day he had died and 'com hum suave odor,' see *História*, I, ch. 6, p. 50. Aries Brandão also writes that the Portuguese found Xavier's body un-corrupted and with 'un olor suavissimo que el sancto cuerpo echava de si,' see Brandão to the Jesuits in Goa (Goa 23 December 1554) in *Alcalá Cartas*, p. 59v.

⁹⁴⁶ See Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier*, IV, pp. 642-3. See also *Documenta Indica*, III, p. 663.

⁹⁴⁷ *Documenta Indica*, III, p. 663.

⁹⁴⁸ *História*, I, ch. 6, p. 49. Antonio China to Emmanuel Teixeira (Cochin, 4 September 1557) in *Documenta Indica*, III, p. 662.

⁹⁴⁹ Pedro de Alcáçova wrote that Xavier died at midnight 2 December 1552, see Alcáçova to the Jesuits in Portugal (Goa 1554) in *Alcalá Cartas*, p. 58r. According to Antonio, Xavier died at 2 in the morning '2 de Decembro de 1552' see Antonio China to Emmanuel Teixeira (Cochin, 4 September 1557) in *Documenta Indica*, III, p. 662. Schurhammer argued that he died 'before dawn on Saturday, December 3, 1552' see Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier*, IV, app. II, p. 643.

⁹⁵⁰ Ariès, *Western Attitudes toward Death*, pp. 33-39.

⁹⁵¹ Fróis called the after-life 'terra nos vivos,' see *História*, I, ch. 49, p. 352.

⁹⁵² My own emphasis, see *História*, V, ch. 28, p. 217.

juncture, devils would tempt and torment those about to die.⁹⁵³ As the moribund lay on their bed the Devil would try to take advantage of the weakened person and make a last attempt to tempt them to sin against hope, charity, and to mistrust their own good merits.

Fróis describes the deaths of the Jesuits in Japan in a very peaceful manner in the *História*. Juan Fernandes, Fróis notes, gave ‘con grande alegria e quietação’ his spirit to God.⁹⁵⁴ Brother Duarte da Silva died after receiving the sacraments.⁹⁵⁵ The sacrament of the sick, which at the point of death meant also the last rites, is an apostolic blessing that gives a plenary indulgence to the sick or dying person. Gaspar Coelho died during mass as the communion wafer was raised.⁹⁵⁶ Other Jesuits are described as having faced similar deaths. Fróis was present at neither Xavier’s nor Torres’s death. Vilela, who was a witness of Torres’s death, portrays him as ‘un tan sancto viejo’ with his soul ‘gozando en el cielo.’⁹⁵⁷ The manner of his burial ceremony, with the Christians dividing everything that belonged to Torres into ‘thousands of pieces’ and treating them like relics is, according Vilela, a clear sign of the sanctity of Torres: ‘vox populi, vox Dei.’⁹⁵⁸ Vilela’s letter was copied in the *História*, but Fróis adds Cosme de Torres mentioning near his end the ‘dulcissimos nomes de Jesus, Maria.’⁹⁵⁹ Frois presents the death of Dom Miguel, *daimyo* of Amacuza, similarly: ‘tinha de fazer oração com as mãos alevantadas, estando já para espirar e sem pulso, as tinha da mesma maneira, e entre ellas as riliquias e contas do nome de Jesus, ao qual invocava de todo seo coração.’⁹⁶⁰

⁹⁵³ See Darren Oldbridge, *The Devil in Early Modern England* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2000), pp. 52-6.

⁹⁵⁴ *História*, II, ch. 80, p. 219.

⁹⁵⁵ *História*, I, ch. 49, p. 352.

⁹⁵⁶ *História*, V, ch. 28, p. 217.

⁹⁵⁷ Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 314v.

⁹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 314v. According to Fróis the Jesuits observed the importance that the Japanese put on burials: ‘solemne enterramento, de que os christãos grandemente se edificarão, por ser esta huma das cousas em que os japões mais põem os olhos,’ see *História*, IV, ch. 1, p. 5.

⁹⁵⁹ *História*, II, ch. 92, p. 329-30. He omitted Vilela’s remark that to Torres ‘sobrevinole un hipo, señal de muerte’ see Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 314v.

⁹⁶⁰ *História*, III, ch. 37, p. 308.

The image that Fróis is attempting to portray is that all of the above missionaries and good Christians had, in religious terms, a good death, and that for their labour they have received the ultimate prize: ‘el obrero era digno de su premio.’⁹⁶¹ But to what extent did all these deaths occur as Fróis presents them, or was he, and other Jesuits, merely following standard descriptions of ‘tamed deaths’? Considering the similarity of the reports of Christian deaths throughout most the Jesuit missions, it appears that Fróis was following a typical style of narrative for edifying purposes.

The narrative of the dying Christian always follows a very similar pattern. The person often becomes aware that death is approaching, and usually indicates to those around them what was happening and what steps they should follow. In a panegyric letter about Francis Xavier, Melchior Nunes Barreto wrote that the day before Xavier’s death ‘parese que supo que avía de morir.’⁹⁶² According to Aires Brandão, the vice-provincial in Goa Gaspar Barzeus called Nunes Barreto from Bassein ‘pera vir residir no cargo, afirmandolhe elle estar de camino pera a outra vida.’⁹⁶³ There is usually a sense of peace, tranquility, even happiness within the dying person, and the names of Jesus and Mary are almost always present. Dying with the names of Jesus and Mary on one’s lips supposed a triumph over the Devil during the final moments, as he would not have been able to snatch the soul at the last temptation. In Pernambuco, as a new convert felt he was dying he asked father Juan de Azpilcueta ‘enseñar cómo avía de morir’. The Jesuit told him ‘que le nombrasse muchas vezes el nombre de Jesús, y de S. Maria N. Señora.’⁹⁶⁴ In Piratininga, Brazil, José de Anchieta baptised a moribund woman who died ‘llamando el sacratíssimo nombre de Jesús.’⁹⁶⁵ A year later

⁹⁶¹ Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 314v.

⁹⁶² Nunes Barreto to Loyola (Between Goa and Cochin, May 1554) in *Documenta Indica*, III, p. 75.

⁹⁶³ Aires Brandão to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Goa, 23 December 1554) in *Documenta Indica*, III, pp. 169-70.

⁹⁶⁴ Known as Navarro, see António Pires to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Pernambuco, 2 August 1551) in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, I, p. 254-5.

⁹⁶⁵ José de Anchieta to Diego Laynez (St. Vincente, 1 June 1560) in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, III, p. 252.

Anchieta tells the death of a very old convert who also died saying those exact words.⁹⁶⁶ In Mexico, Francisco Ramirez wrote that when the Jesuits performed the last rites ‘es extraordinaria la devoción con que llaman el santísimo nombre de Jesús [...] hasta expirar.’⁹⁶⁷ In Goa, brother Gaspar de Castro tells of the deaths of two Jesuits under very similar circumstances, first that of father António Rodrigues who ‘tendo a candeia na mão [...] espirou com o nome de Jesu na boca,’ and soon after, brother António Luís who realising that he would die soon asked ‘que lhe metesse a candeia na mão [...] e nomeando-lhe o santo nome de Jesu, se foi pera o ceo.’⁹⁶⁸

III.4 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the way in which Fróis represents and discusses the process of conversion in his *História*. Two of the main internal problems that restrained the Jesuits’ efforts had been hitherto identified by scholars as the lack of finance and manpower. There is no doubt that these problems hampered the mission to a degree, however the *História* does not lay much emphasis on these issues as major impediments to their work efforts. Both of these issues were, if not completely satisfactorily, dealt with relatively successfully, with the missionaries investing in the methodical training of the laity and efficiently targeting the Japanese elite. At the same time, the Jesuits distanced themselves from those methods which they argued had proved detrimental to the mission and focused on those that increased their reputation. A second focus is on Fróis’s representations of Japanese non-Christians, especially the monks. Here we examine how he used loaded terms to describe the enemies of the church, and the contrasting ends that those who opposed Christianity met in

⁹⁶⁶ José de Anchieta to Diego Laynez (St. Vincente, 30 July 1561) in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, III, p. 372.

⁹⁶⁷ Relation of the Michoacan residence by Francisco Ramirez (Michoacan, 4 April 1585) in *Monumenta Mexicana*, II, ed. by Félix Zubillaga, p. 524.

⁹⁶⁸ Gaspar de Castro to the provincial of Portugal João Correia (Goa, 4 September 1557) in *Documenta Indica*, III, pp. 141-2.

comparison with the Christians and the Jesuits. At the same time, despite their best efforts the mission continued to experience setbacks, depicted as the work of the Devil. An examination of these reversals and the role of the Devil in the Jesuits' evangelical work is explored in the next chapter.

Chapter IV - The Devil's work

A few months after the arrival of the Jesuits in Japan, Xavier delivered an emotional appeal in his *magna carta*:

[to God] le son manifestos todos nuestros corazones, intenciones y pobres deseos, que son de librar las almas, que ha más de 1,500 años que están en cautiverio de Lucifer haciéndose de ellas adorar como Dios en la tierra; pues en el cielo no fue poderoso para ello, y después de echado de él, véngase cuanto puede de muchos, y también de los tristes japanes.⁹⁶⁹

Such rhetoric would have been very familiar to his brethren and have had a lasting effect. It echoes Luke the evangelist: 'The Spirit of the Lord is on me [...] He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners [...] to set the oppressed free.'⁹⁷⁰ The intentions of the Jesuits, according to Xavier, were clear, to liberate the souls of the *tristes japanes* from the captivity of Lucifer who had mislead them.⁹⁷¹ According to Elisonas, the paradox encountered by the missionaries, namely the predisposition of the Japanese people to accept Christianity coupled with their propensity to commit terrible sins, was explained by arguing that the Japanese were in the clutches of the Devil.⁹⁷² These sins are mentioned in the *História*, when Fróis describes Xavier and Fernandes preaching in the streets of Yamaguchi about 'quão grande maldade cometião os japões,' specifically on three points: 'A primeira que, esquecidos de Deos todo-poderozo, que os criou e sustentava, adoravão paos e pedras e couzas insensiveis, em as quaes era adorado o demonio seo capital inimigo.'⁹⁷³ In this context

⁹⁶⁹ Xavier to the Jesuits in Goa (Kagoshima, 5 November 1549) in *X. Cartas*, p. 369.

⁹⁷⁰ Luke 4. 18-9; see also Isaiah 61. 1; Isaiah 58. 6.

⁹⁷¹ Cushner maintains that the Devil was used by the Jesuits as the primary reason the Native Americans clung to old beliefs, see Nicholas P. Cushner, *Why have you come here?: The Jesuits and the First Evangelization of Native America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 197-8.

⁹⁷² J.S.A. Elisonas, 'The Jesuits, The Devil, and pollution in Japan. The context of a syllabus of errors', *Bulletin of Portuguese-Japanese Studies* (online) 2000, (December): [Consulted: 25 October 2017] Available: <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=36100102> ISSN 0874-8438, p. 4.

⁹⁷³ The other two terrible sins named are: 'A segunda: o pecado abominavel, representando-lhe quão grave e torpe era, e os castigos gravissimos que Deos, Senhor dos ceos e da terra, por esta maldade tinha dados no mundo. A terceira: que as mulheres matavão os filhos quando parião, pelos não criar; ou tomavam mezinhas para mover, o qual era grandissima crueza e deshumanidade,' see *História*, I, ch. 3, p. 32.

can be understood the attempt by the Jesuits at the removal of the Japanese religious tradition. Iconoclasm took place in Japan from very early in the mission, and this observation could be extended to all of the Catholic missions in the sixteenth century, as demons and their ‘native representations’ held an important place in the collective consciousness of these men of God.

By the time Fróis was finishing his manuscript, the active destruction of Buddhist temples and statues by the Jesuits has become a problematic issue. On the one hand, endeavour to uproot these ‘demonic’ customs was an edifying act; on the other hand it was used by the Japanese monks and warlords as a proof of the negative and destructive presence of the missionaries. What I argue in this chapter is that Fróis’s narrative tends to diminish the active participation of the missionaries in the many iconoclastic exempla given. Instead the focus turns to the neophytes, who, by receiving the Holy Spirit through the sacrament of Baptism, are suddenly aware of their errors, and without any prompting, destroy their ‘idols’.

Throughout the *História* there are constant references to the involvement of the Devil in the Japanese mission, playing havoc with the missionaries’ efforts. Josef Wicki stated that ‘[Fróis] vê muitas vezes o influxo dos diabos’ but he stopped short of analysing the reasons behind this aspect in the *História*.⁹⁷⁴ It must be noted however, that Fróis was not alone in this constant diabolism.⁹⁷⁵ Since he copied or paraphrased the early missionaries’ writings in his work, the frequency with which the Devil was mentioned can be appreciated in the accounts from fellow missionaries in the *História*.⁹⁷⁶ But why were there so many demonic

⁹⁷⁴ *História*, I, p. 26.

⁹⁷⁵ Xavier and the pioneers of the mission made many allusions to the work of the Devil. In his letter from Kagoshima Xavier wrote: ‘os que região, & mandavão o navio, não fazião mais do que o demonio por suas sortes lhe dezia’, see Xavier to the College of Sao Paulo (Kagoshima, 5 November 1549) in Évora *Cartas*, p. 8r.

⁹⁷⁶ Even prior to Fróis’s arrival in Japan, see *História*, I: Pedro de Alcáçova, ch. 9, p. 64; ch. 10, p. 68; Torres, ch. 12, pp. 77-80; Gago, ch. 14, pp. 87-9; ch. 20, p. 130; ch. 21, p. 134; ch. 28, pp. 185-7; Nunes Barreto, ch. 15, p. 94; ch. 16, pp.104-6; Vilela, ch. 17, pp.110-2; ch. 26, pp. 166-70; ch. 29, pp. 191-7; ch. 34, p. 227; ch.

references in Fróis's *História*? In his work, there are constant foreboding remarks, from other Jesuits, from Fróis himself, and even from neophytes. This sense of impending evil or misfortune indicates not only a mindset that had begun to cast the focus away from the initial excitement of the prospects of creating a new kingdom of God, but it also reflects on the missionaries' eschatological outlook.⁹⁷⁷ More importantly, here I argue that Fróis is rhetorically constructing a past with the benefit of hindsight. To this effect the Devil is used rhetorically as a reason to explain the setbacks of the mission. The persons that had intervened against the mission are described as 'instruments of the Devil', echoing the descriptions in the Americas such as *hechicero* in Peru or *jongleurs* in New France.⁹⁷⁸ Since Fróis was aware of all the setbacks to the mission that had previously occurred, he was able to construct a narrative that pointed at the Devil as the main factor behind the majority of the reversals.

As had happened in the early years of the evangelisation of the Americas, where most sermons had emphasised the avoidance of sin, the power of the Devil, and the danger of eternal damnation, in Japan, the Jesuits' emphasis was on conversion by highlighting the perils of eternal punishment in hell and to a lesser extent the glory of heaven.⁹⁷⁹ Eire proposes that in this period hell was an instrument for salvation and the attainment of heaven, as much to do with hope as with punishment and fear.⁹⁸⁰ According to Delumeau, in addition to the fears of exterior perils, early modern Europe was tormented by the 'horror' of sin and

35, pp. 235-40; ch. 36, p. 241; brother Lourenço, ch. 27, pp. 175-81; Aires Sanches, ch. 31, pp. 206-8; Almeida, ch. 33, p. 218; ch. 45, pp. 307-13; and Juan Fernandes, ch. 38, p. 258.

⁹⁷⁷ On eschatology see R.G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), rev. edn., pp. 54-5; Brian P. Levack, *The Devil Within: Possession and Exorcism in the Christian West* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), pp. 65-70.

⁹⁷⁸ Cushner, *Why have you come here?* p. 10.

⁹⁷⁹ See Fernando Cervantes, *The Devil in the New World: The Impact of Diabolism in New Spain* (London: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 9. On the Devil in the Early Modern Period see Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

⁹⁸⁰ See Carlos M.N. Eire, 'The Good Side of Hell: Infernal Meditations in Early Modern Spain' in *Historical Reflections/ Reflexions Historiques*, 26/2 (Berghahn Books, summer 2000), 285-310 (287).

the ‘obsession’ of damnation.’⁹⁸¹ As such the Christianity exported by the missionaries served as a deterrent against sin. I am not arguing that the Jesuits did not teach about the glory that awaited the righteous, but what permeates the *História* is that with the pressure to save as many as possible by bringing them to the bosom of the church through baptism, they concentrated on the dangers that they faced if they did not convert, regularly using the tool of fear. Finally, I argue that Fróis, and the Jesuits’ accounts which he copied, was following established European conventions and models of what was considered demonic possession.

The *História* coincides with reports from other Jesuit missions, where missionaries observed and described the pathological symptoms of the possessed, the process of expelling the demons or exorcism, and the subsequent conversions. These religious rituals are highlighted in the *História* and must be appreciated given their theatrical nature as a propaganda tool for the Jesuits’ ability to cast out demons, and in the context of their constant battle against the forces of the Devil.⁹⁸²

The missionaries saw themselves as engaged in a constant battle against the forces of the Devil, but even among the missionaries there were different degrees to which this feeling was expressed in their accounts. What follows is how Fróis presents the Devil rhetorically as the reason behind their setbacks, and as justification for the missionaries’ actions.

IV.1 Iconoclasm

You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God.

Exodus 20. 1-4

⁹⁸¹ Delumeau, *Sin and Fear*, p. 3.

⁹⁸² The Devil was one of the principal characters in the Jesuits’ plays, see *to philosophize is to learn how to die* in Michael de Montaigne, *The Complete Essays* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), p. 93. On the theatrical dimension of demonic possession see Levack, *The Devil Within*, pp. 139-68.

The historian Andre C. Ross noted that it was not clear who was directly responsible for the destruction of temples and Buddha statues during the early years of the mission.⁹⁸³ J.F. Moran argued that the Jesuits encouraged the burning of temples and shrines in the lands of Christian *daimyo* and observed this ‘with undisguised *schadenfreude*.’⁹⁸⁴ George Elison goes further and emphasises that the Jesuits were ‘engaged in wholesale destruction of the Japanese tradition’ which included their own participation and encouraging that of their flock.⁹⁸⁵ I wish to argue in this section that Elison’s argument seems closer to the truth, especially during the early period of the mission. In the *História* a changing approach to describing the mission by Fróis can be observed in his description of the iconoclastic attitude towards Buddhism and Shintoism. In the text, we can appreciate two types of narrative. The first is sometimes apologetic regarding the author’s co-religionist protagonist role during the early years of the mission. In the second, Fróis instills agency in the neophytes after receiving the sacrament of baptism. These two approaches co-exist in the narrative of the *História* but the emphasis is largely on the Christians converts.

On the eve of the feast of St James the Apostle, 24th July 1587, Gaspar Coelho (1529-90), on board a vessel *fusta*, received a message from Hideyoshi asking him ‘qual hé a cauza por que os christaons destruem os templos dos camis e fotoques, e lhe queimarão as imagens [...]?’⁹⁸⁶ Fróis, who was with the vice-provincial, wrote that Coelho immediately answered:

⁹⁸³ Such as in Yokoseura, Takushima and Ikitsuki, see Ross, *A Vision Betrayed*, p. 47.

⁹⁸⁴ See Moran, *The Japanese and the Jesuits*, p. 76.

⁹⁸⁵ Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, p. 131.

⁹⁸⁶ *História*, IV, ch. 53, p. 405. Üçerler, ‘The Jesuit Enterprise’, in *The Cambridge Companion to the Jesuits*, ed. by Worcester, p. 160.

Os Padres não tem conta com os camis e fotoques [...] Os christaons [...] entendem que fora desta ley que professamos em outra nenhuma há salvação [...] todavia convencido[s] da luz e da verdade, em que se achão depoes de serem christãos, elles de seo proprio moto, sem nenhuma persuasão nem instancia nossa, os quebrão às vezes e destruem por lhe não aproveitarem.⁹⁸⁷

Elison considers Coelho's answer 'too feeble.'⁹⁸⁸ And clearly the hegemon was not convinced by the vice-provincial's reply. The second point of the short expulsion edict sent to the missionaries highlights this issue: '[the Jesuits] fazem a gente de sua seita, para o cual destruem os templos dos camis e fotoques.'⁹⁸⁹ But Hideyoshi's accusation, prior to his decree, and indeed Coelho's answer written in the *História*, explains to an extent this very sensitive issue that needs further attention.

Coelho's answer and what Fróis wrote in the *História* is a polite and diplomatic reply. The answer is written hurriedly but with care in those very tense moments. Coelho claimed that the *Padres* were innocent on this matter, as Hideyoshi's enquiry asked for the cause of the Christians' destructions of their religious objects, which tacitly points the finger at the Jesuits' involvement. Then, the attention shifts to the newly converted Japanese Christians who, after realising that their salvation lay with the Christian religion and on their own initiative, sometimes broke the *kami* and *hotoke* because these were no longer useful to them.⁹⁹⁰ This argument is a constant feature in the *História*, but it is also different from the usual more antagonistic rhetoric, which portrays the Japanese gods as 'demencias e couzas rediculozas'⁹⁹¹ or 'falsos deozes.'⁹⁹² And again the answer returns to highlighting the

⁹⁸⁷ *História*, IV, ch. 53, pp. 405-6.

⁹⁸⁸ Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, p. 131.

⁹⁸⁹ There were two edicts, one for Japanese officials and a shorter one for the missionaries, see Ross, *A Vision Betrayed*, p. 69. *História*, IV, ch. 53, pp. 406. On this see Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, pp. 114-17.

⁹⁹⁰ Balthasar Gago wrote a brief description on *Kami* and *Hotoke* in 1562, see Gago to the Jesuits in Portugal (Goa, 10 December 1562) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 119v-120v.

⁹⁹¹ *História*, I, ch. 27, p. 176.

⁹⁹² *História*, I, ch. 35, p. 240.

complete innocence and lack of participation by the Jesuits in these iconoclastic activities. This points at the desperate attempt by Coelho to exonerate the missionaries.

But the answer is not in fact true; Fróis himself wrote that he destroyed Buddhist statues and had written about it in his manuscript for the year 1582. According to Fróis, Coelho realised that when the monks left Arima they must have hidden their idols on a difficult-to-reach islet in Katsusa where there was a temple. Fróis gloats when he tells the story. He wrote that Coelho ‘movido com dezejo de os destruir [idols]’, and himself left for the islet after lunch.⁹⁹³ After burning the Buddhist temple, the children from the Jesuit school in Kuchinotsu brought all the small idols ‘arrastando, cospindo nelles e fazendo-lhe a honra que elles merecião’ all the way back to the Jesuit house. Because it was cold and the house ‘estava mal provida de lenha para a cozinha [...] forão todos logo fendidos e despedaçados, e com a lenha [...] [se] foi fazendo o comer em caza por bons dias.’⁹⁹⁴

The early Jesuits in Japan were iconoclastic, not just in regard to the physical destruction of religious symbols, but in a broader sense they also challenged the local traditional beliefs and institutions because they considered them to be based on error and superstition, or even satanic in origin. Invoking the meddling of Satan, cast as the originator of the religions in the archipelago, gave them the moral high ground in the prohibition of what they saw as idolatry. From the beginning of the mission, Xavier’s description of Japan was: ‘esta tierra es toda de idolatrias y enemigos de Cristo.’⁹⁹⁵ The Devil was invoked in the *História*, to serve narrative and explanatory functions. Fróis puts into the mouth of the Japanese convert Takayama Ukon (Justo Ucondono 1552-1615) the concern that Satan was endlessly interfering:

⁹⁹³ *História*, III, ch. 36, pp. 299-300.

⁹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

⁹⁹⁵ Xavier to the Jesuits in Goa (Kagoshima, 5 November 1549) in *X. Cartas*, p. 365.

como sempre as obras de Deos são pelo demonio contraidas. Eu tenho para mim que não pode tardar muito alguma grande adversidade e contradição do demonio, por onde hé bem que assim os Padres como nós outros nos vamos preparando para ella.⁹⁹⁶

If we were to assume that Takayama actually expressed these sentiments - and this is possible since he was baptised when he was 12 years old and by 1587 he had been a Christian for over 20 years - then this signals the heavy emphasis of the Jesuits' teachings on the constant interfering of the Devil. If, on the other hand, this is just a narrative creation by the author, it still reflects the importance of this issue – in editing to make the reader believe that the Christians are aware of this problem.

As such, Fróis implies that no effort should be spared in removing such beliefs. The missionaries observed the destruction of religious objects with satisfaction. In Malacca, the Jesuit Gonzalo Rodriguez tells that the Rector, looking for a place to build a church, found an idol and he 'honro al pagoda como el merescía, trayéndolo debaxo de los pies y haciendole pedaços.'⁹⁹⁷ In Goa, Fróis wrote in a letter that there was a young man with 'hum livro de feytisarias' who spoke to 65 demons in Latin, Greek, and Portuguese and that the book 'eu (Fróis) por minha mão queymey.'⁹⁹⁸ But Fróis's approach to this subject is more temperate more than 30 years later, when he was writing his *História*. C.R. Boxer considered Fróis 'better balanced' than the 'more vituperative' Vilela.⁹⁹⁹ Fróis's account is sometimes an apologetic narrative regarding the author's co-religionist during the early years of the mission, one that describes the prohibition of any worship that deviated from Catholic

⁹⁹⁶ *História*, IV, ch. 53, p. 397.

⁹⁹⁷ Gonzalo Rodriguez to the Society of Jesus in Europe (Malacca, December 1562) in *Documenta Indica*, V, p. 672.

⁹⁹⁸ Luís Fróis to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Goa, 1 December 1552) in *Documenta Indica*, II, p. 475.

⁹⁹⁹ Boxer, *The Christian Century*, p. 65.

teaching and included the active burning and destruction of these idols, with the Jesuits presently involved and in a protagonist role.

Fróis did not, or perhaps could not, choose to avoid writing about the Jesuits' involvement in instigating or even themselves destroying temples and religious images during the early years of the mission since it was already known through the letters. While he does not condemn such acts, Fróis narrates these episodes with an apologetic tone, such as when he describes Gaspar Vilela's advocacy for iconoclasm in northern Kyushu. In 1558, Vilela visited the islands of Takushima, Ikitsuki, Shishi, Ira, and Kasūga under the jurisdiction of Koteda Yasumasa (*Kotedadono* - Don Antonio ?-1580), and Fróis, who worked with Vilela later in Kyoto, alludes to Vilela's experimental methods: 'sempre intentava ver se poderia fazer alguma couza de novo que rezultasse em maior serviço divino.'¹⁰⁰⁰ Vilela wrote a long letter about his activities in Hirado but it was lost at sea off the coast of China in 1558.¹⁰⁰¹ Wicki guessed that Fróis may have used the copy that remained in Japan to write about these events.¹⁰⁰² It is interesting that Vilela is described as being fairly new to the Society 'ainda que não havia mais de seis mezes que entrara na companhia, quando, depois de recebido em Goa, veio para Japão'.¹⁰⁰³ He is eager to eradicate the false beliefs and his actions point to the complete uprooting of Buddhism and Shintoism and their replacement with Christianity:

(para lhes mais depressa cortar as antigas raizes da gentildade) acumulando o numero dos pagodes de diversas varelas e, ajuntando-os em montes, fazia delles mui grandes fogueiras.¹⁰⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰⁰ *História*, I, ch. 18, p. 115.

¹⁰⁰¹ 'El año pasado les escrevi [...] largamente las nuevas de esta tierra, especialmente de Firando' see Vilela to the Goa College (Japan, 1 September 1559) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 93r.

¹⁰⁰² 'Este de 59. tivemos por novas, que a nao em hião antes que passasse a costa da China se perdeo em hūs bayxos' see Gago to the Brothers in India (Bungo, 1 November 1559) in Évora *Cartas*, p. 63r.

¹⁰⁰³ See *História*, I, ch. 18, p. 115.

¹⁰⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

But this practice was more generalised than the innovative ‘couza de novo’ methods of Vilela about which Fróis tells us. According to the Jesuit historian José de Acosta, the Viceroy of Peru Andrés Hurtado de Mendoza y Cabrera, 3rd Marquis of Cañete (c. 1500-61), removed the mummies of some Inca kings in Cuzco in an attempt to prevent their veneration. Public bonfires similar to those of Vilela were held across the missions. Another Jesuit, Pablo José de Arriaga (1564-1622), wrote in *La extirpación de la idolatría en el Perú* regarding mummified bodies venerated by the natives that ‘se quemaron estos cuerpos con otras muchas Huacas.’¹⁰⁰⁵ The bishop of Yucatán, Diego de Landa Calderón, O.F.M. (1524-79), believed it was his duty to expose the Devil and stop idolatries by burning Maya codices.¹⁰⁰⁶ Diego Muñoz Camargo (c. 1529-99) in his *Historia de Tlaxcala*, illustrated the Franciscans in New Spain burning clothes, masks, and regalia used by the natives for their religious practice. In Travancore, the Jesuit Emmanuel de Morais proudly wrote ‘quebré y hize con la gracia del Señor quemar muchos pagodes.’¹⁰⁰⁷

Fróis describes Vilela’s active destructions of ‘idols’ as an act of fervent zeal: ‘Vilela com tanto fervor [...] trazia cargas de fotoques e livros das seitas de Japão em sacos de palha athé à praya e, postos em montes, lhe punha o fogo.’¹⁰⁰⁸ Fróis continues by pointing out that Vilela’s actions had different outcomes:

Os que estavam bem instruidos na fé confirmavão-se com isto mais, e os que da ley de Deos não tinham tanta noticia, lhes punha aquella obra grande horror e espanto, temendo lhe viesse por isso algum castigo dos camis e fotoques.¹⁰⁰⁹

¹⁰⁰⁵ Pablo José de Arriaga, S.J., *La Extirpación de la Idolatría en el Perú* (Lima: San Martí y ca., 1920), p. 11.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Inga Clendinnen, *Ambivalent Conquests: Maya and Spaniard in Yucatan, 1517-1570*, 2nd. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

¹⁰⁰⁷ Emmanuel de Morais to the Jesuits in Coimbra (Goa 3 January 1549) in *Documenta Indica*, I, p. 458.

¹⁰⁰⁸ *História*, II, ch. 18, p. 119.

¹⁰⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

Fróis was in favour of constraining the missionary's religious zeal, and indirectly criticises Vilela's actions. The burning of Buddhist statues and books, according to the *História*, had two outcomes: on one hand, it was beneficial to those who were well instructed in the faith as it symbolised the end of the old religion, on the other hand it caused fright among those who had little knowledge of Christianity, which actually implies that Vilela's burning of books and *hotokes* caused fear among some neophytes or among those who had begun to learn the Gospel, which essentially was fear of the local gods punishing the Christian converts. Originally, Vilela was welcomed in Hirado by the *daimyo* Matsura Takanobu due to the Jesuits' association with the Portuguese *nau*, but what is not mentioned in the *História* is that as a result of Vilela's evangelising methods and the Jesuits' antagonistic and iconoclastic behaviour they were expelled from Hirado in 1558; the manuscript only mentions that Vilela 'foi lançado dalli com grande estrondo e ignominia.'¹⁰¹⁰ Vilela blamed a *bonzo* who incited the people to exile him lest they suffer a great punishment from their gods. Fróis hints that those methods must be carefully evaluated, or even avoided, as they could eventually lead to the rejection of Christianity.

What appears more often in the *História* is how Fróis instills agency in the neophytes: he does not condemn this violent iconoclastic approach, he almost encourages and applauds it, but his focus lies on the new Christians who upon receiving the sacrament of baptism are 'awakened' *convencido[s] da luz e da verdade* and, realising their errors, wish to eradicate the idols and temples. Fróis's narrative seems to attempt to portray the Jesuits as not in fact being the protagonists in the destruction of religious objects. By the time he was writing his manuscript, in the late 1580s, the reports of iconoclasm had shifted to the newly baptised Japanese. Certainly, both the superior of the Japanese mission Francisco Cabral and later the

¹⁰¹⁰ *História*, I, ch. 52, p. 374. Vilela to the Goa College (Japan, 1 September 1559) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 93r.

Visitor Alessandro Valignano were against the missionaries' participation in such violent acts.¹⁰¹¹ The *História* does not condemn these acts, but Fróis's narrative minimises or omits the missionaries' involvement. It is however likely that the Jesuits continued to encourage the neophytes to publicly destroy Buddhist and Shinto objects following their baptism. The *História* details how as a result of the converts suddenly discovering the truth upon receiving baptism, and as an act born of their own initiative, almost as spiritual enlightenment, the new Christians decided to burn their past idols. Some of these external demonstrations of conversion, such as public destruction of *hotokes*, may have been genuine; many may well have been public displays to show adherence to their already converted lords as a sign of loyalty. For example, in 1585 when Ōtomo Sorin (Dom Francisco) had already converted, a young Japanese baptised as Simão is described as being 'muito cheio de zelo das pregações que tinha ouvidas', and as having decided after baptism that 'se foi logo direito para os lugares e povoações de suas rendas e poz fogo a quantas varelas e fotoques por alli achou.' The fire was so big 'que cuidarão os vizinhos que, ou elle se fazia inimigo d'el-rey de Bungo, ou a terra era tomada dos inimigos'.¹⁰¹² The same assumption could be applied when a *tono* and a *bonzo* from Voari were baptised; Fróis argues that,

Entrou nelles o bom espirito de Deos [...] depois que chegarão a suas cazas [both] ajuntarão todas as imagens de seos idolos, pinturas, nominas, livros e outras alfaias [...] e defronte de suas portas puzerão fogo a tudo.¹⁰¹³

The repudiation of these images of worship and their subsequent destruction is also described as a sign of a true conversion since the neophyte had realised his previous errors, and as sign of receiving the Holy Spirit. In Bungo there was an old man 'muito devoto dos fotoques, o qual se converteo na segunda pregação e, sem fallar com o Padre, queimou os

¹⁰¹¹ Ross, *A Vision Betrayed*, p. 47.

¹⁰¹² *História*, IV, ch. 3, p. 21.

¹⁰¹³ *História*, III, ch. 33, p. 271.

ídolos que tinha.¹⁰¹⁴ In Goa, Sebastian Fernandes tells that a local religious man a *jogue* (or yogi), once converted, went to the square and made a fire and ‘lançou todas aquelas alfaias com que o demonio o trazia ornado.’¹⁰¹⁵ Fróis writes that a young girl after receiving baptism was the first ‘que mostrou o zelo de desfazer os ídolos [...] que seos pays e irmãos tinham em caza, e primeiro que elles os andava desencovando e metendo no fogo.’¹⁰¹⁶ But more likely, most cases would have been encouraged by the Jesuits to be seen as a truthful manifestation of conversion and the renunciation of the Devil. After all, baptism is a kind of exorcism, given the power of holy water to banish demons.¹⁰¹⁷ These teachings or directives, however, are absent from the manuscript, and the desire for burning the ‘idols’ is portrayed as born of the zeal of the converts. There is nevertheless a sense of approval of these acts and the involvement of the Jesuits is almost tacitly implied:

Em espaço de tres mezes, que o Padre alli esteve, se desfizerão e destruirão todos os templos de seos camis e fotoques, que passavão de 40 entre grandes e pequenos.¹⁰¹⁸

On October 7th 1578, as Ōtomo Sorin (Dom Francisco) and his army began the conquest of Hyuga province, the former landed in Tsuchimochi where he was joined by Father Cabral and Brothers André Douria, Luís de Almeida and João de Torres (Japanese). Sorin planned, according to Fróis, to build a utopian Christian city ‘que fosse nomeada até dentro de Roma’, run and governed ‘com as leys e costumes de Europa.’¹⁰¹⁹ Sorin chose the most favourable area and gave it to the Jesuits to build a house and a church. In addition, he offered the Jesuits the income arising from two Buddhist *varelas* to comfortably support 20

¹⁰¹⁴ *História*, IV, ch. 17, p. 135.

¹⁰¹⁵ Sebastian Fernandes to General Francis Borgia (Goa, end of November 1569) in *Documenta Indica*, VIII, pp. 76-7.

¹⁰¹⁶ *História*, IV, ch. 11, pp. 78-9.

¹⁰¹⁷ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, pp. 280-1.

¹⁰¹⁸ *História*, III, ch. 20, p. 149.

¹⁰¹⁹ *História*, III, ch. 5, p. 38.

members of the Society.¹⁰²⁰ The Japanese brother João de Torres was designated with the task of dismantling the Buddhist monasteries for the building of a church. But Fróis writes that the brother made the monks dismantle their own temples: ‘E o que elles (monks) mais sentião, era obrigarem-nos que com suas proprias mãos derribassem os fotoques e os templos.’¹⁰²¹ The symbolism of this is the triumph of Christianity over paganism, but more important here is that the Jesuits distanced themselves from the direct destruction of these Buddhist buildings.

The rhetoric used by Fróis often describes this iconoclastic attitude as an act brought forth by the mystery of the sacrament of baptism. Baptism in this sense is not only a healer of physical diseases: ‘pela virtude do santo bautismo [...] recebessem saude perfeita.’¹⁰²² It is also given the attribute of causing one to see the truth. In this case the neophytes are ‘convencido[s] da luz e da verdade,’ and come to the realisation that outside Christianity there was no salvation and that their native religion came from the Devil. According to Županov the metaphors of ‘light/darkness antithesis were standard items in the demonological, baroque vocabulary.’¹⁰²³ One can appreciate this in Acquaviva’s letter, who described his fellow Jesuits as ‘chamados a levar a luz do Evangelho sedentibus in tenebris et in umbra mortis’¹⁰²⁴ Fróis points to this often: ‘como erão gentios e carecidos da luz.’¹⁰²⁵

Hideyoshi’s enquiry about the Jesuits’ iconoclastic attitude was correct. Even after the expulsion edict the Jesuits continued destroying Buddhist artifacts. Fond of the *bon mot* as ever, Fróis copies a letter by a Jesuit priest, whose name he (atypically) does not give, informing the vice-provincial Coelho in December 1590 that it was quite cheerful to see the

¹⁰²⁰ Ibid., pp. 38-9.

¹⁰²¹ *História*, III, ch. 5, p. 38.

¹⁰²² *História*, IV, ch. 3, pp. 20-1.

¹⁰²³ Županov, *Disputed Mission*, pp. 203-4.

¹⁰²⁴ *História*, IV, ch.15, p. 108.

¹⁰²⁵ *História*, III, ch.27, p. 208.

blaze and bonfires ‘que faziamos de muitos fotoques e outros diversos idolos que achamos, que nos não ajudava pouco para passar os frios que aqui há em Dezembro.’¹⁰²⁶ The problems caused by the missionaries’ iconoclastic attitude, such as the hatred of the Buddhist monks, explain to some extent why the Jesuits usually distanced themselves from physically participating in the destruction of temples and the *kami* and *hotoke*, since this caused great resentment and gave cause for their enemies to complain about them. More importantly the rhetoric that the neophyte by his or her own will decides to destroy these religious objects was edifying since implied that they have receive the grace of God.

IV.2 The intermittent presence of the Devil

The Dominican Durán believed that in Mexico there was a blend of Catholic and native ceremonies, of which some, ‘hark back to the old law and to the diabolical and satanic ceremonies of their own invention.’¹⁰²⁷ The men who transported the message of the Christian God also carried with them the concept of its *inimigo*, the Devil. However, if the missionaries believed that they were the first to bring the Gospel to the newly ‘discovered lands,’ such as in Japan, they also were convinced that the Devil had arrived well ahead of them. A means of justification for the Jesuits’ evangelising mission was the rhetorical argument that the ‘Biblical’ Devil was present already and thus that the native religion came from Satan, who had encouraged vices among the locals. Therefore, the arrival of the missionaries was vital in order to liberate the local population from the false religion and offer them salvation through the true God. To an extent, European accounts, not just those of missionary origin, reveal their attempt to incorporate the ‘other’ into the European framework. Non-European religions were not considered as different, or indeed as religions

¹⁰²⁶ *História*, V, ch. 26, p. 200.

¹⁰²⁷ See Gruzinski, *The Mestizo Mind*, p. 182.

in their own right, and as having their own ‘God’ and ‘demons’, or independent in origin from the Biblical tradition. Missionaries described other religions as a sub-part of the Christian world; this Eurocentric feature of Catholicism observed other religions as having been started by Lucifer.

In Europe existed the idea of the world ‘riven by a cosmic struggle between good and evil.’¹⁰²⁸ This was a powerful apocalyptic rhetoric, closely associated with millenarism, derived from the eschatological belief that at the end of time God will be victorious over the forces of evil and He will judge the living and the resurrected dead. Perhaps the initial inquisition of books and Buddhist images by Gaspar Vilela points at the urgency to convert as many souls as possible, as the Franciscan believed in Mexico, before the turn of the century, and that eliminating idolatrous practices would speed the second coming of Christ.¹⁰²⁹ Stuart Clark argues that witchcraft and demonism were considered as aspects of that final period of time and heralded the end of history. Therefore, the Devil was during this period thought to be particularly busy following the biblical prophecy of the twilight of the world, and the language reflected the eschatological belief of the time.¹⁰³⁰ Fróis almost always attempts to explain the setbacks experienced in Japan by blaming the incessant interferences of the ‘*demonio e os bonzos, seus immediatos ministros.*’¹⁰³¹ He acknowledged the power of the Devil and described how the monks, ‘[the Devil’s] ministers,’ had deceived the Japanese.

Fróis saw the monks as a major obstacle to the conversion of Japan, and the ongoing feuds and arguments between missionaries and *bonzos* are depicted in the *História* as a constant

¹⁰²⁸ See Robin Briggs ‘Embattled Faiths: Religion and Natural Philosophy in the Seventeenth Century’ in *Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Euan Cameron (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 189.

¹⁰²⁹ *História*, I, ch. 18, p. 115.

¹⁰³⁰ See Clark, *Thinking with Demons*, pp. 321-34.

¹⁰³¹ *História*, I, ch. 48, p. 334.

battle between the forces of good and evil. The warlike language used by Organtino is copied by Fróis in the *História*:

Tenho por tamanha affronta ser vencido nesta batalha nem em huma minima couza [...] e sinto sensivelmente quanto pezar elle [Satan] tem de eu aqui estar, porque não cessa de nos dar continuos combates acerca disto, que se tudo escrevesse ficarião espantados.¹⁰³²

Perhaps this points to the eschatological belief of Organtino, as in Revelation 20. 7-8, where, ‘At the end of these thousand years, Satan will be released from his prison; then he will set out to deceive the nations of the four corners of the world, namely Gog and Magog, and gather them for war.’ The Apocalyptic belief that Satan and demons were allowed to torment humanity before the Second Coming permeates throughout the *História*.¹⁰³³ Fróis describes Almeida even suffering physical harm from demons while in Kagoshima:

Sentindo-se os demonios (que naquella terra andão tão soltos) injuriados [...] se vingarão nelle [Almeida]: porque, alem de lhe aparecerem aquella noite logo seguinte com grandes estrondos, sembrantes e figuras espantozas e horrendas, se soube depois que lhe derão boa copia de pancadas, de que o Padre esteve alguns dias doente.¹⁰³⁴

The early Franciscans in the New World had thought of St Francis as the ‘angel of the Apocalypse who would unlock the seal of the sixth age and inaugurate the age of the Holy Spirit.’¹⁰³⁵

In the battle to win souls in Japan, these ‘soldiers of Christ’ viewed every day as a struggle to win the war: ‘Y con ellos (monks) principalmente tenemos nosotros una perpetua guerra, alevantando contra nosotros muchas y graves persecuciones.’¹⁰³⁶ According to Valignano it was the religion given by the Devil that was the reason for the vices of the Japanese: ‘En

¹⁰³² *História*, IV, ch. 59, p. 458; Évora *Cartas*, II, p. 190v.

¹⁰³³ See Levack, *The Devil Within*, pp. 65-70.

¹⁰³⁴ *História*, III, ch. 37, p. 311.

¹⁰³⁵ See Cervantes, *The Devil in the New World*, p. 63.

¹⁰³⁶ See *Sumario*, I, p. 67.

Japón, donde parte por las perversas leyes que el demonio y los bonzos les dieron, [...] no es mucho verse entre ellos algunas malas cualidades.’¹⁰³⁷ This argument was not exclusive to the missionaries: sailors and conquistadors described native rituals as satanic or under diabolical influence and the natives as devil worshippers. The conquistador Pedro Cieza de León wrote: ‘These Indians [...] certainly talk with the Devil, and do him all the honour they can, for they hold him in great veneration.’¹⁰³⁸ If the Devil was considered to be already present in Japan by the time of their arrival, the missionaries needed to explain and enlighten ‘dos erros em que os japões vivião.’¹⁰³⁹

The Devil was considered to have power over nature. En route to Japan in Malacca, Fróis noted, ‘o demonio impedio de maneira, que foi necessario invernar alli hum anno.’¹⁰⁴⁰ In similar fashion Valignano wrote: ‘de manera que ni el demonio ni sus ministros pudieron impedir nuestra ida a Japón.’¹⁰⁴¹

One of the main features of the Devil, according to Pierre de Lancre (1553-1631), a French judge from Bordeaux who organised a witch-hunt in Labourd in 1609, was his versatility in adopting different forms.¹⁰⁴² The Devil could take the form of animals, especially that of a fox: ‘o demonio em Japão tomava figuras de rapozas ou adibes para enganar aos hombres.’¹⁰⁴³ In Luke 13. 32 Jesus calls Herod a fox: ‘Go and give that fox my answer: I

¹⁰³⁷ Ibid., p. 25.

¹⁰³⁸ See Pedro Cieza de León, *The Travels of Pedro de Cieza de León, A.D. 1532-50*, 1st ed. vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 39-40. Similarly, the Spanish chronicler Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés (1478-1557) describes: ‘Alli entraba Montezuma e se retrahia a hablar con el Diablo, al cual nombraban Atezcatepoca.’ From Oviedo’s ‘História de las Indias’ in W.H. Prescott, *History of the Conquest of Mexico* (London: Phoenix Press, 2002), p. 679.

¹⁰³⁹ *História*, I, ch. 47, p. 324.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Fróis copied Nunes Barreto’s letter, see *História*, I, ch. 15, p. 94.

¹⁰⁴¹ See Valignano, *História del Principio*, p. 126.

¹⁰⁴² Cited in Iris Gareis ‘Como el Diablo llegó a los Andes: Introducción y Trayectoria Histórica de un Concepto Europeo en el Perú Colonial’ in *Entidades Maléficas y Conceptos Del Mal En Las Religiones Latinoamericanas / Evil Entities and Concepts of Evil in Latin American Religions*, ed. by Iris Gareis (Bonner Amerikanistische Studien, 45) (Aachen: Shaker Verlag, 2008), pp. 41-2.

¹⁰⁴³ *História*, I, ch. 26, p. 169.

drive out demons and heal today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my course.’ Fróis seems rather obsessed with foxes, *rapozas*: ‘Este mesmo fidalgo tinha huma criada, que antes de ser christã vinha a ella huma rapoza, que dizião ser o demonio.’¹⁰⁴⁴ This obsession seems to have come from the Japanese as well, as Fróis notes that ‘os bonzos chamavão aos nossos rapozas.’¹⁰⁴⁵ When he was allow to return to Kyoto after four years (August 1565-69) he writes that the monks called him *rapoza* as a manifestation of a demon: ‘Isto [Fróis] não hé homem mas rapoza , ou o mesmo demonio em figura humana, pois teve habilidade e industria para tornar com tanto contentamento a esta cidade, sendo lançado della por patente do Dairi.’¹⁰⁴⁶ The Buddhist monks, like their Christian counterparts, used many derogatory terms to slander the missionaries. It seems that the Jesuits turned existing local traditions to their advantage in spreading their faith: in Japanese folklore the fox, *kitsune*, is depicted as a trickster being with malign intentions who can take human form and possesses supernatural powers. Furthermore, Fróis also notes that the Devil uses animals in order to be adored, and some animals are dedicated to the Japanese gods:

Como o demonio hé substancia spiritual e invisivel uza pera ser adorado dos homens de tomar bestas e aves por cavalgaduras suas e defende que se não matem os tais animais por ser couza com que os homens fiqão sujós e contaminados: polo qual os cavalos são dedicados ao culto e veneração de Quannon, as vacas a Dainichi, os tigres e veados a Casugadaimeójin, os porcos montezez a Marixton, os minhotos a Atago, os corvos a Qumano, os pombos a Fachiman, as rapozas a Ynari, os bogios a Sannó.¹⁰⁴⁷

Vilela pointed out that, ‘hazese adorar el demonio en diversas figuras, especialmente de bestias, como vacas, venados, conejos.’¹⁰⁴⁸ Here it is interesting to highlight that in Aesop’s *Fables*, possibly the only secular book published by the Jesuit mission press in Japan, the

¹⁰⁴⁴ See *História*, I, ch. 8, p. 62, n. 8.

¹⁰⁴⁵ *História*, I, ch. 27, p. 181.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Fróis makes a mistake and he wrote that it was five years of exile, see *História*, II, ch. 85, p. 265.

¹⁰⁴⁷ *História*, IV, Fragments of a Catechism, p. 560.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Gaspar Vilela (29 October 1557) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 87r.

fox ‘came to be the most popular animal figure.’¹⁰⁴⁹ In Peru, the Jesuit Juan Gomez noted that the natives believed in superstitions: ‘se les aparece el demonio en figura de muxer y de animales en las fuentes y rios.’¹⁰⁵⁰

As well as to inform them, it was essential to warn the Japanese of the perils that they faced, most notably the eternal damnation of their souls. Fróis writes how, in 1551, Fernandes spent his time giving etiological narratives to answer the Buddhist monk’s questions about the origins of Christianity: ‘Outros perguntarão que couza era o demonio? E (respondemos) dizendo-lhes que era Lucifer com outros muitos anjos, os quaes por sua soberba forão privados da gloria e vista de Deos.’¹⁰⁵¹ By *demonio* Fernandes meant not only Lucifer but also included all of the fallen angels. These fallen angels are described as dwelling among men, and especially afflicting gentiles. Fróis attributes this thought to a ‘possessed’ gentile: ‘Respondeo que todos [gentiles] erão sugeitos a elle e a seos companheiros, e que em cada aldeazinha pequena havia dous o tres demonios, que tinham cuidado de tentar as almas dos gentios, e lhe fazião cometer muitos pecados.’¹⁰⁵²

According to the missionaries, Lucifer had misled the Japanese and had been leading them to perdition. It was this demonic power to trick people that was a constant concern for the Jesuits. In his *catecismo*, Fróis affirms that,

os camis e fotoques que se adorão em Japão sem falta nenhuma são demonios, mas porque se o diabo se nomease por quem elle hé averia pouqos que o adorasem,

¹⁰⁴⁹ On the printing of Aesop’s *Fables* see Boxer, *The Christian Century*, p. 191. William J. Farge S.J. ‘Translating religious experience across cultures’, in *Christianity and Cultures*, ed. by Üçerler (Rome: Institutum Historicum Soicietatis Iesu, 2009), p. 85. On the Fox in literature see Hans-Jörg Uther, ‘The Fox in World Literature: Reflections on a “Fictional Animal”’, in *Asian Folklore Studies*, Volume 65, 2006: 133-160, p. 135.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Juan Gomez to Francis Borgia (Lima, beginning of 1571) in *Monumenta Peruana*, I, p. 425.

¹⁰⁵¹ *História*, I, ch. 7, p. 54.

¹⁰⁵² See *História*, IV, ch. 28, p. 211. James VI of Scotland (I of England) believed that, ‘the devil was a tangible force of evil, waging war on mankind in its last age’, see Malcolm Gaskill, *Witchfinders: A seventeenth-century English tragedy* (London: John Murray, 2005), p. 30.

emcobrindo falsamente o nome e seu proprio ser, fas-se denunciar com titulo e aparentia de pessoas tidas por santas.¹⁰⁵³

This is a common argument of the time, when Lucifer is considered the archetypical trickster. In Japan, according to Fróis, the Devil had managed to disguise himself as people considered to be saintly so he could be venerated, but when he came to be known as the Devil they would see him for what he truly was and the arrival of the Jesuits showed that. This is explained in terms of the missionaries having come to preach the truth and to denounce the lies taught by the Devil. In the book of Revelation, the Devil is considered the deceiver of the whole world, and the same bitter arguments that were happening in Europe at the time between Catholic and Protestants are transported across the seas.¹⁰⁵⁴

For Valignano, who put under the same umbrella heretics and pagans, the blindness of the Protestant clergy barred them from seeing their errors and realising that it was all the work of the Devil,

De manera que tienen estos propiamente la doctrina, que el demonio, padre de ambos, enseñó a Lutero; de lo qual podrian los desventurados herejes de nuestro tiempo tomar buena ocasión de conocer su ceguedad [...] bastandoles para eso saber que essa su mesma doctrina tiene dada el demonio por sus ministros a la gentilidad de Japón.¹⁰⁵⁵

The Devil had even induced the native population to imitate some Christian rituals: ‘parece que en cierta manera el demonio los enseña a remedar nuestras cosas.’¹⁰⁵⁶ Among these were the way the monks’ behaviour resembled that of the Capuchin friars and the solemnity of the Japanese burial customs. In China, Matteo Ricci wrote, ‘that the father of all lies, who

¹⁰⁵³ *História*, IV, app. 1, p. 558.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Revelations 12. 9.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Valignano, *História del Principio*, p. 161.

¹⁰⁵⁶ *Sumario*, I, p. 64.

is the author of all this, has not yet lost his incredible pretensions of seeking to be similar to his own Creator.¹⁰⁵⁷ After all, it was said that *Diabolus est simia Dei*.¹⁰⁵⁸

Fróis's *História* displays the characteristics, concerns, and preconceptions of its European authorship. These issues become especially magnified in the encounter with the 'other', as Gruzinski argues that being confronted with different cultures led Europeans to appreciate and note what at home would have been of little relevance.¹⁰⁵⁹

In the *História*, there is sufficient mention of the Devil to imply that Fróis and his brethren considered his presence to be real and active, and that it was acceptable to blame him for any setbacks to the mission. Satan and his followers were constantly trying to mar the missionaries' efforts: 'O demonio, que não dormia, e com summa industria e solitudine pretendia destruir e aniquilar todo o bom soccesso da christiandade, maquinou outras insidias e tribulações aos christãos.'¹⁰⁶⁰ Literary works of this period also point in this direction; for example, such as *Guzmán de Alfarache* insists on the Devil's relentless work and states that 'El demonio vela y nunca se adormece.'¹⁰⁶¹

But while this war is depicted as a constant, the missionaries also believed that there were periods in which the diabolical forces intensified their attack. For example it was believed that during the final moments in which a dying person faced the last temptation, devils were actively trying to gain their soul. This indicates that diabolism was akin to the topic of the

¹⁰⁵⁷ Spence, *The Memory Palace*, p. 116.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Cited in Caro Baroja, *Las Formas Complejas de la Vida Religiosa* (Madrid: Akal, 1978), p. 53. Barreto and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, p.130.

¹⁰⁵⁹ See Serge Gruzinski, *Man-Gods in the Mexican Highlands: Indian Power and Colonial Society 1520-1800* (California: Stanford University Press, 1989), p. 6.

¹⁰⁶⁰ *História*, II, ch. 51, p. 365.

¹⁰⁶¹ See Mateo Alemán, *Guzman de Alfarache* (Barcelona: Editorial Planeta, 1983), p. 717.

so called ‘witch-craze’; it too fluctuated in intensity, and Fróis explicitly points to periods when Lucifer’s interference in Japan tended to increase or lessen.

In 1578, the Ōtomo clan at the helm of their power fought against the Shimazu clan in Hyuga province. The situation looked very propitious for the missionaries. Ōtomo Sōrin had just converted to Christianity and his son Yoshimune, then lord of Bungo, was very receptive, even building a chapel in one of his castles, and had promised to convert the entire Hyuga province to Catholicism. As the Bungo forces advanced they destroyed Buddhist temples in their path, this being if not encouraged, then supported by Francisco Cabral the superior of the mission, who accompanied Sōrin. However, the Bungo forces led by Tawara Chikataka suffered a disastrous defeat which led to Bungo’s decline. As Bungo had prospered until the conversion of Sōrin (Dom Francisco), the Jesuits’ adversaries were quick to point out that it was the presence of the Jesuits and the destruction of Buddhist temples and images that had enraged their ancestral gods.

In 1579, in Bungo, when the Jesuits made preparations to suffer martyrdom, Fróis wrote that

N Senhor parece que nestes dias tinha largada muita licença aos demonios, não [so] o contentou com emburilhar o Bungo [...] mas neste momento se queremos por os olhos em qualquer parte aonde havia christiandade em Japão, não viamos nem ouviamos senão perseguições, trabalhos e arreceios de haver tudo de destruir.¹⁰⁶²

Fróis alludes to the book of Revelation, in which Satan is given freedom to inflict great suffering on humanity. He echoes this by suggesting that the forces of evil were actively tempting the Japanese during *nestes dias*.

¹⁰⁶² *História*, III, ch. 16, pp. 116-7.

The interference of the Devil intensified according to certain circumstances.¹⁰⁶³ In the *História* it seems to increase following patterns of peril and missionary setbacks when the written sources indicate a belief that the Devil was at large. In 1587, after the expulsion edict by Hideyoshi and while hiding in Shodo-shima, Organtino would refer to his personal encounters with the ‘dragon’ (Satan), as in the book of Revelation:

O meu estado e occupação agora [...] hé estar attentissimo por onde dá os assaltos deste dragão infernal para rezistir-lhe [...] E ainda não há dous dias que tive tamanho encontro e ficou meo coração tão atormentado, que me parece absolutamente que se tivera outro similhante, me houvera de passar desta vida.¹⁰⁶⁴

For Organtino after the expulsion of the Jesuits from Japan, the presence of the Devil is a very personal one. He argues that he has personally experienced the attack of the Devil through visions, which he compares with the book of Revelation 12. 7-9. Organtino’s analogy with the last book of the Bible also hints at his eschatological view of the world. However, Fróis does not depict the Devil in such personal, almost mystical, detail. He usually represents the Devil as an enemy that is machinating evil and persuading the Japanese to oppose the mission, but does not mirror Organtino’s rhetoric or the metaphors of a *dragão infernal* or *leão ferocissimo* when referring to Satan.¹⁰⁶⁵

According to Fróis, diabolical interference increased during Christian festivities:

Não deixava de haver alguma sospeita do antigo costume do demonio [...] como a experiencia ad oculum tem mostrado, sempre pelas festas da Pascoa e Natal trabalha quanto lhe hé possivel por cauzar alguma perturbação.¹⁰⁶⁶

¹⁰⁶³ On the witch-hunt trials’ patchy pattern during the early modern period, see Gaskill, *Witchcraft: A very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 67.

¹⁰⁶⁴ *História*, IV, ch. 59, p. 466. Also cited in Schütte, *Valignano’s Mission Principles*, p. 104. Revelations 12. 3.

¹⁰⁶⁵ *História*, IV, ch. 59, p. 466. Revelations 13. 2.

¹⁰⁶⁶ *História*, IV, ch. 47, p. 349.

He argues, that by observation, it has been demonstrated that the Devil was always more active during Christmas and Easter. It was during these two key celebrations of the liturgical calendar that the new religion became more visible to the locals and perhaps received greater opposition. Christmas and Easter demanded a great deal of not only spiritual but also physical preparation. They involved confessions, public self-disciplines (flagelations), processions, and festivities. Fróis writes that in Funai ‘Desd'o principio da Quaresma athé à Pascoa do Espirito Santo’ the Christians came to the church from their villages every night and even two hours before dawn, ‘e erão tantos que não cabião.’¹⁰⁶⁷ The very visible pious demonstrations contrasted with the local religion and antagonised monks and non-Christians who reacted angrily to these deviations from their culture. This is perceived in the description of the activities in a Christian church in Kyoto during Easter:

Na Quaresma [...] o Padre [...] lhes pregava aos domingos sobre o Evangelho, às quartas sobre a materia da confissão, e às sextas-feiras sobre os mysterios da paixão, dizendo-lhes às noites as ladainhas, e tomando juntamente com elles a disciplina. Os quaes [...] de seo proprio mo[to] fizeram suas disciplinas de rozetas, derramando com ellas muito sangue.¹⁰⁶⁸

In the above *caza*, as Vilela prepared the neophytes for Easter, the Devil is depicted as resenting these pious activities and preparing to attack: ‘crescia [...] o odio que o demonio tinha a estas virtuozas obras e proveito espiritual dos christãos, que não deixava de intentar couza em que os podesse perturbar.’ Fróis argues that it was the Devil that possessed and instigated the gentiles: ‘entrou o demonio nos vizinhos da igreja, por todos os daquela rua serem gentios [...] alli se armavão entre huns e outros humas brigas crueis.’¹⁰⁶⁹ But the above mentioned church in Kyoto is unequivocally described as being located in a road of non-Christians. According to Fróis, Vilela had negotiated with the Shogun that the Jesuit house

¹⁰⁶⁷ *História*, I, ch. 14, p. 91.

¹⁰⁶⁸ *História*, I, ch. 35, p. 239.

¹⁰⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

should evade ‘as impozissões, vigias e outras muitas obrigações que tem as ruas todas, com as quaes igualmente correm os bonzos que nellas estão.’¹⁰⁷⁰ The church was sold by a *bonzo* to Vilela against the will of the neighbours and with a ‘patente de Cubosama (Shogun) para lhe não ser tomada a caza da pouzentadaria, e ser eximido das obrigações da rua.’¹⁰⁷¹ Therefore this church had inauspicious beginnings as all the neighbours were non-Christians and had good reasons to protest against this religious house.

Not all the Jesuits’ houses and churches were built among gentiles, but during Easter and Christmas their Christian practices were more visible to the Japanese and may have encouraged greater opposition. These observations of cyclical diabolical interference of higher intensity led to Fróis’s constant expectations of foreboding in his *História*.

IV.3 Forebodings in hindsight

The *histoire des mentalités* focuses on the mindsets of past cultural and social groups or how an individual would interpret the world around him in a specific situation. Ariès refers to common ideas, which ‘in order to be effective [...] need not be recognised or admitted or even unanimously accepted. They need only be present as truisms or commonplaces in the air of the time.’¹⁰⁷² The Jesuits examined and analysed the Japanese social context through the lens of their European preconceptions, but also they tried to interpret, and more importantly convey through language the new reality that they encountered. But the point here, as Whatmore argued, is to understand why the idea was being pressed upon the world by the author.¹⁰⁷³ In the *História* the word *demônio* alone appears in 158 chapters of a total of 357, not mentioning the various other terms used to describe Lucifer. The word *diabo*

¹⁰⁷⁰ *História*, I, ch. 25, p. 162.

¹⁰⁷¹ *História*, I, ch. 29, p. 196.

¹⁰⁷² Philippe Ariès, *The Hour of our Death* (London: Penguin Books, 1981), p. 332.

¹⁰⁷³ Whatmore, *What is Intellectual History?*, pp. 98-9.

appears in 25 chapters, and *satanaz* appears seven times, there are many more allusions to the Devil, as for example when he is described as ‘the enemy’, *inimigo*, in the *História*. The author of the *História* uses high-inference language such as *demonio*, *diabo*, *Satanaz* or just *o inimigo*; these are terms with strong connotations invoking an emotional response as well as being contentious and loaded terms carrying a myriad of meanings.¹⁰⁷⁴

Here, I aim to show how Fróis and his confreres appealed to the discourse of diabolical interference as a truism in order to explain negative events or disasters, and as a rhetorical device. The Devil was considered real and a constantly menacing presence, but Fróis seems to use the Devil in the *História*, often deliberately to achieve specific ends, in this case as a screen, to hide the missionaries behind the *shoji* (paper screen), so none of the setbacks reflect negatively on the Jesuits’ errors or shortcomings.

Fróis argues, in what could be considered a rather negative statement:

Pela larga experiencia que disto se tem tomado, hé couza infalivel e averiguada [...] depois de algum prospero soccesso na obra da conversão haver-se-lhe logo de seguir o contraste da contradição, maquinada pela malicia e enveja do demonio e de seos sequazes, como são os bonzos em Japão.¹⁰⁷⁵

A close analysis of the *História* reveals that Fróis is constantly making this kind of foreboding remark, usually after the Jesuits had achieved some success in their proselytising efforts. In the above statement, he argues that this was not just his own view but one which was widely accepted among the missionaries worldwide. If this was true, then the evangelising progress and success achieved from Goa to Japan, and from New Spain to Manila in the sixteenth century were always met with the anticipation that a step backwards was imminent, due to the Devil’s impending meddling. But here I argue that Fróis writes

¹⁰⁷⁴ On emotivism see the seminal work by C.L. Stevenson, *Ethics and Language* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944).

¹⁰⁷⁵ *História*, I, ch. 45, p. 307.

with the benefit of hindsight and that he, and perhaps also his sources, observes signs of looming negative events; indeed he is always anticipating the next negative episode in his narrative. Of course, many of the accounts which he copies, including his own letters, reflect actual arguments made by Jesuits just after the events and which often include the intervention of the Devil as the reason for a setback. But given Fróis's knowledge of what had already happened, he is able to develop a coherent narrative that foresees the setbacks that would follow, always citing the intervention of the Devil as their main cause.

These forebodings followed a narrative of progress or missionary success such as this: 'se começava já a augmentar com maior concurso o numero dos christãos, não podia o demonio deixar de acudir com seos acostumados obstaculo[s] a contrariar esta obra.'¹⁰⁷⁶ In a similar way Fróis noted:

Sendo [...] o sucesso dos nossos, da igreja e dos christãos tão prospero [...] foi Deus N. Senhor servido que se aguassem estes prazeres passados com alguma nove tristeza inesperada [...] convem saber-se primeiro a quem tomou o demonio por author e instrumento desta perturbaçam.¹⁰⁷⁷

It is as if the *Rota Fortunae* is especially spinning when the missionaries have reached the summit, sending them crashing down to the bottom.¹⁰⁷⁸ Fróis uses this figure of speech before narrating the fall of Bungo, as he writes that the Superior Francisco Cabral many times 'ameaçava aos de Bungo, dizendo que se aparelhasem para o desandar da roda.'¹⁰⁷⁹ Here Fróis implies that at that time Bungo was successful but they should prepare spiritually as the wheels of fortune were about to change. In 1578, he reminds those in Bungo that although their armies were making progress in Hyuga province and they were at the height

¹⁰⁷⁶ *História*, II, ch. 80, p. 220.

¹⁰⁷⁷ See *História*, II, ch. 87, p. 278.

¹⁰⁷⁸ In King Henry V, act 3, scene VI, Shakespeare depicts 'Fortune's furious fickle wheel/ that goddess blind.'

¹⁰⁷⁹ *História*, III, ch. 6, p. 44.

of their power, he almost presaged the disastrous set of events to come warning that ‘in die bonorum non essent inmemores malorum.’¹⁰⁸⁰

Fróis, as mentioned above, copies letters from other missionaries but to these he silently makes additions in order to give emphasis to his argument. For example, when Balthasar Gago was in danger in Funai, he wrote that he moved to the house of a monk, where he had disputes and was verbally attacked. Fróis copies Alcáçova’s letter about these events, but in this section he adds ‘especialmente com bonzos’ and the ‘[devil] pay de todas as abominações’, so as to give a special sense that the confrontation was instigated by the Devil through the *bonzos* ‘his ministers.’¹⁰⁸¹ This can be appreciated in the way in which Fróis constructs the failure of the Kagoshima mission by Almeida. In 1582, when Almeida was sent to Kagoshima by the vice-provincial to restart the mission in the Satsuma area, his efforts enjoyed some auspicious beginnings as he was welcomed by the king and given a license to preach, and house in which to reside. However, things soon turned sour and Almeida’s subsequent departure is portrayed by Fróis as being entirely due to the Devil’s intervention:

O diabo [...] fez hu[m]a conjuração dos bonzos, feiticeiras e fidalgos principaes, acordando que seria bom mandar el-rey expressamente aos fidalgos e pessoas nobres do reino que jurassem por seos idolos e se assinassem com sangue tirado de seos corpos, que nem elles se farião christãos nem consentirião que seos vassalos o fossem.¹⁰⁸²

I suggest that this theme was also rendered salient due to the personal predicaments of Fróis and his colleagues. From his arrival in Yokoseura in 1563, Fróis experienced mortal danger and he had to seek refuge in the Portuguese carrack as the port was burned. This perilous

¹⁰⁸⁰ See *História*, III, ch. 6, p. 44. Ecclesiastes 11. 27.

¹⁰⁸¹ *História*, I, ch. 10, p. 68. See Pedro de Alcáçova to the Jesuits in Portugal (Goa 1554) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 55v.

¹⁰⁸² *História*, III, ch. 37, p. 312.

situation would be repeated many times in Japan and he would very often have to flee, such as when he had to hide in Kyoto:

Vinhao os christaos a cada passo a igreja dizer ao Padre [Fróis] que entrouxasse o fato que boamente se podia salvar em cestos [...] e o restante [...] ficavao alli a ventura do fogo e dos ladroes que haviaio de saquear a cidade.¹⁰⁸³

Among these threatening situations figures his escape from the city of Osaka. But as he had erased the name of Mendes Pinto in his *História*, Fróis omits certain parts.¹⁰⁸⁴ In this case he passes over the narrative in his own letter printed in the Alcalá *Cartas*, where he had admitted to being petrified while running away, ‘nunca camino me parecia tan largo, ni he dado pasos tan acelerados, tan amiga es la naturaleza de conservar su ser.’¹⁰⁸⁵ Perhaps this passage was considered by our author to be embarrassing and not particularly edifying, so he chose to omit it.

There were certainly good reasons for the missionaries to feel a certain sense of imminent disaster. At the beginning of the mission in Yamaguchi, Cosme de Torres would start a flourishing Christianity in 1551, only to have to flee in 1556;¹⁰⁸⁶ in Hakata (Fukuoka) after a favourable start, Balthasar Gago had to dress in women's clothing and a large straw hat in order to escape from the city in 1559;¹⁰⁸⁷ in Hirado, the Jesuits were denied authorisation to work by Matsuura Takanobu (1529-99) between 1558 and 1564; in Yokoseura a very promising Christian port was burned to ashes in 1563.¹⁰⁸⁸

¹⁰⁸³ *História*, II, ch. 101, p. 398.

¹⁰⁸⁴ It was typical in the Jesuits' accounts to erase the names of those who had left the Society.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 208r. This statement is missing in the *História* even though he uses his own letter as source, see *História* II, ch. 56, p. 10.

¹⁰⁸⁶ See *História*, I, ch. 16.

¹⁰⁸⁷ *História*, I, ch. 20, p. 131.

¹⁰⁸⁸ *História*, I, ch. 48, p. 339.

If, as argued in chapter II, Fróis wrote this manuscript intending it to be a manual for future missionaries, then he appears to inform those yet to come that they should expect the worst and be ready even when everything looked promising, to work with the *fato* ready to depart at any moment. Fróis's explanation of the Devil's intervention was a belief shared by his brethren and thus would serve to effectively guide the latter. Throughout the *História* the missionaries are constantly fleeing, often lucky to escape with their lives.

Blaming the Devil was a win-win scenario, for if the Devil was working against the missionaries then the latter were working for God and everything they were doing was seen as righteous by God and therefore threatening to the Devil: 'pezava ao demonio de se pregar nossa santa fé.'¹⁰⁸⁹ Or 'O demonio se temia do fructo que se alli poderia fazer.'¹⁰⁹⁰ However, it remains debatable whether the Jesuits truly believed that the setbacks were instigated by the Devil, or if this was used as an excuse to exonerate themselves from mission's failures.

In his *Apologíá*, Valignano wrote that the reason for Hideyoshi's expulsion decree in 1587 was his anger due to the monk Yakuin's intrigues against the Jesuits. Privately however, Valignano mainly blamed Coelho's imprudence for Hideyoshi's hostility. On the other hand, as pointed out by Álvarez-Taladriz, in a letter to the General Acquaviva (Goa, 23 November 1595), Valignano recognised the threat that the missionaries could have represented in the eyes of the Japanese ruler, as a subversive group working within Japan to further an invading European's military and political aims: 'Quambacudono, no entendiendo nuestro modo de proceder, a temerse que fácilmente de esta manera los Padres vendrian a hacerse señores de Japón, por do movio contra nosotros la persecución.'¹⁰⁹¹ However later on, and like Fróis,

¹⁰⁸⁹ *História*, I, ch. 12, p. 77. In a letter to the Fathers and brothers in Japan, the General Acquaviva, argued that charity would give the missionaries patience when, 'os demonios impede[m]' see *História*, IV, ch. 15, p. 113.

¹⁰⁹⁰ *História*, II, ch. 106, p. 441.

¹⁰⁹¹ See Valignano, *Apologíá*, p. 185.

Valignano also saw the influence of the Devil as a factor in the martyrdom of 1597: ‘vino a caer Kampaku en desconfianza [...] y teniendole el demonio metido en la imaginación tanta sospecha [...] de los frailes [...] que luego los mando a matar.’¹⁰⁹²

These constant references about the Devil ties in with the earlier suggestion that Fróis and his fellow Jesuits taught as much about hell as about heaven; perhaps even more about the former than the latter. The themes of liberation from sin and from the power of the Devil occupied the bulk of the sermons that were preached to Amerindians in the early period after conquest.¹⁰⁹³ Fróis writes that following Xavier’s orders to catechise the gentiles, the missionaries taught amongst other things the ‘penas do inferno.’¹⁰⁹⁴ This should not come as a surprise, since the salvation of souls was their main objective, and without any kind of coercive power in Japan, the Jesuits saw the loss of thousands of unbaptised souls plunging towards hell during the warring states period:

Nas guerras que há en Jappão morrem ordinariamente cinco e dez mil homens por amor do demonio, [...] Poes a batalha em que agora andamos, não hé porventura contra o demonio, onde morrendo ficamos vencedores com Christo?¹⁰⁹⁵

Francisco Cabral lamented that ‘de outros reinos nos pedem [...]se lhe va pregar a lei de Deos aos quaes eu não posso responder senão com lagrimas de ver perder tantas almas sem aver quem lhe possa acudir.’¹⁰⁹⁶ This echoes Saint Teresa who remarked: ‘I do not know how we can look calmly on those others that are endless (eternal tortures) and see the devil carrying off as many souls as he does every day.’¹⁰⁹⁷

¹⁰⁹² Ibid., p. 184.

¹⁰⁹³ See Cervantes, *The Devil in the New World*, p. 9.

¹⁰⁹⁴ *História*, II, ch. 57, p. 16.

¹⁰⁹⁵ *História*, I, ch. 7, p. 56.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Francisco Cabral to the Provincial of Portugal (Nagasaki, 12 September 1575) in Évora *Cartas*, p. 352v.

¹⁰⁹⁷ See *The Life of Saint Teresa*, trans. by J. M. Cohen (Edinburgh: Penguin Books, 1958), p. 235.

Preaching amid wars, fires, starvation, and desolation gave the first Jesuits in Japan, few in number, an urgency to make conversions in a very large geographical area; indeed one of the main problems raised in the mission consultation in Bungo in 1580, was whether to consolidate the areas already Christianised or to expand further into areas not yet evangelised, given that extending the mission signified a huge effort during difficult circumstances with already stretched resources, ‘como a messe de Japão era mui grande e os obreiros tão poucos.’¹⁰⁹⁸ Among the reasons in favour of extending the mission further, the main weight lay on the salvation of souls:

Lo primero porque aunque los cristianos fuesen flacos, tendran todavia siempre muchas ayudas y podran, aun puestos en el paso de la muerte, buscar remedio y hallar su salvación, lo cual no pueden hacer los gentiles, que viven ciegos y sin Padres que les puedan dar remedio [...] Lo tercero [...] a lo menos se salvan todos los que mueren niños, los cuales se perderian muriendo gentiles.¹⁰⁹⁹

It was decided that, ‘no opportunity should be lost of extending the Christian faith in the different kingdoms.’¹¹⁰⁰ This signals a rather pressing issue, one that could not wait as time was running out. Lacking in numbers and in anxious times, this diabolism permeated their writing heavily. Rather than a just the belief in the existence and power of demons in Fróis’s writings, what is abundant in his letters and his *História* is the everyday concern of a missionary from the rank and file to help the Japanese avoid eternal damnation; especially when the locals are seen as idolaters and therefore followers of the Devil. An oath of apostasy in Japan 1645 says: ‘[The Christian religion] regards the next life as the most important [...] [it] teaches that there is no salvation in the next life unless sinners confess their faults to the padres and receive their absolution.’¹¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁹⁸ *História*, I, ch. 10, p. 66.

¹⁰⁹⁹ *Sumario*, I, p. 213.

¹¹⁰⁰ Cited in Schütte, *Valignano's Mission Principles*, p. 224.

¹¹⁰¹ See Boxer, *The Christian Century*, p. 441.

Extending the mission under these conditions more likely meant at least the baptism of large numbers of Japanese, if not the permanent presence of Jesuits in the areas being converted. Baptism is a kind of exorcism, in which the candidate is liberated from sin and explicitly renounces Satan: ‘Logo que recebeu o santo baptismo, cessou [o demonio] e não veio mas.’¹¹⁰²

As Luke Clossey points out the missionaries aimed at ‘religious and cultural values to flow in one direction’ and this must be kept in mind when analysing Jesuit sources.¹¹⁰³ One of the key elements of their mindset was their preoccupation with the salvation of souls, which was believed to be achieved by good Christians. This preoccupation sometimes bordered on an anxiety that followed the missionaries wherever they went. This is present, for example, when Fróis expressed his concern at not knowing whether Xavier’s first Japanese convert, Yayirō (Paulo de Santa Fé), at the time of his death had repented of his sins or whether his soul was lost to the Devil: ‘pode ser que tivesse antes da morte contrição de seos peccados e acabasse bem; mas isto não nos consta, nem sabemos outra couza de seo fim.’¹¹⁰⁴ According to Fróis Yayirō was compared among the Jesuits in Japan to the star that guided the three wise men, in that he was the ‘guia dos Padres da India para Japão [...] mas todavia não entrou com elles dentro no presepio de Betlem.’¹¹⁰⁵

In the *Catecismo*, attributed to Fróis, he argued that ‘o termino do perigo ultimo aonde o diabo deseja e pretende levar e precipitar os homens he a morte.’¹¹⁰⁶ After all, according to

¹¹⁰² *História*, I, ch. 8, p. 62.

¹¹⁰³ Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization*, p. 7.

¹¹⁰⁴ *História*, I, ch. 6, p. 46. Spelled Anjirō in the *História*.

¹¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

¹¹⁰⁶ ‘Fragmentos dum Catesismo para os Catecumenos Japoneses da segunda metade do seculo XVI’ attributed to Fróis, see *História*, p. 562.

the scriptures, it was because of Satan that ‘sin and death’ entered this world and with his total and final defeat humanity would be completely liberated of both.

But while the shadow of Satan was looming large, the belief that the individual had the power to save himself was also paramount. Juan Fernandes, answering the question as to why God let the Devil cause harm, wrote:

Respondemos que o demonio não tem mais poder contra os homens, que trazer-lhe a memoria que faça mal; e que os homens tem conhecimento do bem e do mal, e liberdade para fazerem o que quizerem, e assim a culpa he sua.¹¹⁰⁷

In this way the individual could take the necessary steps toward salvation, especially by preparing for death. Such concern is clearly represented in this period with the production of a large body of literature concerning ‘the art of dying well’ in Europe.¹¹⁰⁸ In his last letter to the Emperor (3 February 1544), Hernán Cortés wrote: ‘no tengo ya edad por andar por mesones, sino para recogerme a aclarar mi cuenta con Dios [...] y sera mejor dejar perder la hacienda que el anima.’¹¹⁰⁹

IV.4 More of a deterrent than a comfort

The presence of the Devil and the dangers that he posed consistently featured in the missionaries’ preaching and sermons, and filtered through to appear in their writings. In his autobiography, Loyola tells of his internal fight with thoughts he believed came from the ‘enemy.’ According to Loyola the Devil pointed out to him the long life of hardship that he was expected to endure, and Ignatius inwardly replied: ‘O miserable being! Can you promise

¹¹⁰⁷ *História*, I, ch. 7, p. 55.

¹¹⁰⁸ Such as the Erasmus’ *De praeparatione ad mortem* (1534), Alejo Venegas’ *Agonia del Tránsito de la muerte* (1537), and *Pensez-y-bien* among many, see O’Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1994), p. 175. On a specific area, see Casey, *Familia y Sociedad*, pp. 213-256.

¹¹⁰⁹ See Prescott, *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, p. 696.

me an hour of life?’¹¹¹⁰ According to Fróis, Cosme de Torres preached that hell was in the centre of the earth.¹¹¹¹

By condemning the religions of Japan as having originated from the Devil, the Jesuits attempted to argue that the Japanese had been deceived, being led to worship nothing but idols. In the disputations of the Jesuits with the monks of Yamaguchi, Fernandes, answering the question as to why God let the devils cause so much harm in this world, wrote that ‘si aqui no uviessse demonios que tentasen a los hombres, no tendrian miedo a los peligros de este mundo, ni al infierno.’¹¹¹² In other words, God allows demons, or even uses them, to do mischief and cause harm as a warning of the dangers that humanity could suffer in this world and in hell. Fear and the preoccupations with the dangers of this world and the after-life keep appearing over and over in the early accounts. This would be a recurring theme throughout the *História*.¹¹¹³ This starts to appear even in Xavier’s correspondence with fellow Europeans. In 1545, in a letter Xavier warns John III of Portugal, he does not remind the king of the glory of heaven, instead he finishes the letter with: ‘que en esta vida le de gracia para sentir y hacer lo que en la hora de la muerte, desearia haber hecho.’¹¹¹⁴ In Japan, the pioneers would teach ‘que los que no adoraban a Dios, todos iban al infierno.’¹¹¹⁵ This, of course, had the negative effect of condemning the Japanese’s ancestors who had died without learning about the Christian God. According to Xavier, this was the biggest

¹¹¹⁰ John C. Olin, ed., *The Autobiography of St Ignatius Loyola* (New York: Torchbooks, 1974) p. 34.

¹¹¹¹ *História*, I, ch. 7, p. 56; The *inferno* is ‘debaxo da terra’, see ‘Fragmentos dum Catecismo para os Catecumenos Japoneses da segunda metade do seculo XVI’, attributed to Fróis in *História*, pp. 554-5.

¹¹¹² Juan Fernandes to Xavier (20 October 1551) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 25r.

¹¹¹³ ‘Temiamos e esperavamos nosso ultimo tranze’ from a letter by Antonio Prenestino quoted in *História*, II, ch. 116, p. 508.

¹¹¹⁴ Xavier to King John III (Cochin, 20 January 1545) in *X. Cartas*, p. 159. Xavier asked John III of Portugal to remind his ministers in India to work harder for *las cosas del servicio divino*, and he even warns the king of the perils that awaited him at his death during his judgement with God ‘y esto ha de suceder cuando menos se espere,’ when God should ask him ‘airado ¿por que no vigilaste a los que en la India recibian la autoridad de ti y eran subditos tuyos y enemigos mios?’ *ibid.*, p. 156. In a similar vein Xavier reprimanded two Jesuits, Alfonso Cipriano and Gonzalo Fernandes, by warning them: ‘a la hora de vuestra muerte os ha de pesar’, see Xavier to Alfonso Cipriano (Goa, 6-14 April 1552) in *X. Cartas*, p. 457.

¹¹¹⁵ Xavier to his companions in Europe (Cochin, 29 January 1552) in *X. Cartas*, p. 394.

stumbling block for the conversion of the Japanese people to Christianity, as they believed that ‘Dios no tuvo piedad de sus antepasados, pues los dejó ir al infierno, sin darles conocimiento de sí.’¹¹¹⁶ This alone points to the degree of teaching about the Devil and hell imparted by the Jesuits, in their attempt to highlight that those outside the church were sentenced to spend all of eternity in hell.

Valignano mentioned that in Japan, ‘Otros adoran al demonio, al cual pintan con tan fea y espantosa figura como lo pintamos nosotros.’¹¹¹⁷ The eternal sufferings in hell were emphasised by clerics in order to instil fear within the laity so they would refrain from sin. Especially frightening at this time was to perpetually endure being burned by fire and being frozen in icy conditions. The fear of Hell can be observed in the disputations between Fernandes and Torres with the monks and copied by Fróis: [the devil] procura neste mundo trazê-los a muitos perigos e depois levá-los ao inferno, se segue nelles hum medo e temor, assim do inferno como dos perigos deste mundo.¹¹¹⁸ If anything, the fear of eternal damnation and the innumerable depictions of sufferings in hell were the best way to keep Christians in check, *Inferno aperto al Christiano perche non v’entri* and to gain neophytes.¹¹¹⁹ Venegas named 20 forms of punishment in hell out of the innumerable that were “available” for the wicked.¹¹²⁰ There are in the *História* several mentions of the tortures that awaited the Japanese if they did not convert.¹¹²¹ Perhaps more relevant, such a marked

¹¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 394.

¹¹¹⁷ See *Sumario*, I, p. 65.

¹¹¹⁸ Juan Fernandes to Xavier (Japan, 20 October 1551) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 25r. *História*, I, ch. 7, p. 56.

¹¹¹⁹ Cited in Piero Camporesi, *The Fear of Hell: Images of Damnation and Salvation in Early Modern Europe* (Cornwall: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991), p. 75. F.X. Schouppe, S.J., *The Dogma of Hell* (London: Catholic Way Publishing, 2013). There are innumerable representations of hell during the sixteenth century, from Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel to the anonymous painting *Inferno* (c. 1520) in Lisbon; and in literary works such as the hell of *Mephistophilis*: ‘Which strike a terror to my fainting soul’, in *Doctor Faustus*.

¹¹²⁰ See A. Venegas, ‘Agonia del Tránsito de la Muerte’ in *Escritores Místicos Españoles: Hernando de Talavera, Alejo Venegas, Francisco de Osuna, Alfonso de Madrid* (Madrid: Casa Editorial Bailly/ Bailliere, 1911), I, pp. 197-9.

¹¹²¹ See *História*, I, ch. 23, p.146; ch. 35, p. 240; ch. 259; ch. 54, p. 383; II, ch. 58, p. 29 (on Japanese inferno); ch. 66, 103 (Christian talks about inferno); ch. 74, p. 168 (Christian mentions *tormentos eternos*); ch. 79, p. 211 (Christian); ch. 87, p. 280; III, ch. 22, p.170 (possessed gentile talks about inferno); IV, ch. 3, p. 25

prominence of the Devil and hell in the *História* demonstrate, as Caro Baroja argued, that Christianity in the early modern period, due to this emphasis on eternal punishment, was *mas freno que consuelo*.¹¹²² Valignano describes the Buddhist gods in Japan as monstrous representations: ‘plunged in the midst of fiery flames so that by their very aspect they warn mortals of the torments they endure and of the punishments, too, that await those who pay them homage.’¹¹²³ The idea that everlasting torment awaited the sinner was supposed to deter people from committing immoral acts and crimes more effectively than the offering of an earthly consolation. The issue of hell was so important as to induce a group of learned Jesuits to ‘measure’ its size.¹¹²⁴ It was also very relevant to the Jesuits’ methods of conversion.

While narratives representing hell could be passionately expressed in the Jesuits’ sermons, Fróis portrays allegedly possessed persons as having the ability to describe the inferno and the devils in the *História*. In 1580, Fróis notes how a *relicário* was put on the neck of possessed Japanese woman; after this, the woman started to tremble and was questioned as to where the souls of the damned went and the torments they suffered:

Respondeo que ao inferno e que os tormentos erão ahi mui grandes, especialmente de fogo e frio. E perguntando-lhe quão grande erão os do fogo, se fez a mulher toda vermelha, começando por todo corpo fumegar e suar e parecia que arrebentava; e depois querendo mostrar quaes erão os do frio, com huma mudança repentina começou a bater os dentes e tremer por todo corpo, mostrando-se tão fria como se estivesse metida em caramelo.¹¹²⁵

(possessed gentile); ch. 26, p. 196; ch. 28, p. 211 (*camis* and *fotoques* suffering in inferno); Fragmentos dum Catecismo, p. 545, 554, 555, and 556.

¹¹²² Baroja, *Las Formas Complejas de la Vida Religiosa*, pp. 51-76.

¹¹²³ Cited in Schütte, *Valignano’s Mission Principles*, p. 83.

¹¹²⁴ They were Cornelio a Lapide (1567-1637), Francisco de Ribera, Jeremias Drexel (1581-1638), Leonardo Lessio (1554- 1623), and Mattioli, see Camporesi, *The Fear of Hell*, pp. 30-2. Darren Oldridge, *Strange Histories: The trial of the pig, the walking dead, and other matters of the fact from the medieval and Renaissance worlds* (Oxford: Routledge, 2007), pp. 35-6.

¹¹²⁵ *História*, III, ch. 22, p. 170.

This is similar to Dante's description of the agony of those souls trapped in a lake of ice up to their chins with their teeth chattering from the cold. These corporeal sufferings and manifestation in the possessed woman are used as proof of the existence of hell. The interpretation of the woman experiencing what could be described as convulsions is that, being possessed by a devil, she (or the devil) was able to describe the torments that awaited the sinners.

IV.5 Possessed

Throughout the *História* there are stories of people being possessed, *endemoninhado/ endemoninhada*, by the Devil. In the instances where this is narrated, those who are possessed are mainly non-Christian *gentios* or otherwise (or less often lukewarm Christians), who suffer convulsions and great physical harm while their souls are tormented.¹¹²⁶ Once the demoniac is exorcised and is baptised he or she no longer suffers from the Devil. Stuart Clark argues that the phenomenon of possession was a construction by contemporaries and derived from the models of the product of demons, disease, or deception or a combination of these.¹¹²⁷ The Jesuits transported to the missions a set of beliefs indicative of demonic possessions as demonstrated by the similarities between the cases between Europe and the overseas missions. A look into these cases reveals an insight into the Jesuits' preconceptions, teachings, and how they described them. It appears that Fróis, and the Jesuits' accounts which he copied, was following established European conventions of models of what

¹¹²⁶ It is widely known that during this period, Satan represented a real menace to people's lives, see Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization*, pp.130-5. Fróis copied a letter from Juan Fernandes where he interprets for Torres the monks' questions; here 15 times the word *demonio* is mentioned, while *inferno* is written 14 times, see *História*, I, ch. 7, pp. 51-8.

¹¹²⁷ Clark, *Thinking with Demons*, p. 396.

possession was thought to be at the time, how to recognise a demoniac, how to deal with the sick person, and how to cure them.

The process of possession is generally explained either by a demon entering the body of the afflicted person, or through another person working with the Devil - *feiticeira/o* - who in this case bewitches the person. Fróis describes the mother of a monk ‘em extremo perversa e malissima gentia’ that through pacts with the devil was ‘feita bruxa e feiticeira estranha.’¹¹²⁸ He said that according to the locals this *bruxa* was described as ‘sobremaneira mal acondicionada, iracunda, insufriavel, má de contentar e, finalmente, como filha e discipula do demonio, pelear com todos e com ninguem ter paz.’¹¹²⁹ As a *feiticeira* she was said to be able to send ‘a hum daquelles seos espiritos malignos familiares que entrasse’ in the body of the son of a Christian.¹¹³⁰ As in Europe at the time, and just as in witchcraft, the majority of possessed in the *História* were females.¹¹³¹ Noriko T. Rieder discusses that *oni*, or supernatural figures in Japanese literature and lore, usually appear as demons. Such as the *Yamauba*, depicted as a woman with long unkempt hair and kimono and with cannibalistic tendencies.¹¹³² There was a belief in spirit possession in Japanese culture before the arrival of Europeans, which seems to have been exploited by the missionaries to gain prestige over the local religions. The Jesuits found and noticed a deep believe on the supernatural in Japanese folklore. Baptista believed the Japanese to be ‘muy agoreros [harbingers] y se siguen mucho por agueros [omens]’¹¹³³ Fróis may have also borrowed from

¹¹²⁸ *História*, V, ch. 7, p. 58.

¹¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

¹¹³⁰ See Julio Caro Baroja, *The World of the Witches*, trans. by O.N.V. Glendinning (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1964), pp. 131-9. *História*, V, ch. 7, p. 58.

¹¹³¹ On women possessed see *História*, I, ch. 12, p. 77 and 79; ch. 14, p. 89 -90; ch. 17, p. 112; ch. 31, p. 208; ch. 49, p. 343; ch. 51, p. 367; II, ch. 82, p. 236; ch. 113, p. 484; III, ch. 22, p. 170; ch. 37, p. 311; V, ch. 7, pp. 58-60; ch. 16, pp. 132-3; ch. 31, p. 244; ch. 53, p. 405. On men possessed see *História*, I, ch. 12, p. 78 and 79; ch. 14, p. 89; IV, ch. 3, p. 25; ch. 28, p. 208 and 211; ch. 35, p. 256-7.

¹¹³² Noriko T. Rieder, *Japanese Demon Lore: Oni from Ancient Times to the Present* (Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 2010), pp. 68-84.

¹¹³³ Battista to Juan Polanco (Bungo, 9 October 1564) in Alcalá *Cartas*, p. 180v.

pre-existing notions of demonic influence in Japanese tradition. Fróis copied a letter of Giovanni Battista de Monte, where the later affirmed that possessed were being cured in the Christian churches:

Há neste reino grande numero de endemoninhados: da igreja se faz oração sobre elles e exorcismos, e pela bondade do Senhor ficão livres de vexação do demonio, e alguns em reconhecimento deste beneficio se fazem christãos. E assim corre já entre os gentios esta opinião, que os enfermos, para receberem saude, hão-de hir a nossa igreja e não a suas varelas.¹¹³⁴

One of the more persuasive ways to demonstrate the presence of the Devil in Japan was to describe demonic possessions. At the same time, by stating that the missionaries were able to cure these demoniacs through exorcisms, Fróis reinforced the belief that the Devil was actively present in Japan and the power of the Christian doctrine. The curing of the sickness of alleged possessions was clearly used by the Jesuits as a tool to attract new converts as well.¹¹³⁵ Fróis paraphrases Ayres Sanches who wrote that in Bungo there were people ‘atormentados del demónio, los libró nuestro Señor por los exorcismos de la Iglesia.’¹¹³⁶

In both cases Satan or devils tormented the Japanese non-Christians, and in both cases they were freed by the exorcism of the church. According to de Monte these exorcisms had the benefit of convincing the Japanese that if they wanted to cure their diseases they have to go to churches ‘e não a suas varelas.’ These passages show that possession was considered a sickness that afflicted the demoniac both physically and spiritually. Exorcisms were applied either through a Jesuit’s or a neophyte’s intervention. After the exorcism, in most cases, the afflicted converted to Christianity and was no longer tormented by demons, as ‘fazendo-se christã o demonio a não avexaria mais.’¹¹³⁷

¹¹³⁴ Battista’s non-extant letter (Funai, December 1564) see *História*, I, ch. 53, p. 381.

¹¹³⁵ On demonic possession in the Christian West in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries see Levack, *The Devil Within*, pp. 1-31.

¹¹³⁶ *História*, I, ch. 31, p. 206. Aires Sanchez to the Society of Jesus in Portugal (Bungo, 11 October 1562) in *Alcalá Cartas*, p. 121v.

¹¹³⁷ *História*, V, ch. 16, p. 133. Matthew 10. 1.

The image of the Devil in sixteenth century Europe was large and ever-present.¹¹³⁸ This constant, clear and present danger, or what Luke Clossey calls ‘the Devil’s cold war’, is manifested in the witch hunts and trials which reached their height in Europe in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century.¹¹³⁹ Witchcraft was regarded as a direct satanic influence and was seen as a diabolical conspiracy against Christianity. In Germany, witches’ prosecutions received support from prominent Jesuits.¹¹⁴⁰ In the *História*, Torres told the Buddhist monks that Lucifer felt envious of the human race: ‘Ihes tem enveja, e trabalha por engana-los para que tamben elles se perção.’¹¹⁴¹ Already, in his Spiritual Exercises, Loyola, while arguing about the two standards, that of Christ and that of Lucifer, asked that the exercitant should ‘consider the address he [Lucifer] makes to them [demons] ordering them to lay traps for people and to bind them with chains.’¹¹⁴² This image of Satan’s cunning and deceptive powers was mirrored in Asia, where Xavier believed that Satan was ‘greatly disturbed’ at the prospect of the Jesuits starting a mission in China, to the Americas where José de Acosta wrote that the Devil had ‘blinded the Indians.’¹¹⁴³ The idea of Satan as a trickster or a liar that had misled the natives appears to be generalised among the Jesuit missions. The Jesuit Luis Lopez wrote that in Peru ‘el demonio los incita a mayores males e idolatrias.’¹¹⁴⁴

As Xavier had written, Japan was considered to be under the *cautiverio* of Lucifer and he was in favour of the Inquisition in Goa. The Portuguese Jesuit provincial Diogo Mirão was keen of taking over the Lisbon Inquisition, while at the same time some Jesuits opposed

¹¹³⁸ See O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, p. 225.

¹¹³⁹ Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization*, pp. 130-5.

¹¹⁴⁰ O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, pp. 267-8.

¹¹⁴¹ *História*, I, ch. 7, p. 54.

¹¹⁴² *Saint Ignatius of Loyola*, ed. by Munitiz and Endean, pp. 310-2.

¹¹⁴³ Cited in Liam Matthew Brockey, *Journey to the East, the Jesuit Mission to China, 1579 -1724* (Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), p. 29. See José de Acosta, *História Natural y moral de las Indias* (Biblioteca Americana, 1962), 2nd ed., p. 223.

¹¹⁴⁴ Luis Lopez to Francis Borgia (Lima, 21 January 1570) in *Monumenta Peruana*, I, p. 366.

such measures.¹¹⁴⁵ Being under the influence of the Devil appears to be a widely accepted belief among the missionaries according to their epistles and in the *História*. In Bahia, the Jesuit Antonio Blásquez echoed the same feeling: ‘aquellos Indios que moraban en la sombra y región de la muerte [...] antes era instrumento de Satanás.’¹¹⁴⁶ Blásquez wrote about the procession on the day of St Tiago when the children walked at the front with green palms on their hands ‘por señal desta victoria, alcançada del demonio por el sagrado baptismo.’¹¹⁴⁷ Josef Wicki pointed to the fact that the letters from India often mentioned the procession or *procissão* of Easter Sunday.¹¹⁴⁸ As pointed out by Eamon Duffy the principal purpose of processions was to drive out of the parish ‘with bells and banners’ the Devil as a sign of triumph.¹¹⁴⁹

The missionaries showed a predisposition to look for symptoms of possession among both people afflicted by sickness and those who opposed the Gospel.¹¹⁵⁰ There was a wide variety of symptoms that could indicate demonic possession.¹¹⁵¹ In the missionary accounts, the Japanese suffered physical ailments such as the inability to eat, strong convulsions, and the ability to know things beyond their own learning, such as speaking a foreign language, being able to describe hell, or knowing who was a good Christian or a bad one. As well as all these, possession could cause the individual to do evil, such as causing physical harm to other

¹¹⁴⁵ See Disney, *A History of Portugal*, p. 189.

¹¹⁴⁶ Antonio Blásquez to Diego Mirón (Bahia, 15 September 1564) in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, IV, p. 77.

¹¹⁴⁷ Blásquez to Diego Mirón (Bahia, 15 September 1564) in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, IV, p. 85.

¹¹⁴⁸ *Documenta Indica*, IV, p. 284; VI, p. 563; VII, pp. 558-559.

¹¹⁴⁹ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, p. 279.

¹¹⁵⁰ On diseases considered to be caused by the devil in the early modern period see Brian P. Levack, *The Devil Within: Possession and Exorcism in the Christian West* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), pp. 113-38.

¹¹⁵¹ Levack argues that there were a ‘large repertoire of signs that could appear in different combinations’ among these ‘signs’ he cites: convulsions, physical pain, rigidity of the limbs, muscular flexibility and contortions, preternatural strength, levitation, swelling, vomiting, loss of bodily function, fasting, ability to speak in languages previously unknown to the demoniac, change in the demoniac’s voice, trance experiences and visions, clairvoyance, blasphemy, immoral gestures and actions, see Levack, *The Devil Within*, pp. 6-15. On the symptoms of possession in England see Oldridge, *The Devil*, pp. 111-33.

people. The demoniacs also usually blasphemed against Catholic symbols or holy objects and rejected them.

One of the widely believed signs of possession was that the person could speak in a foreign language while in a trance, of which normally the possessed had no knowledge.¹¹⁵² Fróis describes a possessed woman in Bungo who never ‘ter fallado com Portuguez algum, nem saber de nossa lingua huma só palabra’ but when she was asked about ‘couzas de Igreja, respondia em lingua portugueza a muita dellas.’¹¹⁵³ Oldridge argues that while diagnosing the symptoms of possession the witness interpreted the expressions uttered by the demoniac as foreign words.¹¹⁵⁴ This set of beliefs also predisposed the audience to interpret the gestures that the sick person made as demonic. In the *História* a possessed woman ‘falando das penas do inferno, mostrava por sinaes os tormentos de fogo e frio que nelle há.’¹¹⁵⁵ As such the possessed were used as mediums between *espiritos malignos* in hell and this world; and Jesuits and neophytes managed to engage in conversations with those demons.¹¹⁵⁶

The exorcisms were performed by the invocation of the names of St Michael, Jesus and Mary, and using Christian objects such as a crucifix, a *relicario* (in the form of a necklace) usually placed on the possessed, or a picture of the Agnus dei, and in most cases *agua benta*. The usage of these objects during exorcism and to help the sick clearly increased the perceived power of these objects and the Christians seem to be anxious to get hold of them. Blessed water, of course, was and is used for baptism and exorcism: ‘livrarão-se tambem

¹¹⁵² See Oldridge, *The Devil*, p. 117; Levack, *The Devil Within*, pp. 11-2.

¹¹⁵³ *História*, II, ch. 113, p. 484.

¹¹⁵⁴ Oldridge, *The Devil*, pp. 114-21.

¹¹⁵⁵ *História*, IV, ch. 3, p. 25.

¹¹⁵⁶ Such as in the Bible, Mark 5. 6-13.

outros endemoninhados com a virtude d'agua benta.¹¹⁵⁷ But it was also used as medicine for physical diseases: 'A mezzinha que lhes dava[m], era agua benta.'¹¹⁵⁸

Forty years after Xavier's great expectations that Japan would be a country that would not only produce the best Christians but would also bring with it a native clergy that would extend Christianity beyond its shores, his dream remained unfulfilled.¹¹⁵⁹ If the spread of Catholicism had increased impressively in that period, from 1587 the first signs of rejection by the *bakufu* began to appear. Rejection and the huge obstacle of having the *Kampaku* opposed to their missionary work was a significant blow, and even if Hideyoshi never truly implemented his eviction order, this produced a moral setback, something that becomes evident in the insecurity displayed in Fróis's later chapters. This insecurity also appears in Fróis's letter (Arima, 20 February 1588): 'fruito, & progresso da Christiandade: forão neste tempo as cosas tão varias [...] tão conjunctas as adversidades com as prosperidades, & os gostos com as tribulações; que mal se pode ategora julgar se estamos em pior o melhor estado,' and continues 'Neste tempo as cousas da Christiandade, & dos padres em parte hiao mui prosperas & em parte padecião tormenta.'¹¹⁶⁰

IV.6 Conclusion

Though the *História* depicts the advances made with the Japanese Christians, its author also acknowledges the setbacks from the early days of the mission. Here Fróis hints that not everything was so promising in Japan, and that the picture of this country should be made less rosy, a view that reflects a realistic approach to this mission. At the same time a

¹¹⁵⁷ *História*, III, ch. 22, p. 170.

¹¹⁵⁸ *História*, I, ch. 14, p. 90. Luther argued that all maladies 'emanate from the devil, who is the cause and author of plagues, fevers, etc', see *The Table-talk of Martin Luther*, trans., William Hazlitt (Philadelphia, PA: The Luteran Publication Society, 2004), p. 218.

¹¹⁵⁹ Boxer, *The Christian Century*, pp. 86-7, 218-9.

¹¹⁶⁰ See Évora *Cartas*, II, p.188r and 190v.

continuous series of negative events is usually explained, and even anticipated, by blaming the Devil. Fróis's *História* takes such a stance, and more importantly blames the setbacks to the mission directly upon the Devil's meddling. This has the effect of exonerating the Jesuits from guilt and condemnation in his narrative. While any reverses and failures were attributed to sabotage by the Devil, the missionaries' actions received immunity.

Conclusion

The present work has paid attention to the analysis of the *História de Japam* written by Luís Fróis. By the time he began his manuscript, nearly four decades after the beginning of the mission, he considered that what needed to be narrated had changed considerably. Through close readings of his manuscript, one finds that Fróis decided not only to tell the history of the mission, but by basing his work on the many letters sent from Japan, he decided to edit them, believing that it was the right time to do so. As such we see more than a summary or a ‘commentario del progresso della fede nel Giappone’ as requested by Maffei. We are able to appreciate the work of an editor writing *in situ*, but who also is writing and interpreting contemporary events that are happening at critical moments of the mission.

The *História* is not the product of the work of the many armchair editors, preparing the Jesuit letters for publication in Coimbra, Alcalá or Évora. In the spatial microcosm of the archipelago issues were more urgent, and danger imminent. The hatred of the ‘enemies of Christianity’ is magnified by Fróis’s pen, the disappointments and setbacks bitterly felt, and the long-term outcome of events uncertain. Through the reading of Fróis’s *História* a picture appears that describes and magnifies the opposite cultures of Japan and Europe with the aim at justifying their method of acculturation implementation in the archipelago, but also, the realisation of the incommensurable cultures, reflecting on a decrease in the dialogue and the beginning of an increase in the distancing between these societies.

As ‘editor’, he oversees what sources he uses and determines the final message. In attempting to claim gravity and authority, Fróis alludes to Horace’s *Ars Poetica*, ‘a historia melhor *limada*’ implying to the careful revision of one of his main sources, the famous compilation of letters, the Alcalá *Cartas* printed in 1575. This letter book includes the first missives of the Japanese mission from 1549 up to the year 1571. Among such letters figured

those of the pioneer of the Japanese mission Francis Xavier, who enthusiastically described the Japanese people as white, reasonable, and honourable, and he made observations commensurable with European culture, such as the existence of *fidalgua*, and European-style kingdoms with castles and universities. This early missionary excitement for the Japanese mission is curbed and moderate by Fróis's pen. At the same time, in the *História* one can detect a sense of erosion of the initial missionary optimism, which displays a sense of detachment. The veteran missionary exhibits a change in the mood of describing this enterprise, reflecting on the position the missionaries faced at a difficult junction of the mission. While Fróis wrote his manuscript (1584-93) significant set backs were taking place, being the most damning to the Jesuits Toyotomi Hideyoshi's 1587 edict against Christianity. As such, Fróis with the benefit of hindsight and time spent learning about the Japanese culture, approached his sources incorporating rhetorical strategies to make changes while ensuring that the mission and its aims were presented positively and as a guide to inspire would-be missionaries.

Fróis purposely decided on the versions he wished to present in the *História* and omitted events or changed words when they were not edifying; thus showing a clear method and strategy in presenting the Japanese mission. Of the many missives of Xavier, some which had inspired Jesuits to cross the seas to evangelize in Japan, Fróis only uses two and dedicated merely six chapters in his *História* to the pioneer. Besides, his manuscript is an exception, in that as stated by Županov, the first part of all the histories written about the *Estado da Índia* was a biography of Xavier.

Fróis believed that a change in rhetoric was required to match the changes which have occurred over time. The early accounts were sometimes rushed and lacked depth by writers not all too familiar with the Japanese language and culture. With the considerable knowledge

and expertise gained from many years in the mission field, Fróis argues that one of the ways his manuscript would be helpful was to correct previous errors or ambiguities that the Jesuit missives had caused. However, through a close reading of his *magnum opus*, not only does his manuscript represent a more complete picture than that provided by prior written sources, his work also differs from previous accounts of the Japanese mission. We learn that Fróis constantly uses sacred rhetoric to be powerfully persuasive in his narrative, and he gives a more exalted version of the Jesuit mission to Japan in his *História*. More importantly we learn how he considered the history of the mission should be narrated, revealing his objectives and strategies, such as the use of sources, written and oral, that he deemed necessary to be included.

A subtle undercurrent theme is apparent that aims to justify the Jesuits' 'way of proceeding' as well as a constant diabolism that serves rhetorically to exonerate the missionaries' mistakes and failings and as a reflection of a true conviction of the Devil's presence among pagans. This in turn highlights the need when approaching the *História* as a source to be mindful that Fróis tended to avoid information that may have been detrimental to the image of certain members of the Society or to the Society as a whole. Fróis's work must be read with caution and closely in parallel with the many extant letters which he used as sources. He wrote with a clear agenda, deliberately altering information, and creating a narrative that suggested a more coherent and neater enterprise than it was in reality.

Fróis, as has been seen, presents the *História* as an account of the learning process experienced by the missionaries in those first decades. Fróis alludes to the challenges of the country and is more realistic regarding the mission coming to a new country and culture. His fellow Jesuits are exonerated of any errors and are never held accountable for them, and they are seen as exemplary figures and beacons of light for the future. Finally, one learns

the methodology that had evolved in Japan and what he deemed was the most appropriate after many years of trial and error, and his and other Jesuits' views on the Japanese non-converts, neophytes, and the clergy. It is through close readings of his rhetorical strategies that one uncovers his aims and his views.

Appendix - Fróis's sources for the *História de Japam*

This appendix aims to highlight the choice of sources which Fróis utilises in his *História*. This is done when a known source can be established for a chapter. This is the case when the author includes in a chapter either parts of a fellow Jesuit's writing, usually in “” or when comparing the chapter with an extant source such as in the Coimbra *Cartas* 1570, Alcalá *Cartas* 1575, Évora *Cartas* 1598, or in the *Documenta Indica*. Some letters appear in several compilations in different languages. I have based this appendix on the footnotes that Josef Wicki annotates in his rigorous research by comparing the chapters of the *História* with extant letters. As editor of the *Documenta Indica*, Wicki had access to the sources when he edited the *História* and I have tried to extend it where possible. It is not always straightforward to recognise a specific source.

What follows is a partial note on the sources rather than an exhaustive and detailed list of every single source that Fróis might have used, nevertheless this conveys to the modern reader the frequency of his preferred writers. This is complicated by the fact that some of the missives he used are non-extant letters; or were annual letters which were compilations of letters from several authors from different areas of the Japanese mission. In this latter case, the original source of a letter becomes more blurred, and it is more difficult to unequivocally identify the original writer; therefore, the conclusions are mainly based on Fróis's acknowledgements of his sources or when his manuscript is very close to letters for which he omits any acknowledgement.

The written sources

We must highlight here that Fróis used very few of Xavier's letters and indeed barely expanded on the knowledge that was already known about the so-called Apostle of the Indies. There are, however, two noticeable addendums in the *História* which are not present in other sources: Xavier's first stay in Hirado, and his disputations with Ninjitsu, the Buddhist Abbott in Kagoshima. Nevertheless, the scarce use of Xavier's epistles and the small number of chapters which he dedicates to the pioneer of the mission in his work remain enigmatic. This is remarkable when one considers that at the time he was writing his manuscript, there was high demand from within the Society of Jesus in Europe and from the Portuguese crown for accounts that could expand on the life of the would-be Saint.¹¹⁶¹ Fróis not only met Xavier in Goa, he would have read Xavier's letters and received extensive information about his deeds in India, Malacca, and the Molucas from fellow Jesuits, and from Portuguese and converts. Later, in Japan, from 1563, Fróis worked with Torres and Fernandes, who had worked with Xavier for more than two years. Also, Fróis met with Japanese converts who knew Xavier. The relatively small amount of material he uses from Xavier is mainly in the first two chapters.

The majority of the *História* is based on Fróis's own letters including the annual letters, most of which he edited. This is not surprising, as by the time he travelled to Macau in 1592 he had expended nearly 30 years on the Japanese mission, and could use his own personal experience and memory to redact some chapters.¹¹⁶²

Many chapters are based on more than one source, this is even more so the case when he makes use of the annual letters of course. At the same time, it is difficult to establish the

¹¹⁶¹ The Jesuits Maffei, Tursellini, and Lucena all used Fernão Mendes Pinto's account of Francis Xavier in his *Peregrinação*.

¹¹⁶² Fróis left for Macau on October 1592.

original source of a chapter when the letter that Fróis could have been using as a source is not extant or we have no knowledge of its existence.

From the appendix, we can point out that the single known writer that Fróis referenced the most often is Luís de Almeida. Almeida was a great example for the mission. He had been a successful and wealthy merchant in Asia. His joining the Jesuits was a significant coup for the Society of Jesus not only because of the symbolic message that it sent - a wealthy Portuguese abandons worldly preoccupations and decides to spread the Gospel in Japan - but also by his donation of all his wealth to the Society which would be used to invest in the silk trade between Macau and Japan and in the process secure a substantial source of income for years to come. Besides these benefits, Almeida's controversial yet well-intended hospital was considered by Fróis, as well as by other missionaries, an important tool in converting those who came searching to find a cure to their illness in Bungo. Among the most used sources are those with whom Fróis spent some time working, such as Torres, Fernandes, Vilela, and Coelho. He also uses Lourenço Mexia quite frequently, whom he considered 'homem douto e virtuozo e antigo na companhia.'¹¹⁶³

Although Fróis points to some oral sources when he utilised them, it is impossible to know how much of the *História* was based on this type of source. Below is a list of the known sources which he utilised and the frequency at which he copies from these authors by chapters:

- Francis Xavier (1506-52)	2
- Yayirō (Japanese, c.1512-?)	1
- Cosme de Torres (c.1510-70)	9
- Juan Fernandes (c.1526-67)	14
- Pedro de Alcáçova (1524-79)	2

¹¹⁶³ *História*, III, ch. 18, p. 128.

- Baltasar Gago (c.1520-83)	4
- Melchior Nunes Barreto (1520-71)	4
- Gaspar Vilela (c.1526-72)	15
- Luís de Almeida (1525-83)	27
- Lourenço de Hizen (Japanese, c.1526-92)	2
- Aires Sanches (c.1527-90)	1
- Baltasar da Costa (c.1538-? expelled in 1576)	1
- Giovanni Battista de Monte (1528-87)	1
- João Cabral (?-1575)	1
- Jácome Gonçalves (Indian, c.?-? expelled in 1570)	1
- Belchior de Figueiredo (1528-97)	4
- Francisco Cabral (c.1533-1609, Vice-Provincial)	3
- Miguel Vaz (1546-82)	1
- Afonso Gonçalves (1546-1601)	2
- António Prenestino (1543-89)	3
- Francisco Carrión (1549-90)	7
- Lourenço Mexia (1539-99)	10
- Alessandro Valignano (1539-1606, Visitor)	1
- Organtino Nechi Soldo (1533-1609)	5
- Gregorio Céspedes (1552-1611)	1
- Gaspar Coelho (1530-90, Vice-Provincial)	11
- Claudio Acquaviva (1543-1615, General)	1
- Francisco Pasio (1551-1612)	2
- Pero Gomes (1535-1600)	3
- Francisco Laguna (c.1552-1617)	1
- Álvaro Dias (?-?)	1
- Gregório Fulvio (?-1598)	1
- Egidio (Gil de Mata 1547-99)	1
- José Fornaletti (?-1593)	3
- Francisco Peres (1553-1602)	2
- Christovão Moreira (c.1553-99)	1
- Francisco Peres (1553-1602)	2

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