Early South-South Links in the History of World Christianity (16th – Early 19th Century)

Edited by
Klaus Koschorke, Ciprian Burlăcioiu
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Cover illustration: Anonymous, San Juan Goto, late 17th century, azulejo, Lima, Iglesia de San Pedro, Sacristy; photo: Raphaèle Preisinger. - The tile painting shows San Juan Goto, one of the Japanese martyrs of Nagasaki in 1597, in the church of San Pedro in Lima (Peru) - an early example of transcontinental veneration of native Christian saints (from regions beyond Europe) in the Christian world of the 17th century.

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Preface

This volume contains the papers presented at an international and interdisciplinary conference held in Bad Homburg near Frankfurt (Germany) from 5th to 7th January 2023. The theme of the meeting was early South-South connections in the history of World Christianity from the 16th century to the early 19th century. While the global expansion of Christianity since 1500 is still primarily attributed to the activities of Western missionaries — first the Catholic missionary movement (especially in the 16th to18th centuries) and later (and particularly in the 19th century) the Protestant one —, indigenous actors played an increasingly important role both in its regional and trans-regional spread. This was the case not only in the last two centuries, but already in the early modern period, since the beginnings of the Iberian colonial and missionary overseas expansion around 1500.

These multiple connections are often known only to insiders. But they are indispensable for a differentiated understanding of the religious dynamics within in the Christian world beyond Europe since 1500. Some prominent paradigms were explored at the conference, which was attended by scholars from three continents and varied professional expertise. At the same time, the conference was launched to encourage further research in this emerging field of World Christianity studies. The relevance of the new South-South paradigm for other disciplines and areas of historical research was intensively discussed at the meeting.

The conference was organized by Klaus Koschorke in his capacity as Senior Fellow of the Frankfurt Research Group "Polycentricity and Plurality of Premodern Christianities (POLY)" (2020-2023), in cooperation with two younger colleagues (Ciprian Burlăcioiu and Philipp Kuster). At the same time, this meeting was a continuation of the series of seven Munich-Freising Conferences (1997-2015), where the concept of polycentricity had been developed, together with other projects based at the Munich Chair for Early and Global History of Christianity. This concept of polycentricity focuses on multidirectional links in the history of World Christianity. This includes not only (as in traditional mission history) North-South or (as discussed now in Bad Homburg) South-South links, or early instances of South-North connections and entanglements at different regional and transcontinental levels. It also discusses, for example, the interconnectedness of Christian Ethiopia with the wider Orthodox World and its impact on the multifaceted and widespread movement of emancipation among black Christians on both sides of the Atlantic in the 19th and early 20th centuries known as "Ethiopianism". As such, it seeks to analyze the globality of Christianity in its varying forms and successive stages of historical development.

Thanks are due to various contributors and sponsors who enabled the organization of the conference and the publication of its results. Most of the costs of the conference itself were covered by the POLY Research group (Frankfurt University) resp. the German Research Foundation (DFG). In addition, significant contributions came from private funds. Editing and printing of the proceedings has been financed from different other sources. The publication of this volume in an Open Access format has been made possible by the Open

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Access Fund of the University of Munich (LMU). Ciprian Burlăcioiu and Philipp Kuster (both Munich) contributed significantly to the conceptual preparation, realization and publication of the conference and its results. Thanks are also due to the members of the Munich Chair for Early and Global History of Christianity, for manifold assistance, and to Stephen Hayes (Pretoria, South Africa) who as "Native speaker" reduced the "Germanisms" of various papers. Excellent, as usually, has been the cooperation with the team of the Harrassowitz Publisher (Wiesbaden).

Munich, May 22, 2024

The Editors

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Introduction into the Conference*

KLAUS KOSCHORKE

The core issues addressed by this conference are the global spread and polycentricity and the multidirectional processes of exchange and interaction in the history of World Christianity. That's the reason why we are talking about early *South-South connections* in the worldwide diffusion of Christianity since the early modern period. Thus the focus is not on North–South links — as in traditional mission historiography where the genesis and rise of Christian communities in Asia, Africa and Latin America since the early modern period has usually been presented primarily as being the result of Western missionary activities.

Important as the Western missionary movement has been — first the Catholic and later the Protestant one, particularly at certain places and specific periods of initial contacts — it was just *one* factor, *among several others*, in the worldwide spread of Christianity.

- In the 16th century the Portuguese encountered ancient Christian Churches that already existed in Asia and Africa (as, for example, the St. Thomas Christians in India or Orthodox Christianity in Ethiopia);
- In the 20th century the explosive growth of Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa took place exactly in the postcolonial period, after many European missionaries had left the continent, together with the former colonial masters;
- In some regions Christian communities were established without any western missionary agency. So, for example, in Korea, where the beginnings of Catholicism in this isolated country go back to the underground activities of former Confucian scholars in 1784, sending an envoy to Beijing and accepting Christianity after his return. This happened 50 years *before* the first European priest entered the "hermit nation". Also the beginnings of Korean Protestantism 100 years later have been described as the result of a process of "Self-Christianisation", which soon turned the country into a center of global missions itself;
- Migration – forced or voluntary – has been an important factor in a non-missionary diffusion of Christianity, not only in the most recent times (after WW2), but in earlier periods as well;
- Anonymous spread along transregional or transcontinental trade routes has been another important aspect. Transregional networks or missionary initiatives by indigenous Christian elites are another important factor often overlooked;
- Even in regions with (usually limited) missionary presence, it was the local people who in the end decided about the acceptance or refusal or selective appropriation or

* Extended and updated version of the introduction given at the opening of the conference on January 5, 2023.

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transformation of the message and cultural package introduced by Western missionaries.

Admittedly, considerable research has been done in recent years on these multiple localized forms of Christianity which developed in different regional and cultural contexts. Thus important elements for a polycentric approach to the global history of Christianity have been provided[1]. Unfortunately, however, they are *often known only to insiders* and regional specialists. Even some classical paradigms are still totally unknown in other branches of historical research. What we need, therefore, is a survey of relevant developments in different areas and colonial, missionary and cultural contexts – and to integrate them into a broader picture, with a new, *enlarged map of the history* of World Christianity.

To take one example: *Kongo Christianity* – a highly significant paradigm of an indigenous African Catholicism which originated since late 15th century in a largely pretercolonial context, as a result of African initiatives. To quote the German Africa and colonial historian Horst Gründer:

> "In (the historical kingdom of) Kongo, the phenomenon of a Christianisation carried out by the locals without pressure from outside can be observed which, moreover, was driven forward by the Africans more strongly than by the Europeans, sometimes even against their resistance"[2].

But in the "Global history" of Christianity by another prominent German historian (Heinz Schilling) – which offers a survey of the Christian world in Europe, Asia and America in the early years of the reformation movement — the Christian Kongo is not mentioned at all, without any reference even in the index[3]. This in spite of the fact that its King Afonso (Mevemba Nzinmga, 1465?–1543) — whose extensive correspondance both with the Portuguese crown and the curia in Rome is easily accessible and whose son Henrique was to become the first (and only) black bishop in sub-Saharan Africa for more than 300 years — is a well-studied person. In addition, the historical Kingdom of Kongo provides not only an early example of an "African Catholic Church" as result of African initiatives in a precolonial context. It also had a significant impact on the process of Christianisation among the African American slaves abducted to the New World. "The conversion of Africans", says *John Thornton*, the leading authority in this field of research, in his classical study on 'Africa and Africans in The Making of the Atlantic World', "actually began in Africa, and scholarship has largely overlooked this aspect of the problem". "Much of the Christianity of the African world was carried across the seas to America. In addition to the Africans who were themselves Christians, there were also the catechists who helped to generate an African form of Christianity among the slaves who were not Christians"[4].

1 See e.g. LINDENFELD, D.F. (2021), *World Christianity and Indigenous Experience*. A Global History, 1500–2000 (Cambridge/ New York); TAVÁREZ, D. (2017) (Ed.), *Words and Worlds Turned Around*. Indigenous Christianities in Colonial Latin America (Boulder); BAAGO, K. (1969), *Pioneers of Indigenous Christianity* (Madras); cf. also: MCGRATH, A./ RUSSELL, L. (2022) (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Global Indigenous History* (Routledge).

2 GRÜNDER, H. (1992), *Welteroberung und Christentum* (Gütersloh), 50–65, here: 58 (translated).

3 SCHILLING, H. (2017), *1517.* Weltgeschichte eines Jahres (München).

4 THORNTON, J. ([2]1998), *Africa and Africans in The Making of the Atlantic World, 1400–1800* (Cambridge), 254. 262.

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So I am very glad that John Thornton has been with us as the first speaker at this conference. "Early Kongo Christianity in its Transatlantic connections" is the theme of his presentation. He discusses Kongolese Christianity as the result of a remarkable process of "self-evangelisation" and analyses the role played by enslaved Kongolese Christians — who "carried their home Christianity with them into the New World" — in "evangelizing non-Christian slaves in their new environment, both in Brazil and in St Domingue. They also did evangelization in Protestant countries".

The idea behind this conference now is a double one:

- To discuss well-established (and in the meantime partly already classical) cases of early South-South links and to introduce them into the wider academic mainstream discourse — thus also making them relevant to more traditional (and Eurocentric) disciplines such as Church History (my own field) as they are being taught in the German-speaking academic context.
- At the same time, to take these case studies as a starting point and try to apply them as a model for a connected history of Christianity in other world regions and maritime spaces as well. This naturally can be only a first step — in order to identify rewarding paradigms for future research.

The "Christian" Black Atlantic

One well studied paradigm has been, for example, the concept of what Andrew Barnes (2014) has labelled as the "'Christian' Black Atlantic" — as a space of transcontinental communication and interactions between black Christians on *both* sides of the Atlantic[5].

This concept is relevant not only to more recent developments (in the 19th and early 20th c.), but also for connections and processes of transregional interactions since the 16th c. And it includes not only black Catholicism – such as Kongo Christianity in the Americas or the role of black brotherhoods in the 16th or 17th centuries in connecting African-American Catholics in Brazil, Lisbon, Madrid or West Africa — but also the emergence of black Protestant communities in the Atlantic world (which can be observed since the 1750s).

One classical case has been the famous *Sierra Leone experiment* in 1792 which led to the establishment of a Christian settlement in Freetown (Sierra Leone). This was the result of an African-American initiative: by remigrants from the other side of the Atlantic, freed slaves, who — with the Bible as "charter of freedom" in their hand — wanted to return to the country of their ancestors. They founded what mission historian Andrew Walls has described as "the first Protestant church in [West] Africa": "It was a ready made *African* Church, with its own structures and leadership"[6]. In addition, with its polyglot African elite, Sierra Leone also served as a hub and bridge in the subsequent process of Christianization of West Africa. Later, in the 19th century, it was black missionaries from the Carribean –

5 BARNES, A. (2018), "The Christian Black Atlantic. African American, Ethiopianism and Christian Newspapers in Africa", in: Koschorke, K./ Hermann, A./ Ludwig, F./ Burlaciou (Eds.), *"To give publicity to our thoughts"*. Journale asiatischer und afrikanischer Christen um 1900 .. (StAECG 31; Wiesbaden), 345–362.

6 WALLS, A. (2002), "Sierra Leone, Afroamerican Remigration and the Beginnings of Protestantism in West Africa (18th–19th c.)", in: Koschorke, K. (Ed.), *Transkontinentale Beziehungen in der Geschichte des Außereuropäischen Christentums/ Transkontinental Links in the History of Non-Western Christianity* (StAECG 6; Wiesbaden) 45–56, here: 55.

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sent first by white Protestant societies and later also by black missionary bodies – who became active, for example. in West Africa. Transatlantic black Churches — such as the 'African Methodist Episcopal Church' (AME) or the 'African Orthodox Church' (AOC) — originated respectively in the early 19th and 20th century. Black journals crossing the Atlantic created a feeling of a shared Christian identity among people of African descent and established a transregional indigenous "black" public sphere. They also fueled multiple pan-African initiatives, both religious and political.

The Sierra Leone experiment in 1792 is also the subject of two papers at this conference. *Ciprian Burlăcioiu* focuses on the role of black pastors who led the passage of black diaspora congregations from Nova Scotia to the West African coast. "Exodus, from the slavery of Egypt into the promised land of one's ancestors, was being renewed". *Jim Campbell* discusses the "Ideological Origins of the Back-to-African Movement 1770 – 1820". He places "the birth of Sierra Leone" in a wider spectrum of black emigration movements and white colonisation ventures in early 19th century. Although both did not achieve their original goals, they had a significant impact, inter alia, on the later genesis and survival of independent nations in West Africa. — *David Daniels* looks at an earlier period (16th–18th c.) and explores the relevance of black brotherhoods "in constructing the Black Christian Atlantic during the early modern period". Kongolese Catholic confraternities in Brazil, for example, played an important role both on the local level as well as within transatlantic networks. They "operated a Black Christian Atlantic world of other confraternities and Christian communities led by Christians of African descent".

The case of the "Christian" Black Atlantic — as a space of intra-Christian transregional communication and interactions, not only by colonial or missionary actors, but also by indigenous people and marginalized groups — has been intensively explored in recent years. In the meantime it has become a "classical" paradigm in itself. This certainly is partly due to the enormous interest shown by (and sociopolitical relevance of) the African-American community in the US.

To which extent could this model of the "Christian" Black Atlantic be applied also to other world regions and maritime spaces - such as the Pacific or the Indian Ocean? What forms of trans-oceanic communication, religious exchange, or cultural impact of trade or diaspora formation - as factors relevant to a polycentric history of Christianity - can be observed here?

The Pacific World

The Philippines, for example, functioned technically as a subcolony of Mexico. To what extent did the galeone trade serve not only for the exchange of commercial goods, but also for the transmission of ideas, cultural traditions or religious items (such as the famous ivory carvings by Chinese Christian artisans that found their way from Manila to Mexico and Spanish Colonial America)? It was through "merchants, migrants, missionaries" that direct transmaritime connections between these two territories were established, as Luke Clossey has observed in an article in 2006[7]. "More a missionary outpost than a colony" is a

7 CLOSSEY, L. (2006), "Merchants, Migrants, Missionaries, and Globalization in the Early-Modern Pacific", in: *Journal of Global History* 1, 51–68; cf. also MEHL, E.M. (2016), *Forced Migration in the Spanish Pacific World.* From Mexico to the Philippines, 1765–1811 (Cambridge).

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quotation used by *Christoph Nebgen* in his paper to describe the geopolitical relevance of the Philippines as a springboard for missionaries on their (intended) way to China.

The high mobility — both physically and in terms of religious exchange — in the Pacific world already in the 16th and 17th centuries also becomes evident from the case of the *Japanese martyrs* discussed in three contributions for this conference. *Raphaèle Preisinger* focuses on the Japanese martyrs of Nagasaki in 1597 who were beatified in 1627 and canonized in 1862. As the first group of predominantly non-European martyr-saints in modern times – the majority of them were of Asian descent, not only from Japan, but also from India – they quickly enjoyed global veneration in Catholic Europe and Asia as well as in Spanish Colonial America. Preisinger analyses pictorial representations from the vice-royalty of Peru where the Japanese martyrs of 1597 were locally appropriated and portrayed as "members of the local Andean population". - "From India to Brazil: The Pacific Journeys of the Martyr Saint Gonçalo Garcia" is the title of the presentation by *Erin Rowe*. Gonçalo Garcia (1556/7–1597) — born from a Portuguese father and an Indian mother — was one of the Nagasaki victims of 1597. As a merchant and Franciscan lay missionary he travelled frequently between India, the Philippines, Macao and Japan. He was venerated as a martyr not only in India, but also — due to his brown complexion — in Brazil. Here he turned into a patron saint and "advocate for free, mixed race communities seeking to carve out a communal identity distinct from enslaved and Black people". One of the last non-Japanese martyrs in Japan was San Lorenzo Ruis (1594–1637) from the Philippines, who is discussed in the paper of *Christoph Nebgen*. In Ruis' biography and ancestry Chinese, Filipino and Spanish elements are mixed. Later he turned into a national hero in the Philippine archipelago (and the Philippine diaspora worldwide). At the same time, the worldwide veneration of the Japanese martyrs contributed significantly to the making of a global Christian consciousness in the Catholic world of the 17th and 18th centuries. This applies not only to the literate elites (with access to printed reports or journals or hagiographies) but also to illiterate peasants e.g. in colonial Peru or Mexico who - watching in their local chapel the representation of the faith heroes in far-away Japan - felt as members of a worldwide community.

Across the Indian Ocean

Similarly, the Indian Ocean has attracted considerable attention through the "oceanic turn" in historical research in recent times. What role, however, did it play in the history of global Christianity? To what extent did it facilitate exchange between Christian communities along its shores, for example between India and East Africa? Already in precolonial times there had existed a remarkable Indian presence along the East African coast. And when Vasco da Gama reached Malindi (in current Kenya) in 1498 he encountered there St. Thomas Christian sailors who had come from India with four vessels.

Pius Malenkandathi's essay explores the role played by Indian St. Thomas Christians in the Indian Ocean trade between 800 and 1800. In medieval times, they enjoyed certain privileges and concessions (especially in the pepper trade), granted to them by local rulers, due to their ability to mobilize the Indian Ocean trade of the port of Quilon (Kerala) and to care for the supply of spices and other cargo from the hinterland. Even under Portuguese (and later under British) rule, they continued to be active in the maritime trade and were partially able to dispatch cargo to the most profitable destinations in the Indian Ocean.

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With the arrival of the Portuguese and the establishment of Goa in 1534 as the political and ecclesiastical center of their empire in Asia and Africa, the Afro-Asian Church of the Portuguese *Estado da India* was created, as discussed in the paper of *Klaus Koschorke*. Goa became a cosmopolitan city and meeting point also for local Christians from Asia and Africa. In spite of the strong Portuguese presence, Indian Christians at Goa developed a distinct identity. This led to manifold conflicts and far-reaching activities by local clergy like Mateo de Castro Mahale (1594–1677). He travelled widely between India, the Near East and Rome (and tried, however unsuccessfully, to get to Japan and Ethiopia as well). In other colonial contexts (such as Dutch Ceylon), Goanese volunteers supported the underground activities of local Catholics. British rule in the 19th century resulted in new forms of interaction between communities and Christians on both sides of the Indian Ocean. A significant instance of this is the socalled "Bombay Africans" - former African slaves, abducted from East Africa to India, who were liberated and educated there in mission schools and later provided African leadership in the nascent Church in Kenya.

Ethiopia in its Transregional Connections

Another prominent paradigm discussed at this conference has been *Christian Ethiopia*. It is highly relevant not only as a remarkable representative of an "Ancient Oriental Church" but also as a symbol of both religious and political emancipation which fueled "modern" movements among African and African American Christians in 19th and early 20th centuries. In addition, it entertained multirectional links not only with the churches of the Orthodox world but also with Latin Christianity.

Early direct contacts between Orthodox Ethiopia and the reformation movement in Western Europe (16th c.) is the subject of a first essay by *Stanislau Paulau*[8]. Ethiopian representatives such as the monk and deacon Abba Mikaʾel who visited Wittenberg in 1534 were not only acknowledged and welcomed by Luther and Melachton as brethren in faith and members of the same Church of Christ. Orthodox Ethiopia also played an important role in the confessional controversies in Western Europe in 16th century — as example of an ancient Christian Church outside the jurisdiction of the Roman pope. – In a second paper, *Stanislau Paulau* discusses Ethiopia's transregional entanglements both in the premodern and modern period. Whereas a first section focusses on medieval Aksum's extensive trade networks across the Red Sea and Mediterranean regions that became instrumental in disseminating Christianity and integrating the kingdom into the then-known Christian world a second part deals with king Kaleb (of 6th century) under whom Ethiopia became a major Christian power. Since 16th century, he turned into a notable figure also in the Eastern Christian world (including Russia under Ivan the Terrible). This "adaptation of Kaleb's story in the Russian context underscores the transcultural appeal and adaptability of his narrative within various Christian traditions". As Saint Elesbaan he was finally integrated into the liturgical life of the Catholic Church. His cult dissiminated in regions extending from Brazil to Goa.

Far reaching impacts of Ethiopia as a symbol of redemption and independency are discussed in *Klaus Koschork*e's essay on "Transatlantic Ethiopianism". Due to its repeated mentions in the bible, its venerable past and its survival as an independent nation in

8 This session was originally organized jointly by Stanislau Paulau and David Daniels; but due to health reasons, the latter was prevented to submit his presentation in a print version.

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colonial Africa at the peak of Western imperialism, Christian Ethiopia became a point of reference and symbol of hope for black Christians on *both* sides of the Atlantic in 19th and early 20th centuries. Ethiopia inspired manifold movements of emancipation, both religious and political, pan-African sentiments and fueled various Back-to-Africa endeavours and African-American missionary activities in Africa in 19th century. For many colored people, the term "Ethiopian" became synonym with African Christian identity.

Global and *Polycentric*

These are some of the examples of early South-South connections that have been explored at the conference. Naturally, there exist many more relevant instances (especially in the 19th and 20th centuries). Quite generally the main purpose of this meeting was not so much the production of print-ready papers but to enter into a collective brainstorming and to identify rewarding case studies and areas for future research. Many incentives for further investigations can be found in the detailed comments of colleagues with varied expertise and disciplinary backgrounds (printed in the last section of this volume). Birgit Emich (Early Modern History), Christoph Marx (African Studies), Mira Sonntag (History of Christianiaty in Japan and North East Asia), Fabian Fechner (Latin America and Jesuit Missions), Adrian Hermann (Religious Studies and Global Religious History) and Kevin Ward (Anglican Missions and Christianity in the Global South) contributed significantly to the discussions and opened a wide panopticon of perspectives and challenges for future research.

This conference continues the work of the former seven *Munich-Freising conferences* (held since 1997) where the concept of a polycentric history of world Christianity was developed. Especially relevant in this respect have been the first, second, fifth, sixth and seventh of these international and interdisciplinary meetings, which sought to design "new maps" and to describe changed contours in the historiography of worldwide Christianity[9]. The concept of polycentricity has since been widely received and discussed, with different emphases in varied areas of research. This applies also to the Frankfurt POLY Research Group, in the context of which this meeting has been taking place. What distinguishes the Munich concept from other approaches is, among other aspects, its primary focus on developments in the Christian world *beyond* Europe, the importance attached to "native agency", the corresponding search for indigenous Christian sources, and the different ways in which local characteristics and global perspectives are being related to each other. In many current studies attention is being paid somehow one-sidedly to isolated localized versions of Christianity and processes of decentralization. What has frequently been overlooked in this context, is that the emphasis on local or regional identities — as expressed by "native" Christian voices in different places and periods — was repeatedly

9 Published in: KOSCHORKE, K. (1998) (Ed.), *"Christen und Gewürze".* Konfrontation und Interaktion kolonialer und indigener Christentumsvarianten (StAECG 6; Göttingen); Id. (2002) (Ed.), *Transcontinental Links in the History of Non-Western Christianity* (see FN 6); Id. (2012) (Ed.), *Phases of Globalization in the History of Christianity / Etappen der Globalisierung in christentumsgeschichtlicher Perspektive (StAECG 19; Wiesbaden);* Id. / HERMANN, A. (2014) (Eds.), *Polycentric Structures in the History of World Christianity / Polyzentrische Strukturen in der Geschichte des Weltchristentums* (StAECG Vol. 25; Wiesbaden); Id./ HERMANN/ LUDWIG/ BURLĂCIOIU (2018) (Eds.), *"To give publicity to our thoughts"* (see FN 5). Cf. HERMANN, A./ BURLĂCIOIU, C./ PHAN, P.C. (2016) (Eds.), *The Munich School of World Christianity* (Special Issue of *The Journal of World Christianity* Vol.6/1).

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based exactly on the universal promises of Christianity. This was an established topic among, inter alia, indigenous Christian elites in 19th- and 20th-century Asia and Africa.

"Christianity", said, for example, the African nationalist and Anglican priest James Johnson around 1908 in what is now Nigeria, "is intended to be the religion not of one particular race of people only, but of the *whole world*. But in different countries it will wear *different types*". Therefore, he claimed, we should have "in Africa an African type" of Christianity, just as there exists "in Europe a European type (and) in Asia an Asiatic type"[10]. At the same time, Indian Christians similarly criticized Western missionaries for representing only a partial segment of the universal Christian tradition. By claiming exclusive rights for their denominational "sectarianisms" — and through their often racist attitudes (reproached as the "most damnable heresy in Christ's Church") —, they were accused of excluding themselves from global Christianity[11]. In Ethiopia in 1555, the ruler Gelawdewos insisted, over against Jesuit attacks on certain time-honoured regional practices (such as circumcision or Sabbath observance) on his church's belonging to universal Christianity. "We stand in unshakeable fidelity", he said, to the "doctrine of our fathers" and the Twelve Apostles and the early (three) Ecumenical Councils (as recognized by all churches). Thus "we do not deviate neither right nor left" from the common heritage of Christianity worldwide[12]. East Syriac Christians referred to the plurality of the Apostles (and Apostolic traditions) when confronted with the exclusive claims of Portuguese colonial Catholicism. "Just as there are twelve Apostles", Indian St. Thomas Christians told the Portuguese priest Penteado around 1516, "even so, they founded twelve (sc. different forms of ecclesiastical) customs, each different from the others"[13]. It is within the wider world of global Christianity, they insisted, that both the Indian and the Roman traditions find their legitimate place.

The globality and the polycentricity of Christianity can be described as *two sides of the same coin*. In the study of World Christianity — understood as the totality of Christian churches, movements, and ways of life, in the multiplicity of their denominational, cultural and contextual expressions — both elements are of crucial importance, the local (on various levels) and the global. What makes the "polycentric" approach to its history so exciting is the many forms of transregional interconnectedness we are just about to discover.

10 Quoted by AYANDELE, E.A. (1970/ R2013), *'Holy' Johnson*. Pioneer of African Nationalism, 1836–1917 (Abingdon), 342.

11 The Christian Patriot (Madras), 23.10.1909, 6.

12 ULLENDORF, E. (1987), "The Confessio Fidei of King Claudius of Ethiopia", in: *Journal of Semitic Studies* 32/1, 159–176.

13 MUNDADAN, A.M. (1967), *The Arrival of the Portuguese in India and the Thomas Christians under Mar Jacob 1498–1552* (Bangalore), 83.

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Early Kongo Christianity in its Transatlantic Connections

JOHN THORNTON

At present, the idea that a Christian African country that actively participated in the slave trade might also be a source for Christian expansion into the Atlantic World is not widely considered. While there are many discussions about how African religions might have transited the Atlantic in the minds of African slaves, it has mostly been assumed that they carried their traditional religions and not Christianity. Yet the Kingdom of Kongo was indeed a Christian kingdom, and its conversion dates to 1491, a year before Columbus' first voyage.

Beyond this geographical and chronological coincidence, Kongo is also interesting in that it took to Christianity rapidly after the initial conversion of the king and his court, and soon developed and promoted its own version of Christianity. Kongo, unlike many other societies bordering on the Atlantic or contacted by Christians in the Early Modern world, was not conquered by Europeans (here, Portuguese), nor were Europeans able to impose Christianity without conquest. Indeed, we can properly say that Kongo self-evangelized, albeit with assistance from Portugal, under its own leadership.

And as we shall see below, Kongolese self-evangelization to some degree was followed by outside evangelization as Klaus Koschorke has described for some more modern churches, in India, Korea and the Pacific Islands have done.[1] While Kongo's influence on the Americas was certainly not the kingdom itself missionizing, the religion was spread in some ways in its particular forms by those forced to go across the Atlantic as slaves. Perhaps the processes are similar even if the agency is different.

The initial steps in self-evangelization show how it came to pass: when Portuguese ships appeared off the mouth of the Congo River in 1482 they captured some people (about whom we know nothing), took them across the Gulf of Guinea to their newly established base at São Jorge da Mina (now Elmina) and had them to learn Portuguese. These linguists then allowed Diogo Cão, the captain of this project to have translators to communicate with the people of the region when he visited it formally in 1483. Cão had instructions to organize some sort of diplomatic contact with Kongo, and sent some of his men inland to the capital, Mbanza Kongo, some 200 kilometers from the coast. When they did not return before the time he had to leave, he tricked a few high-ranking nobles into coming on his ship and carried them away, promising to return.

Among those captured nobles was one whose name we can reconstruct as Kala ka Mfusu, who went to Portugal with Cão and spent about a year there, learning to speak Portuguese and observing Portuguese society. When he returned to Kongo in 1485, his

1 KOSCHORKE, K. (Ed.) (2014), *Polycentric Structures in the History of World Christianity* (Wiesbaden) – particularly Koschorke's introduction of the same title, 15–28.

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report, and the testimony of the Portuguese who had been left in Kongo when Cão departed precipitously, gave Nzinga a Nkuwu, Kongo's ruling monarch, a good idea of what Europe was about, from the Portuguese and his own trustworthy noble. On the basis of this Nzinga a Nkuwu sent a return mission to Portugal, led by Kala ka Mfusu, which remained nearly four years in Lisbon. The group learned Portuguese (a number of older children accompanied them with the understanding that they could acquire native Portuguese and learn to write), visited Lisbon (at least), met with the king and high nobles of the court, and received catechism from Vicente dos Anjos, a priest of the canons of São João Evangelista (commonly called Loíos). When the group returned in 1491, Nzinga a Nkuwu, having learned enough from these various sources, was ready to convert to Christianity and establish cultural relations with Portugal.[2]

The Church in Kongo

This rather long introduction is important to establish that a good deal of Kongo's acceptance of Christianity came through a rather prolonged period of study by its own elite and at their initiative, albeit with the enthusiastic support of Portugal. Nzinga a Nkuwu did not need a missionary to establish contact, gradually teach the leader and perhaps win some converts; his own subjects underwent that study and brought it back to him.

Furthermore, he also continued to send students to Portugal to continue learning about that country, Europe as a whole, and Christianity after the formal conversion and his baptism. This project of understanding went on for most of the sixteenth century, with Kongolese students regularly living and studying in Portugal, sometimes for years, and then returning on a steady basis to keep Kongolese authorities fully informed.[3]

The deeper establishment of Christianity within Kongo was also largely done on Kongolese initiative. While we know relatively little about what happened during the rest of Nzinga a Nkuwu's (baptized as João I in 1491) reign; we do know that his son, Afonso Mvemba a Nzinga (1506-1542) took that task on fully. Afonso placed the first wave of students who returned from Portugal to be teachers in schools, first in the capital and then, as their numbers grew, in the provinces. These teachers would be the backbone of Kongo's Christian church.

The schoolteachers, called *mestres de escola* in Kongo's Portuguese written documentation and *adongi a aleke* in Kikongo (a plural form, the singular is *ndongi a aleke*), had staffed many country districts by the 1530s, and the system of teaching was so firmly established by 1584 that a Portuguese priest, testifying to the Inquisition said they did not do regular instruction, as the king had his own people who attended to that, all they did was sacraments.[4]

Priests did come from Portugal as well, of course. The Loíos were among them, given their work among the first students in Lisbon, coming in 1508, but other orders as well. There were quite a few, but nowhere near enough to even begin the wide-scale evangelization that Afonso organized through the schools. Rather their role was to teach

2 For the introduction of Christianity in Kongo, THORNTON, J. (2020), *A History of West Central Africa to 1850* (Cambridge/ New York), 37–40.

3 THORNTON, J. (2023), *The Correspondence of Afonso I Mvemba a Nzinga* (Indianapolis).

4 See BRINKMAN, I. (2016), "Kongo *Interpreters*, Traveling Priests, and Political Leaders in the Kongo Kingdom (15th–19th Century)", in: *Journal of African History* 49, 255–276; THORNTON, J. (1984), "Afro-Christian Syncretism in the Kingdom of Kongo", in: *Journal of African History* 54, 53–77.

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students in the capital city before they left for the country since as ordained priests they were the only ones who could perform the sacraments. An early account of Loíos saw them going, two by two from the capital on mission trips, and baptizing people, often in the hundreds and perhaps the thousands, then returning each season to the capital.[5] They established a pattern that would continue for centuries, education in the hands of the Kongo elite (for nobles attended the schools and became mestres) and sacraments in the hands of mostly foreign clergy.

The presence of foreign clergy was a product of the ecclesiastical politics of Portugal. While they actively supported the promotion of Afonso's son Henrique to the episcopate, even working to bypass age requirements on his behalf in 1518, they turned against having Kongo control of its own church. Initially Afonso planned to have a normal church, with local bishops who would subsequently ordain local clergy. After insuring that he had sufficient instructors of Latin (for that was a critical requirement for priests) in 1526 he proposed an elaborate plan for two bishops and some 50 clergy to be created, first with Portuguese but ultimately with Kongolese priests.[6]

Perhaps the rapid growth of the Church in Kongo, far faster than anyone in Portugal expected, in 1534 King João III decided, when the Papacy was creating new dioceses for the expanded Portuguese empire, to persuade the Pope to put Kongo under the diocese of its Atlantic colony of São Tomé and to claim the right of Patronage over the bishop. The new arrangement, which was perhaps conceived in Portugal as a way to obtain political leverage in Kongo, never changed. Even when Kongo's Álvaro I (1568-1587) succeeded in making direct contact with Rome and eventually having a new diocese created in Kongo (1596) with its cathedral church located at Mbanza Kongo (which he had rebranded as São Salvador) the Portuguese king still obtained patronage over its bishop.

Straining under the ecclesiastical politics of Portugal, especially when the Portuguese colony of Angola was established in 1575, the gap between the Portuguese-appointed bishops and Kongolese kings only grew as Angolan governors encroached on Kongolese territory and the bishops became essentially agents of the Portuguese crown. To meet this challenge, Álvaro III (1615-1622) tried another tactic. Deprived of clergy by the bishop (even Portuguese Angola had few priests) he tried to get at least a clergy to perform sacraments, by inviting regular priests, first Carmelites and then failing in that, Capuchins to be their clergy.[7] His efforts paid off, and the first Capuchins (Italians so as not to disturb Portuguese claims by having clergy from a hostile European country) landed in 1645 and would serve largely as Kongo's clergy for the next 180 years.

The Capuchins left detailed reports of their work in Kongo, literally thousands of pages worth of books, letters, reports and memoranda. They wrote hostile accounts of religious belief and life, and thanks to the great bulk and accessibility of their work, Kongo's Christianity has been largely ignored or dismissed by modern scholars and commentators as thinly disguised traditional religion. But the criticism misses the point: Kongo had become Christian under the medieval church, while the Capuchins were foot soldiers of the Counter-Reformation. The language of their reports in Kongo is remarkably similar to that of the European Counter-Reformation, which also claimed that the medieval church was

5 De Santa Maria, F. (1697), *O Ceu Aberto na terra* (Lisbon), 887–888.
6 Thornton (2020), *West Central Africa* (see FN 2), 48–49.
7 Thornton (2023), *Correspondence* (see FN 3).

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nothing more than pagan and that the whole religion had to be re-founded.[8] They even used the same language in Europe as in Africa, writing of "diabolic superstitions" and "idolatry".[9]

In Europe the civil authorities generally supported the Counter-Reformation, large numbers of priests were reformed, and customs contrary to the reformed Christianity persecuted, but in Kongo the civil authorities were evasive and not particularly supportive of Capuchin efforts to root out the medieval remnants. The Capuchins rarely numbered more than a half-dozen in a country of three quarters of a million people, and spent most of their time on rounds through the rural areas baptizing children.

Their reports show this clearly, an official account of missionary activity shows that a total of 36 priests performed 340,000 baptisms between 1673 and 1701. Some of the priests died before doing much work, many others baptized only few hundred, while others did as many as 5,000 a year.[10] Typically, these were done on long mission trips interrupted by stopping at some strategic point and then doing several hundred in a few days, followed by trips through nearly empty country. Their reports only occasionally speak of teaching and almost never of catechizing. Mostly they baptized, did a few marriages and even fewer confessions, conducted liturgical services and moved on. Their most dramatic work was in disrupting manifestations of what they called diabolic superstition and idolatry.

Even as the Capuchins denounced many aspects of Kongolese religious life, they never doubted their sincerity in being Christians. "Christians in name only" perhaps, but still enthusiastic about being Christian, learning basic prayers and hymns, attending to Mass, and honoring and protecting missionaries. They were taught what they knew of Christianity by the *mestres de escola* and more than one newly arrived missionary was surprised to come to villages which had not seen a priest in years and even in decades, but knew the basics of the faith, prayers, hymns, receiving a sermon, and partaking in the sacraments—at least the sacrament of baptism.

In spite of the problems with clergy, the Kongolese church never broke with Catholicism. When Álvaro I was seeking his own bishop, frustrated with the behavior of the Portuguese bishops who came to him, one of his subjects was said to have obtained a letter in Heaven after his death, that the king was "vicar in his own land" and could appoint his own bishop. Álvaro laughed the ploy off and stayed by the Church even still; when Kongo made an appeal to the Dutch to assist them in driving the Portuguese from Angola, Garcia II (1641-1661) insisted in the agreement that the Dutch not seek to preach against the Catholic church, and when the Dutch sent a *predikant* anyway, Garcia II had him expelled and ordered an Auto-de-Fe of his books.[11] When Pedro IV (1694-1718) learned that one of his subjects, D. Beatriz Kimpa Vita, had been possessed by Saint Anthony and

8 The "new" history of the Counter Reformation begins with DELUMEAU (1977), *Catholicism between Luther & Voltaire* (English translation Moiser, J.) (Philadelphia) [original French 1971]); it engendered a long discussion, especially concerning the idea that the Counter-Reformation had effectively declared the medieval church as essentially pagan, VAN ENGEN, J. (1986), "The Christian Middle Ages as a Historiographical Problem", in: *American Historical Review* 91, 519–55, and HENDRIX, S. (2000), "Re-routing the Faith. The Reformation as Re-Christianization", in: *Church History* 69, 558–577.

9 CHÂTELLIER, L. (1997), *The Religion of the Poor.* Rural Missions in Europe and the Formation of Modern Catholicism, c. 1500-1800 (Cambridge/ New York) [original French 1993).

10 ROMERO, R. (Ed.) (1972), *Il Congo agli inizi del Settecento nella relazione di P. Luca da Caltanissetta* (Florence), 98–99.

11 THORNTON (2020), *West Central Africa* (see FN 2), 81. 107–109.

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promised a new church under new leadership he had her burned alive for witchcraft.[12] In all of those cases, Kongolese leadership could have created a church that answered to them and ordained its own priests, but they all refused to do so.

In the end, the church in Kongo, from the early sixteenth century until the installation of Portuguese colonial rule in 1914 had essentially the same structure as it had from the start. It was a church that honored the Christian holy figures from God through the saints and insisted on sacraments in the Catholic form, but also was widely tolerant of religious activity that did not involve Christian actors. Local religious mediators frequently did bring forth messages, remedies and good luck to people from spiritual forces that were not a part of the Christian universe. In many cases, local territorial spirits that had dominated a province, or a district, were co-revealed in one way or another as Catholic saints, but others continued functioning without any specific reference to Christianity.[13]

In this way, the Kongo church inherited from its origins in medieval Christianity a strong and vigorous system of contacting local spiritual entities who were not of Christian origin for day to day life: luck in hunting or trade, knowing the future, and healing disease. Kongo, like most other African countries, saw spiritual entities in three places: first the ancestors, who were tied to individual families and their cemeteries, then territorial spirits who looked out for the general good of a region, usually now identified as Catholic saints, and finally the minor local spiritual entities for the travails of daily life. In this latter engagement, the spirits were local but often Catholic religious medals or rituals might be used alongside more traditional methods of engagement.

This was the religious culture that Kongo would send out into the Atlantic World.

Kongo in the Atlantic

Kongo began participation in the external slave trade gradually after it came in contact with Portugal. Some twenty years after the first contact, Kongo was still exporting only a few slaves. But as sugar production took over in São Tomé, Kongo became a major producer of slaves. By the 1530s, they were exporting 4-5,000 slaves per year.[14] In the early years, Kongo fought expansive wars against neighboring regions, mostly in the guise of putting down rebellions of neighboring countries over whom they claimed sovereignty. It is therefore possible that many of the enslaved from Kongo were from these border areas and not Christians.

However, by the early seventeenth century, Kongo stopped fighting wars against its neighbors and the bulk of slaves exported from then on were drawn on local sources. This is because Kongo had a highly centralized political system, and the person who ruled in the capital had supreme power and could undo any other noble person in the land. Hence, there were often civil wars at the outset of any king's reign, and periods when several kings

12 THORNTON, J. (1998), *The Kongolese Saint Anthony.* Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita and the Antonian Movement, 1684–1706 (Cambridge/ New York).

13 For a serious and thoughtful critique of my position here, see PIĘTEK, R. (2009), *Garcia II władca Konga a Kościół katolicki* (Warsaw), 80–83, arguing that "Christianity cannot be a part, even an essential part, of any religion", if there is not sufficient information to establish "that the majority of the inhabitants accepted and understood the principles of faith. The fact of knowing the prayers is not a sufficient condition for being considered a Christian".

14 Manuel Pacheco to João III, 28 March 1536, in: BRÁSIO, A. (Ed.) (1952–1988), *Monumenta Missionaria Africana*. Vol. 2 (Lisbon), henceforward: *MMA* 2, 58.

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overthrew each other in quick succession. In these civil wars, the losers, deemed to be traitors, were exported as slaves. Still, in the first half of the seventeenth century, such rebellions were relatively short if quite frequent and the human cost was quite low.[15]

However, in the crisis that followed the Battle of Mbwila in 1665, the ensuing civil war did not end quickly or successfully. While the complex politics of the period are documented and explicable, it is enough to say that rival candidates were often unable to unseat each other and the country began to evolve into more or less permanent regional powers led by a pretender king who nevertheless continued regular wars against their neighbors and over the kingship. This situation resulted in compromise elections in the early eighteenth century with attempts to end civil wars, but this did not last.[16]

After 1750, the regional contestants were joined, and often undermined, by a new class of contenders, "entrepreneurial nobles" who did not aspire to rule the country, but carved out small estates for themselves wherever they could fortify and concentrate followers. Their activities which often involved low level slaving both to populate their domains and to purchase the munitions to continue its growth led to an explosive pattern of export-oriented enslavement, and Kongolese Christians surged into the Atlantic World.[17]

Slaves from Kongo initially went largely to Portuguese Angola or to Portuguese Brazil. But in the later periods of the seventeenth century onwards, their exports were directed to the north coast, including the province of Soyo at the mouth of the Congo River, or the smaller kingdoms north of the river including Loango, a major state. Here the buyers were mostly Dutch, French and English as they paid better prices than the Portuguese and thus drew slaves more and more to their own colonies.

It was in these colonies where Kongolese slaves, still mostly Christian, would develop their own way of dealing with the religious life of the New World. In French Saint-Domingue, torn from the side of Spanish Santo Domingo in 1697, Jesuit priests took up the role of evangelizing the rapid emergence of a slave labor force for the new plantation society.[18] The Jesuits, charged with this task, quickly observed that among the many slaves they had those from Congo who they believed were baptized and evangelized by the Portuguese (undoubtedly because they had Portuguese names and used Portuguese terms) but they were in his opinion poor Christians, just as the Capuchins believed because of their penchant for propitiating non-Christian spirits.[19]

Kongo Slaves and Christianity

Given the fairly substantial number of Kongolese Christians coming to the Americas, what impact would they have? In Catholic countries they would hardly be noticed, they simply pursued the American version of Catholicism whenever possible, given the limitations of the opportunities that they had as slaves. Since most Catholic countries required slaves to be catechized and baptized in any case, they would have been religiously invisible. Where they can be seen, however, is in their penchant to continue in the ways of the medieval

15 THORNTON (2020), *West Central Africa* (see FN 2), 89–91. 109–113. 124–128. 148–150. 153–154. 159–161.
16 THORNTON (2020), *West Central Africa* (see FN 2), 183–186. 197–208. 211–213. 241–249.
17 THORNTON (2020), *West Central Africa* (see FN 2), 279–285.
18 THORNTON, J. (2022), "African Traditional Religion and Christianity in the Formation of Vodun", in: *Slavery & Abolition*, 15–16.
19 DE CHARLEVOIX, P.-F., (1730–1731) *Histoire de l'Isle Espagnole ou de S. Domingue*. Vol. II (Paris), 501–502.

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church, which was those who had the talent and skill continued working with lesser spiritual entities to ensure good luck or success, and perhaps a reduction in the harshness of their regime.

The Portuguese Inquisition in Brazil shows an interesting combination of features, as a fair number of Kongo people were accused of religious crimes. Often these involved the propitiation of local, non-Christian spiritual entities, but even within this testimony it was clear that they also integrated Christian objects and spiritual entities into their practice. In this way, the same combination that had developed in Kongo (and also in Angola under Portuguese rule) that was found in Kongo.

But Kongolese Christians also had a penchant for evangelizing non-Christian Africans, a feature that would make them even more important in the greater Atlantic world. Key evidence of this comes from a certain Pedro Congo who was denounced in 1754 for preaching to a group of mostly free people from the Mina Coast (roughly modern day Bénin, Togo and western Nigeria) preaching what he said was "Christian Doctrine" to the various Minas. While he was denounced for other irregularities, the idea that Kongolese might serve as Christian evangelists on their own raises important questions about their role in propagating Christianity among the enslaved of Brazil as elsewhere.[20]

It is possible they also evangelized their fellows in Saint-Domingue, for local regulation by French authorities clamped down on when church services for slaves could be held. In the process they noted that some of the Christian slaves had organized religious study and worship on their own, even though only to forbid it.[21] The ruling does not mention specific African nations for this, but it is quite possible that these efforts of self-evangelization were led by the many Kongolese living in Saint-Domingue. In a speculative essay, Hein Vanhee proposed that Kongolese evangelical activities played a role in the development of Vodun's Christian component, noting that the figure of the prete savanne (who usually works with Christian texts) was brought in from the *mestre de escola*.[22]

Preaching Christian doctrine in a Catholic country might only raise eyebrows if there were some irregularities, but in Protestant areas, this would be quite important. Unlike Catholic America, which uniformly sought to bring the enslaved Africans into the church, albeit often without exerting much effort, in Protestant America there was considerable resistance to bringing the slaves to Christianity. There was a fear among slaveholders that Christianizing their slaves would force the masters to free them, as the Synod of Dort that affected the English and Dutch churches appeared to demand, debated the question and leaned against freeing Christians. This greatly hampered evangelization even when the church authorities assured masters that they could still retain slaves after they became Christians.[23]

An interesting observation on this question comes from the Danish West Indies, Protestant to be sure, not only from its Danish residents but also from many English and Dutch who also settled in the islands. A mission of the Moravian Church was founded

20 Arquivo Nacional de Torre do Tombo, Inqisição de Lisboa, Processo 16001.

21 PLUCHON, P. (1987), *Vaudou, sorciers, empoisonneurs*. De Saint-Domingue à Haiti (Paris), 57–69.

22 VANHEE, H. (2002) "Central African Popular Christianity and the Making of Haitian Vodou Religion", and REY, T. (2002), "Kongolese Catholic Influence on Haitian Popular Catholicism. A Sociohistorical Exploration", in: Heywood, L. (Ed.), *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Disapora* (Cambridge), 243–264 and 265–286 respectively.

23 LAING, A. (2002), "'Heathens and Infidels'? African Christianization and Anglicanism in the South Carolina Low Country, 1700–1750", in: *Religion and American Culture* 12, 197–228.

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there in the 1732, and evangelical efforts proceeded from then. Strong believers in making the Bible available to all in their own language, the Moravians, recognizing that there were a wide range of African languages spoken in the region sent Georg Christian Andreas Oldendorp to study the situation. In the course of his work, Oldendorp wrote a massive manuscript history and description of his travails, that included detailed accounts of the African population, based on long and careful work among them.

Oldendorp rapidly recognized that among the Kongo, "most who come from there to the **West Indies** have a knowledge of God and their Savior". His further observations about them are worth quoting at length:

> Among the Blacks who come to the **West Indies** from the Portuguese lands or their neighborhood in **Guinea**, especially among those from **Congo**, there are many who know of **Christ** and the Redemption that He brought about, and also received baptism from Catholic priests there. Indeed, there are those among them who themselves perform a kind of baptism on the Bussals [newly arrived Africans] who desire it. It is an imitation of the baptism that they have seen from the Catholic clergy or heard of from the descriptions of Blacks who once attended one or received baptism themselves. They can also have seen it from those Christian blacks who are, in **Congo**, priests among their nation, who baptize and hold church there. In fact, only **Congo Negroes** do and understand it, as such a one who had done it himself said to me. According to his report, water is poured on the head of the person to be baptized, some salt put in his mouth, and, at the same time, prayers are said to God in the **Congolese** language. These, however, do it differently, both men and women, as I have been told, from which arises a difference of ceremonies at such a baptism. Some should pour water over the person to be baptized, some only sprinkle it three times on their face with a finger that they dip in the water and then make the sign of the cross three times over them and sing in their language. This would then be only an imitation of the sprinkling with **holy water** common among Catholics. The salt should not only be put in some people's mouths but also on their heads. Before baptism, the adult Bussal should receive five or six lashes on his back from the baptizer for the sins he committed in Guinea, so that it was more a sort of **deposition** than a baptism.[24]

These remarkable "priests" were in all likelihood *mestres de escola* in Kongo, and probably so was Pedro Congo in Brazil. It suggests that there was a certain evangelical instinct among Kongo people enslaved in the Americas, and that they were prepared to expand Christianity in their own way. The use of salt in these baptisms, while a part of Catholic baptismal liturgy was particularly important in Kongo where the word "baptism" was actually translated as "*kudia mungwa*" or "to eat salt". But was this commonplace?

Unfortunately, most of the countries of Protestant America left only very superficial records of the religious activities of the enslaved population, most of the descriptions of slave life and culture date from very later periods, in the United States mostly in the last few decades before the Civil War when the African-descended population were largely American-born and creole. The fact that Oldendorp knew of several Kongolese evangelists in the Virgin Islands suggests that his observations were not simply a single isolated individual, indeed he seems to suggest that it was commonplace.

The very scarcity of records makes it impossible to rule out Kongolese evangelism in English America, but also does not provide evidence for its existence. Any claims for Kongo initiative in spreading Christianity are necessarily indirect. For example, I was able to point out from original sources that slaves brought from Kongo led the Stono Rebellion in 1739 and had the goal of reaching Spanish (and Catholic) Florida, and Mark Smith enhanced that case by proposing that some of the timing of the revolts related to Catholic

24 OLDENDORP, C.G.A. (2000), *Historie der caribischen Inseln Sanct Thomas, Sanct Crux und Sanct Jan*. Vol. I (ed. by Meier, G./ Palmié, S./ Stein, P./ Ulbricht, H.) (Berlin), 471–472.

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culture.[25] Annette Laing likewise saw in the presence of African Catholics in South Carolina a means by which the enslaved might seek membership in Christian churches, she did not touch on the idea that they might also be willing to share their beliefs with non-Catholic fellow Africans.[26]

While these authors have contended that Kongolese brought Christianity with them, most others, especially archaeologists and anthropologists have looked to the non-Christian component of Kongolese culture for their religious contribution in North America. Like many after him, Robert Ferris Thompson was particularly interested in the non-Christian component of Kongo culture which he found widespread in all parts of the Americas, and acknowledged but down played its Christian heritage. In part this was perhaps because the Christian kingdom, while recognized, was not deemed a likely source of African culture, either because it was believed to be so weakly engrained that it left little trace, or that it only flourished in the sixteenth and perhaps early seventeenth centuries before simply becoming absorbed into the general culture.

Another contribution to modern understanding (or misunderstanding in my opinion) of Kongo's religion in the Americas has been the work of contemporary anthropologists in Africa, particularly in the Democratic Repulic of Congo. But their efforts are made problematic by the rise of a strong neo-traditional movement that grew up in the last years of the colonial Belgian Congo and strengthened itself in Angola not long afterwards. Missionary teachers in both colonies represented Kongo's older relationship with Belgium or Portugal as essentially a precursor to dependency, or denied its survival until formal colonialism of the region took place.

The neo-traditional movement, accepted these dubious claims of colonial era missionaries as fact, and supposed that the Christian faith in Kongo had been planted in a colonial setting. And so, in effect, their project was to recreate the lost faith, victims of colonial missionizing. Among the early proponents of this neo-traditional movement was Fu-Kiau Bunseki, who served as an informant and guide to several anthropologists, among the Wyatt MacGaffey and John Janzen, and more importantly, to Thompson as well. A number of modern researchers used neo-traditional informants, perhaps because their comprehensive ideas about the ancient tradition made them valuable.[27]

One of the stronger propositions of Thompson, borrowed directly from Fu-kiau was the idea of the Kongo crucifix or cosmogram.[28] Fu-kiau wrote a lengthy account of neo-traditional religion in 1969, in which he talked about the significance of cruciform decorations in art as an ancient and profound part of its non-Christian religion. He called these cross-shaped designs *dikenga* and connected them to ideas about the nature of the cosmos, even though in the Kikongo version of his text, he used the term *kuluzu* for this figure, derived from the Portuguese word for cross, and part of the seventeenth century

25 THORNTON, J. (1991), "African Dimensions of the Stono Rebellion", in: *American Historical Review* 96, 1101–1113; SMITH, M. (2001), "Remembering Mary, Shaping Revolt. Reconsidering the Stono Rebellion", in: *Journal of Southern History* 67, 513–534.

26 LAING, A. (2002), "'Heathens and Infidels'?" (see FN 23).

27 For a critique of Fu-kiau's work and its use by a variety of others, see MACGAFFEY, W. (2016), "Constructing a Kongo Identity. Scholarship and Mythopoesis", in: *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 58, 59–180.

28 THOMPSON, R.F./ CARNET, J. (1981), *The Four Moments of the Sun.* Kongo Art in Two Worlds (Washington, D.C.).

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catechismal literature.[29] In critiquing this scholarship, MacGaffey dismissed much of this work as modern invention, especially tracing it in the Americas, and concluding by claiming that the most important importation of Kongolese religion to America was "Roman Catholicism".[30]

This focus on the medieval Church portion of Kongo religion (or at least that portion condemned by the Counter-Reformation) and the scant but existent evidence of its presence in the Americas has led to scholarship which has focused on these features. Jason Young, one of the earlier scholars to study both sides of the Atlantic and locate Kongolese culture in the Americas, played down the role of Christianity in this transfer; and Ras Michael Brown likewise focused a great deal of attention to the role of *simbi* territorial spirits, in South Carolina while playing little attention to Christianity. Their research is convincing in that one can document both linguistically and iconographically the presence of religious beliefs of non-Christian Kongolese origin in the Americas.[31]

But this should not be surprising, since Kongo's medieval heritage had enshrined all those components in its daily practice anyway. They are well described by Capuchin missionaries precisely because, in their opinion such religious activity was cavorting with the Devil, a viewpoint few Kongolese ever truly accepted. Likewise, in the Americas, the Christian behavior of slaves, whether newly arrived or born in the Americas raised no particular observation as it was invisible, even in Protestant countries where there was not an automatic assumption that all would be baptized. It this problem of the sources that makes it difficult to see the Christian portion, and makes the medieval portion more visible.

Those Kongolese who found themselves as slaves in Protestant America were often denied participation in the Christian community, as we can see from the experiences of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel missionaries in South Carolina. There they met unrelenting hostility from the slave-owning elite of the colony and ultimately abandoned their work. However, Kongolese, like other Africans who might have moved to Christianity worked with the spiritual aids they knew would work, using techniques from their home cultures.

Because most African spiritual entities are local, even the higher deities in much of West Africa are confined to a particular space, and ancestors, the most common spiritual helpers were too far away to be enlisted, they found nearby spirits. These *simbi* type spirits that Brown identifies in South Carolina were local to their position, they were not literally *simbis* brought from Kongo, but they were discovered and tested by the techniques used in Africa to identify such spirits. These techniques varied widely not just form culture to culture but even from within the community of spiritual mediators who located the spirits.

The result of these spiritual discoveries was what is commonly called Conjure in North America and Obeah in the English-speaking Caribbean.[32] Conjure (to use its North

29 FU-KIAU, B. (1969), *N'kongo ye nza yakun'zungidila: nza-Kôngo* (Kinshasa), it is accompanied by a French translation, called *Le Mukongo et le monde qui l'entourait. Cosmogonie-Kôngo* which is often more a paraphrase and explanation than a translation.

30 MACGAFFEY (2016), "Constructing a Kongo Identity" (see FN 27), 171.

31 YOUNG, J. (2007), *Rituals of Resistance. African Atlantic Religion in Kongo and the Lowcountry South in Era of Slavery* (Baton Rouge); BROWN, R.M. (2012), *African Atlantic Cultures and the South Carolina Lowcountry* (Cambridge/ New York).

32 For the United States, see CHIREAU, Y. (2003), *Black Magic*. Religion and the African American Conjuring Tradition (Los Angeles/ Berkeley); for Jamaica the work of Diane Paton is particularly well developed, see the many cases reported by PATON, D. (2015), *The Cultural Politics of Obeah*. Religion, Colonialism and Modernity in the Caribbean World (Cambridge). See also her blog https://www.caribbeanreligioustrials.org/

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American name) is the use of local spiritual entities, which might be of Indigenous, European origin, but those not easily assigned to these other categories would be discovered by Africans using their own techniques, and recognizing similarities to those spirits in Africa.[33]

There were certainly people in all these areas from Kongo, and perhaps they also engaged in informal missionary activity, but there is no evidence that confirms this, beyond a few suggestions. Oldendorp's testimony about the Virgin Islands is unique, although it does reveal the possibilities elsewhere. In North America, the Great Awakening, when more African descended people became formally Christian, was strong in South Carolina, where a substantial number of people were descended from Kongo roots. In any case as Koschorke has already pointed out, what the Kongo slaves might have taught other Africans about Christianity in America, their descendants subsequently were engaged in the return voyage through African-American missionaries in the nineteenth century and beyond.[34]

Abstract

The Kingdom of Kongo is well known as the only solidly established indigenous kingdom in Western Africa to accept Christianity as its national religion. It is also distinguished by having self-evangelized, that is that it developed much of its Christianity through the efforts of its own elite, with assistance, to be sure from outsiders, mostly missionaries. It was also known for its incredibly destructive descent into civil war, which the most violent part of which continued for nearly two centuries and fed the slave trade to the Americas. These slaves carried their home Christianity with them into the New World.

As Catholics they blended easily into the colonies of Catholic Europe, but there is evidence that they also played a role in evangelizing non-Christian slaves in their new environment, both in Brazil and in St Domingue. They also did evangelization in Protestant countries. This second range of activities, difficult to determine, (though with evidence from the Protestant Virgin Islands) may have helped to shape the Christianity that developed throughout African descendants in the Americas.

Das frühe Kongo-Christentum in seinen transatlantischen Verbindungen

Das (historische) Königreich Kongo ist dafür bekannt, dass es als einziges fest etabliertes indigenes Königreich in Westafrika das Christentum als nationale Religion angenommen hat. Es zeichnet sich auch dadurch aus, dass es sich selbst evangelisierte, d.h. dass es seine Gestalt des Christentums weitgehend aufgrund der Initiativen seiner eigenen Elite entwickelt hat, freilich mit Unterstützung von Außenstehenden, meist Missionaren. Es ist ebenfalls für seinen unglaublich desaströsen Niedergang in einem Bürgerkrieg bekannt, dessen gewalttätigster Teil fast zwei Jahrhunderte lang dauerte und den Sklavenhandel nach Amerika beförderte. Diese Sklaven brachten ihr heimisches Christentum mit in die Neue Welt.

33 One of the best studies to discuss the varied origins of spiritual helpers within Conjure is ANDERSON, J. (2005) *Conjure in African American Society* (Baton Rouge).

34 KOSCHORKE, K. (2002) "Einführung", in: Koschorke, K. (Ed.) *Transkontinentale Beziehungen in der Geschichte des Außereuropäschen Christentums* (Wiesbaden), 13–16.

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Als Katholiken fügten sie sich leicht in die Kolonien des katholischen Europas ein. Aber es gibt Hinweise darauf, dass sie auch bei der Evangelisierung nicht-christlicher Sklaven in ihrer neuen Umgebung eine Rolle spielten, und zwar sowohl in Brasilien als auch in Santo Domingo (im heutigen Haiti). Sie haben auch in protestantischen Territorien evangelisiert. Dieser zweite Bereich ihrer Aktivitäten, der im Einzelnen schwer zu bestimmen ist (obwohl es dafür Beweise aus den protestantischen Jungferninseln gibt), könnte dazu beigetragen haben, das Christentum zu formen, das sich unter den afrikanischen Nachkommen in den Amerikas entwickelte.

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Kongolese Christianity in the Americas and the Formation of Transatlantic Networks of Black Brotherhoods in the 17th and 18th Centuries*

DAVID D. DANIELS III

Since the shape and contour of Kongolese Christianity in Africa is a contested topic within the study of Christian history, its presence within the Americas is even more controversial within academic circles. This paper strives to outline the ways that scholarly proponents of Kongolese Christianity as a religious movement indicate how it exhibited itself in the Americas. This paper contends that Kongolese Christianity was a discernible current within the stream of early diasporic African Christianity in the Americas by building upon the work of scholars who explore the presence of the Kongolese and Kongolese Christianity in the Americas: John K. Thornton, Linda M. Heywood, Jason R. Young, Jane G. Landers, Michael A. Gomez, Elizabeth W. Kiddy, James H. Sweet and Karen Wanjiru Ngonya.[1]

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* The title of David Daniel's paper at the Frankfurt South-South Conference (presented on January 6, 2023) had been: "Transatlantic networks of Black Brotherhoods". For health reasons, his presentation — which sparked lively debate at the conference — could not be submitted in print form. In agreement with the author, it was decided to reprint an earlier article by him with a similar theme here instead. It is the article: "Kongolese Christianity in the Americas of the 17th and 18th Centuries", which appeared in the volume "Polycentric Structures in the History of World Christianity", ed. by Klaus Koschorke/ Adrian Hermann (Wiesbaden, 215–226) in 2014. This essay also deals in detail with the significance of Kongolese and Angolan confraternities in the development of Christianity among people of African descent within the Americas during the 17th and 18th centuries and the role they played in the process of constructing the Christian Black Atlantic. It is reprinted in the present volume under the slightly changed title: "Kongolese Christianity in the Americas and the formation of transatlantic networks of Black Brotherhoods in the 17th and 18th centuries".
The (original) abstract of the lecture in Frankfurt-Bad Homburg reads as follows: "This paper will explore the roles played by Kongolese Catholic confraternities (brotherhoods) in constructing the Black Christian Atlantic during the early modern period. These roles were played on local levels as well as within transatlantic network. According to recent research, confraternities were key sites for the shaping of Kongolese Christian identity in Africa, Europe, and the Americas, organizing of Kongolese Christians into communities, and mobilizing them in their quest for freedom and power. These confraternities operated a Black Christian Atlantic world of other confraternities and Christian communities led by Christians of African descent".

1 THORNTON, J.K. ([2]1998), *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400–1800* (Cambridge); HEYWOOD, L.M./ THORNTON, J.K. (2007), *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585–1660* (Cambridge); YOUNG, J.R. (2007), *Rituals of Resistance*: African Atlantic Religion in Kongo and the Lowcountry South in the Era of Slavery (Baton Rouge); LANDERS, J.G. (1999), *Black Society in Spanish Florida* (Urbana/ Chicago); GOMEZ, M.A. (1998), *Exchanging Our Country Marks*: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South (Chapel Hill); KIDDY, E.W. (2005), *Blacks of the Rosary*: Memory and History in Minas Gerais, Brazil (University Park); SWEET, J.H. (2006), "The Evolution of Ritual in the African Diaspora: Central African Kilunda in Brazil, St. Domingue, and the United States, Seventeenth-Nineteenth Centuries", in: Gomez, M.A., *Diasporic Africa*: A Reader (New York/ London), 64–80; WANJURI NGONYA, K. (2009), "Kongolese Peasant Christianity and the Its

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With a focus on intercontinental linkages between Africa and South America as well as North America, this paper strives to veer away from the debate about africanism and African retentions. Rather, the discussion focuses the contributions of Kongolese and Angolan practicing Christians along with their nominal Christian counterparts as well as non-Christian Central Africans. For all these populations, they recognized Christianity as a religion that had Kongolese and Angolan adherents. These three populations participated in varying ways in creating a religious climate in the Americas that was conducive to enslaved Africans embracing Christianity. For the latter category, while Christianity was not their religion, it existed within the Central African religious orbit in which they operate. While this paper resist identifying Kongolese Christianity solely in terms of a set of doctrines, practices, or institutions, there will be a discussion of the role of institutions such as confraternities and practices such as "the ring shout". The discussions of these elements are only meant to point towards the existence of a Kongolese Christianity as a religious arc or thrust. Rather than enter a debate about the location of these elements on a continuum of Christian expressions, a contention of this paper is how Kongolese and Angolans identified themselves as Christians. In this paper, it will be argued that Kongolese Christianity was a contributing factor in the emergence and development of Christianity among people of African descent throughout various communities within the Americas during the 17th and 18th centuries.

1. Atlantic Creole Identity and Culture

The invention of a new Central African identity and the construction of a novel Central African culture during the 16th and 17th centuries inaugurated a historic shift within the Atlantic world. Ira Berlin called this new identity Atlantic Creole. John K. Thorton and J. Lorand Matory respectively name this new culture: Atlantic Creole Culture and the Afro-Lusitanian Creole Culture.[2] According to Ira Berlin, Atlantic creoles were the products of three worlds that shaped the Atlantic: Africa, Europe, and the Americas. These Africans as Atlantic creoles were "[f]amiliar with the commerce of the Atlantic, fluent in its new languages, and intimate with its trade and cultures" along with Christianity, Catholic and Calvinist; thus, "they were cosmopolitan in the fullest sense".[3] While the Atlantic creoles were a miniscule percentage of the transatlantic world, they were a crucial factor in this era as diplomats, cultural brokers, intermediaries, economic agents, linguistic interpreters, social catalyst, and Christian "evangelists" or catechist.

According to Berlin, "slaves from central Africa – generally deemed 'Angolans' – numbered large among the new arrivals" during the first part of the eighteenth century. He noted that while many came from the African interior, "others were Atlantic creoles with experience in the coastal towns of Cabinda, Loango, and Mpinda". He noted that some "subscribed to an African Catholicism" and were familiar with "their catechism, celebrated feasts of Easter and All Saints' Day" along with "recognized Christian saints". Roger Bas-

Influence on Resistance in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century South Carolina" (MA Thesis, Ohio State University).

2 HEYWOOD/ THORNTON (2007), *Central Africans* (see FN 1), 49.

3 BERLIN, I. (2010), "From Creole to African: Atlantic Creoles and the Origins of African-American Society in Mainland North America", in: DuBois, L./ Scott, J.S., *Origins of the Black Atlantic* (New York/ London), 116–157, here: 118.

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tide contends that in northern Brazil, there emerged among the Catholic population of enslaved Africans a "black aristocracy" constituted by the Kongolese.[4]

Kongolese and Angolans navigated Christianity in the Americas in a particular way because of the history of Kongolese Christianity. Kongolese Christianity was a product of the encounter between the Kongolese traditional religion and Roman Catholicism during the late 15th to the early 18th centuries, especially Portuguese Roman Catholicism. Established in the kingdom of Kongo, Kongolese Christianity was reinforced by other transnational linkages between Portugal and Kongo as well as between neighboring Angola and the Kongo. Confraternities existed in Kongo as early as the mid-sixteenth century. Confraternities in the Kongo and Angola during the seventeenth century included the Brotherhood of the Lady of the Rosary, Brotherhood of St. Ignatius, Brotherhood of St. Francis, Brotherhood of St. Bonaventure, Brotherhood of St. Benedict, and Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of the Blacks. With a literate strata, priests, catechists, and school teachers along with an ecclesial infrastructure of a cathedral, chapels, confraternities, and schools, Kongolese Christianity as a form of Roman Catholicism established a Christian corridor of faith for its adherents within the religious landscape of Central Africa.[5]

The Kongolese and Angolans were recognized as an identifiable people or ethnic group in various colonies in the Americas and, in some cases, were noted for forming distinct associations. Within these Kongolese communities were Kongolese Christians as well as Kongolese traditional religionists and other neighboring peoples who were acquainted with Christianity through its Kongolese expression. The transporting of Kongolese Christianity to the Americas by these Kongolese occurred through various means, including ways of behaving, belonging, and believing. While Kongolese Christianity was not transported as an ecclesial entity with priest and women religious, it was introduced through practices and institutions.

Ira Berlin contended:

> In the long history of North American slavery, no other cohort of black people survived as well and rose as fast and as high in mainland society as the Atlantic creoles. The experience of the charter generations contrast markedly with what followed…. [They] entered a society not markedly different from those they had left [in Central Africa]. There, in New Netherlands, the Chesapeake, Louisiana, and Florida, they made a place for themselves, demonstrating confidence in their abilities to master a world they knew well. Many secured freedom and a modest prosperity, despite the presumption of racial slavery and the contempt of their captors.[6]

According to J. Lorand Matory and others, this creole culture in Africa was "spread, through the agency of the enslaved" to the Americas, especially Brazil, Peru, Venezuela, St. Kitts, the Virgin Islands, Haiti, Cuba, Mexico, and the colonial North American (New York, South Carolina, Virginia and Louisiana).[7]

For instance, in 1711, the Italian Jesuit Joao Antonio Andreoni published a characterization of Central Africans that Angolans "who grow up in Luanda are more capable of learning mechanical trades than those from" places such as Dahomey, Gold Coast (Ghana). Andreoni added that among the Kongolese "are also some who are rather industrious and

4 BERLIN (2010), "From Creole to African" (see FN 3), 136; BASTIDE, R. (1978), *The African Religion in Brazil* (Baltimore), 347.
5 HEYWOOD/ THORNTON (2007), *Central Africans* (see FN 1), 62–67.
6 BERLIN (2010), "From Creole to African" (see FN 3), 138.
7 LORAND MATORY, J. (2005), *Black Atlantic Religion*: Tradition, Transnationalism, and Matriarchy in the Afro-Brazilian Candomble (Princeton), 112. 117. 118.

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useful not only for field service, but also for the various crafts and for household management".[8]

After interviewing many enslaved Africans in the Danish West Indies (Virgin Islands) between 1767 and 1769, a Moravian missionary, Christian Georg Andreas, concluded that:

> The Negroes from the Congo nation who came to the West Indies as slaves usually have for the most part some knowledge of the true God and of Jesus Christ, and they are more intelligent and better mannered than other Blacks. For this they have to thank the Portuguese who, since their settlement along this coast, have made a great effort to enlighten and improve these ignorant people with Christian teachings. In this endeavor, they have been partially successful with those who dwell nearby. However, those who live further inland and are far removed from the Portuguese have a religion that combines even superstition and Christian ritual.[9]

A major people among the Atlantic creoles were the Central Africans. The key ethnicities within the Central African Atlantic creole community were the Kongolese and Angolans. Kongolese Christianity was an essential element in the making of the Atlantic Creole culture of the Americas. The creole culture and ethnic identities of Kongolese and Angolans in the Americas was reinvented in various ways between 1600 and 1800. In seventeenth-century Brazil, they were constituted as recognizable "ethnicities" in various coastal towns and cities. In Peru, Angolans and Kongolese Christians constituted themselves as religious entities. In Cuba, this same practice was also evident. Angolans and Kongolese were recognized as a particular people in colonial North America as well. These African ethnic identities bore connotations of "a group of individuals bound by a common language, culture, history, and geographic origin". The Kongolese and Angolans played a pivotal role in constructing the religious landscape of the Americas.[10]

2. Kongolese and Angolan Confraternities

Kongolese and Angolan Christians shaped their social environment by reinventing their identities as Kongolese and Angolans through establishing organizations and associations for their respective and, at times, combined ethnic groups. These Kongolese and Angolan organizations and association changed the topography of the Americas by building chapels, churches, confraternity houses, and cabildo houses. According to Matt D. Childs, "[t]hroughout the Americas, Africans created associations, relationships, and networks by looking back across the Atlantic to their cultures of origin to create survival strategies in the New World". Childs added that these entities "provided an institutional framework that enslaved and free Africans could mold to their" life in the Americas. In a sense, Kongolese and Angolans erected a religious infrastructure in the Americas in which they organized their ethnic communities and contextualized Christianity. The religious infrastructure of these particular Central Africans impacted their social environment in the Americas.[11]

8 ANTONIL, A.J. (1983), "An Italian Jesuit Advises Sugar Planters on the Treatment of Their Slaves (1711)", in: Conrad, R.E., *Children of God's Fire*: A Documentary History of Black Slavery in Brazil (Princeton), 55–60, here: 56.

9 SWEET, J.H. (2003), *Recreating Africa*: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441–1770 (Chapel Hill), 261–262, here: endnote 14.

10 CHILDS, M.D. (2010), "The 1812 Aponte Rebellion in Cuba", in: DuBois, L./ Scott, J.S., *Origins of the Black Atlantic* (New York/ London), 269–322, here: 96.

11 CHILDS (2010), "The 1812 Aponte Rebellion" (see FN 10), 275.

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Ira Berlin contends that for Kongolese and Angolans certain port cities in the Americas such as Dutch New Amsterdam "was not radically different" than the African port of Luanda. The Kongolese and Angolan Christian infrastructure could seemingly operate institutionally in what Ira Berlin called the "intercontinental web" of confraternities, a "network of black religious brotherhoods" that "stretched" across the Portuguese and Spanish Atlantic from the Central African cities of Sao Salvador and Luanda to the Iberian cities of Lisbon and Seville and the South American cities of Rio de Janiero and Lima. He noted, though, that the British and French worlds lack "comparable institutional linkages".[12]

The Kongolese and Angolans served as a major influence within the life of leading confraternities or Christian lay societies. These confraternities participated in producing an institutional structure which undergirded Christianity among African peoples in certain places. Kongolese-instituted and -led confraternities were most prevalent in colonial Brazil. Some of these confraternities were counterparts to confraternities in the Kongo. Other confraternities were identified by their African patron such as Benedict the Moor or St. Eligenia of Ethiopia. The leading African confraternities in the Americas included the Brotherhood of the Rosary, the Brotherhood of the Rosary and Ransom, the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of the Black Men, the Brotherhood of Santo Elesbao and Santa Efigenia, and the Brotherhood of Santa Efigenia.[13]

The Roman Catholic saints of African descent recognized by the Kongolese and Angolans included "Estebao, Moises, Benedito, Antonio de Catalagirona, Efigenia, and His Holiness King Balthasar".[14] Henry Koster noted that "Our Lady of the Rosary is even sometimes painted with a black face and hands". He added: "The election of a King of Congo by the individuals who come from that part of Africa…. [T]he Brazilian Kings of Congo worship Our Lady of the Rosary, and are dressed in the dress of white men; they and their dance, it is true, after the manner of their country…." With charters from the Portuguese crown, these confraternities had legal standing within the society as well as official recognition from the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Through the confraternities, Kongolese Christians were able to organize themselves institutionally within the Christian community, the African community, and the Brazilian society. These confraternities participated in constructing an institutional structure in which African Christians could transmit the Christian faith, fashion a religious and ethnic identify, produce social-religious-cultural practices, and organize their communal lives.[15]

Jesuits and other religious orders developed confraternities among the Kongolese and Angolans especially in Brazil. They masterfully employed Kongolese music, drums, and dance. They also relied on African customs. The Jesuits committed themselves to establishing black confraternities as early as the mid-1550s. In 1552, they organized Brazil's first black confraternity with the newly arrived enslaved Africans from Central Africa. They received crucial support from the Crown through its 1576 decree "ordering the tithes

12 BERLIN (2010), "From Creole to African" (see FN 3), 133.

13 KIDDY (2005), *Blacks of the Rosary* (see FN 1), 27–37.

14 Excerpt from DOM DOMINGOS DE LORETO COUTO (1983), *Desagravos do Brasil e glorias de Pernambuco* [1903], in: Conrad, R.E., *Children of God's Fire*: A Documentary History of Black Slavery in Brazil (Princeton), 178–180, here: 179.

15 Excerpt from HENRY KOSTER (1983), *Travels in Brazil* [1817], in: Conrad, R.E., *Children of God's Fire*: A Documentary History of Black Slavery in Brazil (Princeton), 185–192, here: 187; KIDDY, E.W. (2002), "Who is the King of Congo? A New Look at African and Afro-Brazilian Kings in Brazil", in: Heywood, L.M. (Ed.), *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora* (Cambridge), 169–181, here: 172.

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collected from the newly converted Africans should be used for their churches, lay brotherhoods (confraternities) and their spiritual affairs in Brazil for a space of six years".[16]

Confraternities established a significant presence in Brazil between 1650 and 1700. "By the eighteenth century", according to Richard Gray, "most towns in Brazil had a multiplicity of Black confraternities". Confraternities of Our Lady of the Rosary existed among the Angolans within Angola, Portugal, and Brazil. In Bahai, according to Richard Gray, the rosary confraternity "was at first limited to Blacks of Angolan origin and it became a recognized mouthpiece for Black rights".[17]

The confraternities were autonomous and semi-autonomous organizations that functioned with the Church. Some submitted their charter to the Bishop for approval, while others acted independently. Since most were attached to a parish, we may assume the rector would oversee their activities as he would any other religious activity in the parish. But due to the low priest-parishioner ratio it is doubtful that the priest exercised much control. Confraternities often matched the class and ethnic divisions that society maintained. Whites, mulattoes, creoles, Africans—free and enslaved—often joined separate confraternities. When an African ethnicity like the Angolans or Kongolese were numerous enough to form a confraternity such as on the coastal cities of Brazil--Rio de Janiero, Recife, and Sao Salvador--they did; however in interior regions like Minas Gerais, they did not. Confraternities primarily arose in urban Brazil where community life among Africans was more complex than rural areas.[18]

Confraternities were instrumental in the manumission, or buying the freedom, of a sizeable minority of enslaved Africans. They annually assessed their memberships a designated amount for the "emancipation of members". They offered assistance to freed persons entering the free African sector with clientele for their respective businesses, ranging from barbers to midwives. They also supported members facing expulsion from their craft guilds. Providing pastoral care for their members, especially care for the sick and the aged members, ranked high in the significant services confraternities performed. Since many confraternities had their charters granted by the Portuguese crown, they had legal recourse against certain injustices. They could petition the crown to hear their case. Different Portuguese monarchs ruled on cases throughout the colonial period. The royal relationship buttressed the African advocacy for justice and struggle for human dignity against slaveholders. From the 1600s onward, petitions against injustice consistently echoed a theology espousing "the basic equality of all Christians [regardless of race] before the eyes of God".[19]

In Venezuela during the mid-eighteenth century, there were confraternities among the free Afro-Venezuelans, including a confraternity composed of the Loangans from Central Africa. In Santo Domingo, there existed also Kongolese and Angolan confraternities. In Cuba, *cabildos de nacion* were religious associations organized around African ethnic identities. The Kongolese formed a "nation" in Cuba. In Havana, there was the Kongo, Kongo Masingo, Kongo Musolongo, and Kongo Macamba *cabildos de nacion*. Additionally, various Kongolese associations sponsored confraternities. By 1800, the Kongolese

16 MULVEY, P. (1976), "The Black Lay Brotherhoods of Colonial Brazil, A History" (Ph.D. Dissertation, City University of New York), 79.

17 GRAY, R. (2010), "The Papacy and the Atlantic Slave Trade. Lourenço da Silva, the Capuchins, and the Decisions of the Holy Office", in: DuBois, L./ Scott, J.S., *Origins of the Black Atlantic* (New York/ London), 101–115, here: 103.

18 MULVEY (1976), "Black Lay Brotherhoods" (see FN 16), 78–79.

19 MULVEY (1976), "Black Lay Brotherhoods" (see FN 16), 78–79.

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were a recognizable ethnic community in Cuba. In Lima, Peru, there was a Dominican confraternity for the "negros Congos" as well as an Angolan confraternity called Our Lady of the Socorro.[20]

Confraternities performed a crucial role in the emergence and development of Christianity in the Americas among people of African descent. Ritually, the Kongolese and Angolans reproduced Atlantic creole culture in the Americas. By creating the ring shout, they expanded the cultural environment through their cultural production of dance, drumming, and singing. The way confraternities occupied public space during religious festivals or other occasions shaped the cultural environment. Politically, the Kongolese or Angolan confraternity officials in the Americas impacted political relations between their confraternities and the Church by levering the legal status of many confraternities in utilizing formal political channels in their appeals to the Portuguese Crown to resolve disputes or protest injustices; thus, they advanced the rights of their constituents. Economically, the confraternities impacted local economies through the ways their organizations and associations employed their economic resources in purchasing property, creating a clientele base for businesses, or manumitting enslaved Africans. Consequently, the organized religious life of Kongolese and Angolan Christians functioned as an economic factor. The Christian infrastructure of the Kongolese and Angolans altered its environment in the Americas as well as impacted the other ethnicities through the various modes of Christian presence that was produced, sustained, and expanded by the Kongolese and Angolan Christians.[21]

3. Kongolese/Angolan Christians and the First Mass Conversion of Africans in North America

Protestantism among Kongolese and Angolans in the Americas emerges during the seventeenth century in Dutch North America. Building on the thesis of Atlantic creoles, Caroline A. Williams argues:

> the creoles' knowledge and understanding of the wider Atlantic, and their 'confidence in their abilities to master the world they knew well', equipped them with strategies that enable many to overcome their condition as slaves, to integrate into the local societies, and prosper. In New Netherland, for example, they exploited the large measure of independence which, in the entrance of shortlist profit, the West India Company (WIC) allowed company owned slaves, to learn the Dutch language, trade on their own account, acquire property, participate in the religious life of the Dutch reformed church, and establish families. As early as 1635, fewer than 10 years after the arrival of the first Africans, black people in the Dutch colony and learn enough about their new masters to travel to company headquarters and Holland to petition the WIC for wages. By 1664, as many as one in five have gone on to gain their freedom; some joined the landholding class, participated actively in the life of New Netherland.[22]

The historian Alfloyd Butler noted that the first mass Protestant conversion of Africans in North America occurred in lowcountry South Carolina during the early eighteenth century. He identified the critical presence of enslaved Angolan and Kongolese who brought

20 WARNER-LEWIS, M. (2003), *Central Africa in the Caribbean*: Transcending Time, Transforming Cultures (Kingston), 66–67; CHILDS (2010), "The 1812 Aponte Rebellion" (see FN 10), 272. 275. 279. 282. 288.

21 Applying sociology of religious presence as framed in MCROBERTS, O.M. (2003), *Streets of Glory*: Church and Community in a Black Urban Neighborhood (Chicago), 12–13.

22 WILLIAMS, C.A. (2009), "Introduction: Bridging the Early Modern Atlantic World", in: Williams, C.A. (Ed.), *Bridging the Early Modern Atlantic World*: People, Products, and Practices on the Move (Burlington), 1–31, here: 8.

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their Roman Catholicism with them from Africa as a major factor in the mass conversion. In 1710 Anglican missionary Francis Le Jau commented on the presence within his South Carolina parish, St. James in Goose Creek, of three or four enslaved Angolans who professed Roman Catholic having been baptized by the Portuguese Roman Catholics and who requested Holy Communion. Le Jau added: "I have in this parish a few Negroe Slaves and [they] were born and baptized among the Portuguese…. [T]hey come to Church and are well instructed so as to express a great desire to receive H[oly] Communion amongst us, I proposed to them to declare openly their Abjuring the Errors of the Romish Church without which Declaration I cou'd not receive them …."[23]

Additionally, Le Jau required that they renounce from "praying to the Saints" and vowed to never "return to the Popish worship in case they shou'd be sent to Medera again. I gave them that fform of Submission in Writing and left it to their Consideration, they come constantly to Church and are very sensible".[24]

These Angolan Catholics, according to Le Jau, could "speak very good English". He further added that they regularly attended public worship. While a group of Africans attended the Sunday worship, according Le Jau, only a smaller contingent remained for catechism. Le Jau followed the Kongolese model of utilizing African catechists. Le Jau stated: "I take all the care I can that they instruct one another when they have time; there are a few men in several plantations to whom I have recommended to do that good service to the others, those men are religious, zealous, honest, they can read well…." By 1716, Le Jau counted a sizeable community of African Christians in his parish and noted that these Christians "prayed and read some part of their Bibles in the field and in their quarters, in the hearing of those who could not read…."[25]

An Antonian apocalyptic theology apparently informed a segment of the small Angolan Christian community within Le Jau's St. James Parish in 1710. In his book on Africanization of Christianity in lowcountry South Carolina, Alfloyd Butler quotes Le Jau as stating:

> The best scholar of all the Negroes in my parish and a very sober and honest liver through his learning was like to create some confusion among all the Negroes in this country; he had a book wherein he read some descriptions of the several judgements that chastise men because of their sins in the latter days, that description made an impression upon his spirit, and he told his master abruptly there would be a dismal time and the moon would be turned into blood, and there would be dearth of darkness and went way.
>
> When I heard of that I sent for the Negro who ingeniously told me he had read so in a book; I advised him and charged him not to put his own constructions upon his reading after that manner, and to be cautious not to speak so, which he promised to me but yet would never show me the book; but when he spoke those few words to his master, some Negro overheard a part and it was publicly blazed abroad that an angel came and spoke to the man, he had seen a hand that gave him a book, he had heard voices, seen fires and as I had opportunities I took care to undeceive those who asked me about it.[26]

A 1739 letter from South Carolina noted: "Amongst the Negroe Slaves there are a people brought from the Kingdom of Angola in Africa, many of these speak Portugueze (which Language is as near Spanish as Scotch is to English,) by reason that the Portugueze have

23 BUTLER, A. (1980), *The Africanization of American Christianity* (New York); Excerpt from KLINGBERG, F.W. (1956) (Ed.), *The Carolina Chronicle of Dr. Francis Le Jau, 1707–1717* (Berkeley) cited in SERNETT, M.C. (1999) (Ed.), *Afro-American Religious History*: A Documentary History (Durham), 25–33, here: 27.

24 KLINGBERG (1956) (Ed.), *The Carolina Chronicle* (see FN 23), 30.

25 KLINGBERG (1956) (Ed.), *The Carolina Chronicle* (see FN 23), 30.

26 BUTLER (1980), *Africanization* (see FN 23), 81.

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considerable Settlement, and the Jesuits have a Mission and School in the Kingdom and many Thousands of the Negroes there profess the Roman Catholic Religion."[27]

From 1700 to 1740, over 65 percent of the imported Africans with known ethnicities were of Kongolese-Angolan descent according to the historian Jason R. Young. With 8,045 Angolans/Kongolese arriving between 1735 and 1740 to South Carolina, their presence and role in the Christianization of enslaved Africans intensified. The historian John Thornton and others make linkages between Roman Catholicism in the African Kingdom of Kongo and the enslaved Kongolese and Angolans in South Carolina. These ethnicities constitute two of the African ethnicities among the enslaved populations of coastal South Carolina and Georgia which included Ibos, Guineans, Mossi, Fulahs, and other ethnicities from Africa.[28]

The revivals of the 1740s produced a new era with the first mass conversion of Africans to Christianity in British North America and of African peoples to Protestantism. This ran against the objections of the majority of slaveholders who discouraged the evangelization of enslaved Africans. The historian Alfloyd Butler argued for the intersection of the enslaved Angolan Christians, enslaved, including semi-literate, Anglican communicants, and nascent evangelicalism as being responsible for this first mass Protestant conversion of Africans in North America. With the Angolans and Kongolese as catalyst, these revivals created space for Africans to forge their Christianity in the Americas with memories of Kongolese and Angolan Christianity as well as an emphasis on conversion, the apocalyptic, and religious enthusiasm.

Among the practices and rituals of the Kongolese and Angolan Christians in colonial coastal South Carolina were the Pray's [Praise] House and the ring shout. The Pray's House was an institution that organized the religious life of enslaved African Christians outside of the congregation. The Pray's House served as a center for prayer, ring shouts, and conversion, often coordinated by volunteer Christian laywomen. Located on plantations, the Pray's House developed outside or parallel to denominational structures. Alongside the Pray's House were other religious practices such as the ring shout. Scholars such as Robert Farris Thompson and Sterling Stuckey identify the Kongo as the origin of the ring shout. It was a vital religious ritual that marked Christianity in various parts of the Americas.[29]

Regarding the ring shout, Sterling Stuckey argued that the "circle ritual imported by Africans from the Congo region was so powerful in its elaboration of a religion vision that it contributed disproportionately to the centrality of the circle in slavery". Drawing upon the scholarship of Robert Farris Thompson, Stuckey linked the ring shout to "the counterclockwise, circular dancing in Bakongo burial ceremonies and 'ancestral rituals.'"[30]

Theologically, within the inner circle of the ring that was formed in the open air stood the seeker around which the converted sang and danced in a circular motion, praying for the Holy Spirit to descend in order for the sinner to get converted, signaled by an ecstatic religious experience.

27 BUTLER (1980), *Africanization* (see FN 23), 80–81.
28 YOUNG (2007), *Rituals of Resistance* (see FN 1), 33.
29 JOHNSON, A. (1996), "Pray's House Spirit: The Institutional Structure and Spiritual Care of an African American Folk Tradition", in: Johnson, A./ Jersild, P.T. (Ed.) *Ain't Gonna Lay My 'ligion Down*: African American Religion in the South (Columbia), 8.
30 DESCH OBI, T.J. (2002), "Combat and the Crossing of the *Kalunga*", in: Heywood, L.M. (Ed.), *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora* (Cambridge), 353–370, here: 366.

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In Angola, nganga or the dance ritual was described as where a "man or woman puts himself in the middle of the multitude" while "the musicians play their instrument excite those present with appropriate songs and shouting", especially "songs with invocations. Singing and dancing was central to their quest to be possessed by a spirit. The seeker "rises with great seriousness, and remaining still for several moments, suddenly begins to agitate, moving his eyes in their sockets, laying himself on the ground, contorting furiously, bending all of his members".

A Dominican priest, Jean-Baptiste Labat, described a "ring shout" as well as the song and response singing on St. Domingue or another French Caribbean colony in 1698:

> The Negresses arranged in a circle regulate the tempo by clapping their hands, and they reply in chorus to one or two chanters who piercing voice repeats or improvises ditties. For the Negroes possess the talent of improvising, and it gives them an opportunity for displaying especially their tendency to banter. The dancers, male and females, always equal in number come to the middle of a circle (which is formed on even ground and in the open air) and they begin to dance….This dance,…which offers little variation, consists of a movement where each foot is raised and lowered successively, striking with force, sometimes the toe and sometimes the heel, on the ground, in a way quite similar to the English step. The dancer turns on himself or around his partner who turns also, and changes place, waving the two ends of a handkerchief that they hold. The dancer lowers and raises alternatively his arms, while keeping the elbows near the body, and the hand almost closed. This dance in which the play of the eyes is nothing less than extraordinary, is lively and animated, and an exact timing in real grace. The dancers follow each other with emulation ….[31]

Sterling Stuckey identified the circle dance in his study of the Pinkster Festival in Albany, New York from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century. He highlighted the role of an Angolan who presided over the Pinkster Festival at one point during this time period, noting that some of the dances were from the Kongo according to contemporary sources. Stuckey also noted that a former enslaved African in New York contended decades after the Pinkster Festival was celebrated that it had some origins from a Christian community in Africa. Standing in the middle of the circle of other dances, the lead drummer sang and beat, according to the contemporary,

> lustily with his naked hands upon its loudly sounding head, successively repeating the ever wild, though euphonic cry of *Hi-a-bomba, bomba, bomba*, in full harmony with the thumping sounds. These vocal sounds were taken up and as oft repeated by the female portion of the spectators not otherwise engaged in the exercises of the scene….Merrily now the dance moved on…rapid and furious became their motions…copiously flowed perspiration, in frequent streams, from brow to heel, and still the dance went on in all its accustomed energy and might….[32]

The ring shout borrowed or reinvented a defining ritual from Central Africa. As a Christian religious practice, it provided a transatlantic link between the Americas and Africa. Kongolese Christianity played a vital role in the emergence and development of Christianity in the Americas among people of African descent through the rituals they practiced and institutions they erected. In addition to Kongolese Christianity altering the religious landscape of the Americas through creating new identities, reproducing creole

31 SWEET (2003), *Recreating Africa* (see FN 9), 73–74; excerpt from PERE LABAT, *Nouveau Voyage aux Isles de l'Amerique*, vol. 2, 51 cited in SWEET (2003), *Recreating Africa* (see FN 9). Also see WILLIAMS, J.J. (1932) *Voodoos and Obeahs*: Phases of West Indian Witchcraft (New York), 60–61.

32 STUCKEY, S. (1994), *Going Through the Storm*: The Influence of African American Art in History (Oxford/New York), 59. 65. 67. 68; excerpt from JAMES EIGHTS, "Pinkster Festivities in Albany Sixty Years Ago", partially cited in STUCKEY (1994), *Storm*, 65.

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culture, and fashioning Christian institutions, it also cleared political spaces in the Americas through the formation of maroon communities.

4. Kongolese and Angolan Christians and the Formation of Maroon Communities

Kongolese- and Angolan-led fugitive communities called maroon societies were present throughout the Americas. Between 1550 and 1800, hundreds of maroon societies were organized in the forest, mountains, and heaths of North and South America. The largest maroon society was Palmares, a confederation of settlements in Brazil. Some scholars recognized it as the first major African state in the Americas. In various towns of Palmares, they erected Catholic churches, "complete with statues of saints". Established around 1612, Palmares existed for nearly eighty-three years. Palmares rebuffed "at least twenty major attacks or seizes by the Dutch, the Portuguese and Brazilians before succumbing in 1695". The churches they built served the 20,000 to 30,000 citizens residing in ten areas. Robert Anderson proposed: "It is reasonable to assume that many, if not most, of the Palmarinos were the descendants of slaves from Angola, and many may have been recent arrivals from among the Imbangala. Indeed, the residents of Palmares called it Angola Janga, supposedly 'Little Angola.'"[33] A Dutch lieutenant, Jurgens Reijmbach, who scouted out Palmares, described the main town/city in a 21 March 1645 diary entry:

> [It] is equally half a mile long, its street six feet wide and running along a large swamp, tall trees alongside….There are 220 *casas*, amid them a church, four smithies and a huge *casa de conselho*; all kinds of artifacts are to be seen…. [The] king rules… with iron justice, without permitting any *feticeiros* [sorcerers] among the inhabitants; when some Negroes attempt to flee, he sends *crioulos* …after them and once retaken their death is swift and of the kind to instill fear, especially among the Angolan Negroes; ….[F]rom what we saw around us as well we presumed that there were 1,500 inhabitants all told….This is the Palmares *grandes* of which so much is heard in Brazil, with its well-kept lands, all kinds of cereals, beautifully irrigated with streamlets.[34]

An historical account from 1675–78 characterized the residents of the capital of Palmares as having "not completely lost allegiance to the Church". The capital included a chapel to where its residents "flock whenever time allows" along with Christian images "to which they direct their worship". Associated with the chapel was a person recognized by the people as a priest who served as the officiant at baptisms and weddings. In 1671, a Brazilian governor surmised that "More and more Negroes from Angola have now for some years fled on their own from" enslavement. According to the scholar R. K. Kent, "the king and most of the hierarchy" in Palmares were most likely native Central Africans such as the Kongolese and Angolans.[35]

Colonial Spanish Florida was also a haven for Kongolese- and Angola-led maroon Christian communities. "At every opportunity", according to Ira Berlin, "Carolina slaves fled to Spanish Florida, where they requested Catholic baptism", especially between 1720

33 BASTIDE (1978), *The African Religion* (see FN 4); ANDERSON, R.N. (1996), "The Quilombo of Palmares: A New Overview of a Maroon State in Seventeenth-Century Brazil", in: *Journal of Latin American Studies* 28/3, 545–566, here: 559.

34 Cited in KENT, R.K. (1965), "Palmares: An African State in Brazil", *The Journal of African History* 6/2, 161–175, here: 167; also see WOODWARD, M. (2010), "Palmares and Political Conflict: The Growth of an Afro-Brazilian Sovereign in Colonial Brazil" (unpublished paper).

35 KENT (1965), "Palmares" (see FN 34), 171. 169.

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and 1740. While the majority of the African participants in the Stono Rebellion of 1739 were "killed or captured, some escaped to Florida". Among the Stono Rebellion participants who successfully reached freedom in Spanish Florida were many who "had already been baptized" and prayed "as one Miguel Domingo informed a Spanish priest—in Kikongo".[36]

By clearing political spaces in the Americas through the formation of maroon communities, Kongolese Christianity demonstrated its persistence as well as ability to adapt "African" states within the Americas as well as to societies in which Kongolese and Angolans were enslaved.

5. Conclusion

Kongolese and Angolans introduced Christianity to various African communities in the Americas through the reinvention of their Christian identities, the reproduction of Atlantic creole culture, the formation of confraternities, and the establishment of Christian maroon societies. By reinventing their Christian identities in the Americas, they facilitated the transplantation of Kongolese Christianity into sectors within the Americas. By reproducing Atlantic creole culture, they performed practices and rituals that were framed by Kongolese Christianity. By forming confraternities, they organized their religious lives into Christian institutions and found ways of practicing their faith in their new context. By establishing maroon societies like Palmares, they demonstrated that, when independent from European rule, the Kongolese and Angolan Christians still sought to practice Christianity as well as had the ability to govern themselves. Christianity in Americas among people of African descent possessed currents that were produced, sustained, and expanded by the Christian faith and practice of Kongolese and Angolans.

Between 1600–1800, Kongolese and Angolans along with their Christianity were recognizable factors in the construction of the Americas as a Christian territory. With the Atlantic creole culture of the Kongolese and Angolans as the key factor in their creation of new African communities in the Americas, they fashioned ethnicities and identities that empowered them to erect an infrastructure, especially of confraternities, which impacted the development of Christianity among Africa peoples in the Americas as well as Christianity within the Americas for Europeans and Amerindians, too. The Kongolese and Angolan infrastructure possessed ritual, cultural, political, economic, and religious consequences.

Abstract

The contribution presents Kongolese Christianity as a conduit in which Kongolese and Angolans Christians reinvented their Christian identities with roots in the Christian communities of Central Africa. It argues that they reproduced the Atlantic creole culture that was a hybrid of African, European, and Amerindian cultures and formed confraternities in the Americas, including some with branches in Central Africa along with establishing maroon societies in the Americas, some with a distinct Christian presence. With a focus on intercontinental linkages between Africa and South America as well as North America, the

36 BERLIN (2010), "From Creole to African" (see FN 3), 136–137.

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author contends that Kongolese Christianity was a contributing factor in the emergence and development of Christianity among people of African descent throughout various communities within the Americas during the 17th and 18th centuries.

Kongolesisches Christentum in den Amerikas und die Bildung transatlantischer schwarzer Bruderschaften im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert

Der Beitrag stellt das kongolesische Christentum als einen Kanal dar, durch den kongolesische und angolanische Christen ihre christliche Identität mit Wurzeln in den christlichen Gemeinschaften Zentralafrikas neu erfanden. Sie reproduzierten die atlantische kreolische Kultur, die eine Mischung aus afrikanischen, europäischen und amerindischen Elementen darstellte, und gründeten in den Amerikas Bruderschaften, von denen einige auch Zweige in Zentralafrika hatten, sowie Maroon-Gesellschaften in Amerika, darunter einige mit ausgeprägter christlicher Präsenz. Mit dem Hinweis auf die interkontinentalen Verbindungen zwischen Afrika und Südamerika sowie Nordamerika vertritt der Autor die These, dass das kongolesische Christentum einen Beitrag zur Entstehung und Entwicklung des Christentums unter Menschen afrikanischer Abstammung in verschiedenen Gemeinschaften Amerikas während des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts leistete.

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West African Christianity and its Transatlantic Trails: Sierra Leone in the Late 18th and Early 19th Centuries

CIPRIAN BURLĂCIOIU

The beginnings of Protestant Christianity in West Africa have usually been described as the result of missionary activities by various European societies such as the Anglican 'Church Missionary Society' (CMS) or the Swiss-German Basel Missions in early 19th century. There was, however, an earlier – and partially even more important – initiative: the remigration of former African-American slaves who had become Christians in the New World and were now returning to Africa. Two regions played here a significant role in the course of 19th century: Sierra Leone and Liberia. This article deals with the initial phase of the Sierra Leone experiment around the turn from late 18th to early 19th centuries.

From the 'New World' to West Africa, from Servitude to Freedom

"African Protestant Christianity was already very much a reality around 1780", says Adrian Hastings in his magisterial study of the history of *The Church in Africa, 1450—1950*. "The one place, however, where it did not exist was Africa"[1] – apart from its sporadic presence in some trading posts of various West European powers (Dutch, British, Danish, etc.) along the West African coast. However, it existed in considerable numbers on the other side of the Atlantic, in the Caribbean and especially in North America. In the English colonies on the North American east coast, the core area of the later USA, there were already numerous African-American slaves or freedmen who had accepted the Christian faith. Of particular importance was the so-called Second Great Revival of late 18th and early 19th centuries, which affected both whites and blacks. Among other things, it led to the emergence of the first black churches (such as the 'First African Baptist Church', which was founded in Savannah, Georgia, in 1788). Enthusiastic piety, biblical faith and trust in the promises of the God of the Exodus, who had once "led Israel out of the slave house of Egypt",[2] were characteristics of this African-American evangelical Christianity.

During the American War of Independence (1776–1783), British authorities were encouraging the flight of slaves from the lines of the American rebels. They raised black regiments and promised freedom and land ownership to those who rose up against their American masters. After the American victory, the British then had to deal with a considerable number of black troops who could not be demobilized locally. Some of these were evacuated to other places still under British control. In 1782, 4,000 of these "black

1 HASTINGS, A. (1994), *The Church in Africa*, 1450–1950 (Oxford), 177.
2 Cf. Exodus 20,2.

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loyalists"[3] were transferred to Jamaica, to Nova Scotia (Canada),[4] or even to Britain. On a last evacuation movement in 1783 some 3,000 black loyalists were moved from New York to Nova Scotia.[5] In this way, a community of African American Christians developed in Nova Scotia – legally free, often literate, Protestant, and with the Bible in hand as "the charter of their freedom and dignity".[6] And it was from there that on January 15th, 1792 a fleet of fifteen ships with 1,196 people of color left for West Africa[7] – in search for a place of freedom and Christian brotherhood in the country of their forefathers.

The immigrants in Nova Scotia had been promised free land for settlement. The treatment given to them there, however, was disappointing, and pledges were fulfilled only in an unsatisfactory way. They felt treated as second-class citizens or even reduced to a state of new bondage. Because of racist attitudes among the white population, black loyalists were forced to cluster in separate locations from the white towns. This factual segregation included religion, one of the most important elements in the community life of these black people: "[T]he foundation of their society, and its most distinctive trait, was religion. Their religion gave them much of their vocabulary and determined many of their daily activities but it also … conditioned their attitudes towards themselves and towards other people. Religion made them aware of race … for it bound them together as a select all-black group against the encroachments of outsiders, considered sinful or at least less pure. Religion also influenced their political outlook, which was anti-establishment and antiauthoritarian…"[8]

Black loyalists were found in Britain as well. One of them was John Marrant. According to his own account,[9] he was born of free parents 1755 in New York and grew up in Georgia and Charleston, South Carolina. During the Independence War he fought in the British navy, was wounded and discharged to England. He settled in London and become involved in the Countess of Huntingdon's Connection (Calvinistic Methodist).[10] Through correspondence with his brother, one of the Nova Scotia immigrants, Marrant was informed in 1785 about the state of things there and reported it to the countess. The countess become aware of the need for mission work among the Nova Scotia black loyalists and assigned John Marrant himself to this task. He was ordained and sent to Birchtown, Nova Scotia, accompanied by another Huntingdonian black loyalist, William Furmage, as his assistant. As a result of their mission a Huntingdonian congregation in Birchtown near Shelburne was born. Marrant left two immigrants, Cato Perkins and William Ash, in charge of the congregation, went for a while to Boston and returned to London where he died unexpectedly 1791. His assistant William Furmage remained and continued the evangelization work, finally as a school teacher in Halifax, until his death in 1793. Unlike Furmage, in 1782 Cato Perkins and William Ash led almost the entire congregation from

3 Cf. WILSON, E.G. (1976), *The Loyal Blacks* (New York/ Toronto); PULIS, J.W. (Ed.) (1999), *Moving On*. Black Loyalists in the Afro-Atlantic World (New York/ London).
4 A trustful digital resource for the history of this community is the https://blackloyalist.com.
5 WALKER, J.W.ST.G. (1976), *Black Loyalists*. The Search for a Promised Land in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone, 1783–1870 (London), 9f. 12. 18–32.
6 HASTINGS (1994), *The Church in Africa* (see FN 1), 176.
7 Cf. WALKER (1976), *Black Loyalists* (see FN 5), 115–138.
8 WALKER (1976), *Black Loyalists* (see FN 5), 86.
9 MARRANT, J. (1785), *A Narrative of the Lord's Wonderful Dealings with John Marrant, a Black* (London).
10 This group goes back to the so called "Countess of Huntingdon's Connection", a group seceding finally as a result of a revival from the Anglican Church and related to the Methodist movement. It was founded 1783 by Selina Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon.

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Birchtown in an exodus to Sierra Leone. They became the leaders of the Huntingdonians in Nova Scotia, during the months of travel, and in Sierra Leone itself. This applies to Baptist and Methodist pastors in the same way.

The Sierra Leone 'experiment' was started in the 1780s by a group of philanthropists in Britain under the influence of the antislavery activist Sir Granville Sharpe.[11] In 1787 the first group of slightly over 400 – mostly black – settlers sailed from Britain to West Africa. Because of insufficient preparation, lack of experience, high mortality among the settlers, and opposition from local African rulers, the newly founded Granville Town was in the end dismantled 1789 by King Tom of the Temne. The colonists still alive at this time escaped to some of the nearby local villages or found employment at Bunce Island in the factories of slave traders.[12]

In search for an exit from their futile situation in Nova Scotia, in 1790 some black loyalists sent Thomas Peters, a former slave and sergeant in the British army, to London to complain about unfulfilled promises and to ask the British government for support. Here he made contact with Granville Sharpe and his group and the possibility of a resettlement in Sierra Leone was discussed. This encounter was timely since the initiators of the Sierra Leone experiment were prospecting for future opportunities. John Clarkson, a respectable former British Navy officer and brother of Thomas Clarkson, a member of the anti-slavery committee, was sent to inquire in Nova Scotia. Even if the legal situation of Sierra Leone was still pending in London, Clarkson was authorized by the directors of the Company to offer to willing settlers free land, racial equality, and logistical support for the passage to Africa. On arriving in Halifax 1791, Clarkson went for over a week from hut to hut, explaining the plans to the black loyalists in Halifax and in the black location Preston at the outskirts of this city. News spread and Clarkson's offer even appeared in the press. When he sailed to Shelburne, he was met on the pier by David George, the Baptist pastor, who had been appointed by his congregation in this town to make contact with Clarkson and was on his way to look for him in Halifax. In the nearby all-black settlement Birchtown the message was carried by Moses Wilkinson, the Methodist pastor, addressing 300 to 400 people of his parish from the pulpit. The congregation decided spontaneously to emigrate as a whole. The Cato Perkins' Huntingdonian congregation from Birchtown reacted in a similar way, as well as the smaller fellowship of the Baptist pastor David George from Shelburne. As a result, Clarkson had to enroll some 600 people from Shelburne and Birchtown over the next few days.

Since the success was beyond expectations, Clarkson refrained from further advertisement but the propaganda made by Thomas Peters, the London deputy, brought hundreds more emigrants from the New Brunswick and Annapolis regions. For different reasons, the Nova Scotia Governor was not interested in the success of this operation and instructed its agents to keep the number of applicants low or even to refuse them. Finally, the resettlement plan was successful only in places where the black loyalists were instrumental in advertising it – such as Shelburne, Birchtown or the Annapolis region – or where Clarkson himself made it public, as in Preston. From Shelburne and Birchtown almost 600 persons enrolled, i.e. up to the half of the entire local black population, and

11 Cf. FYFE, CH. (1962), *A History of Sierra Leone* (Oxford) (reprint 1993); idem (1968), "The Foundation of Freetown", in: idem/ Jones, E., *Freetown*. A Symposium (Freetown), 1–8; PETERSON, J. (1969), *Province of Freedom*. A History of Sierra Leone, 1787–1870 (London).

12 Cf. CAMPBELL, J. (2006), *Middle Passages*. African American Journeys to Africa, 1787–2005 (New York), 25.

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virtually at least a large part of the three parishes of the Baptist David George, of the Methodist Moses Wilkinson, and the Huntingdonian Cato Perkins.[13] From Preston, there were about 50 families under the leadership of Adam Abernathy and his wife Catherine who emigrated. The Anglican bishop Ignatius reported one year later: "The Blacks are all gone from Preston. Most of them went to Sierra Leone, the remainder settled at Halifax."[14] The Methodists of Boston Kings' chapel and the Baptists of the Hector Peters' one in Preston mostly left as well.

From Brindley Town Joseph Leonard reported in December 1791 that he and most of the black Anglican loyalists in Brindley Town were then preparing to embark for Sierra Leone, and only 15 families with 7 children intended continuing there.[15] Since the Methodist Society in this town, with 66 black members in 1786, was closed in 1792, it seems that most of their members left that year for Sierra Leone. On the whole, it is possible that some three-quarters of the entire black population in Brindley Town emigrated. Even if emigration remained an individual decision of every person and every family, the exodus took the form of a mass movement, including nearly 1,200 persons of color. The emigrants organized themselves for the movement to Halifax, during the waiting time there, and during the passage to West Africa mostly along confessional lines. Religious leaders became the natural representatives of their travelling parishioners through which the Company organized the emigrants. Next to the former London petitioner Thomas Peters, the Baptist pastor David George and his the Huntingdonian counterpart John Ball were the three "superintendents" chosen by Clarkson to supervise the preparation for the passage while in Halifax and organize their people.[16]

When the migrating black loyalists got ashore in Sierra Leone in early March 1792, they did not represent an amorphous mass of people but a largely organized society with particular group identities and clear leadership. It goes without saying that their preachers and religious leaders were at the same time their political representatives and the emerging 'chapels' shaped the social structure of Freetown. Andrew Walls speaks about the "first Protestant church in tropical Africa" in the following terms: "It was a ready made African church, with its own structures and leadership."[17] James Walker concludes, regarding the role of religious communities: "Inevitably the chapels were far more than centres of religious worship. Political opinions were formed and debated, mutual assistance was generated, and social bonds were confirmed in the class and chapel meetings. And as the chapel was the most important institution in settler life, so their preachers were the true leaders of the colonial population."[18] This became obvious as the hardships of the initial years and the problems of the following decades were resolved, not least along religious lines, sometimes in a very different manner from each other.[19]

13 WALKER (1976), *Black Loyalists* (see FN 5), 123.
14 Apud WALKER (1976), *Black Loyalists* (see FN 5), 123.
15 WALKER (1976), *Black Loyalists* (see FN 5), 124.
16 WALKER (1976), *Black Loyalists* (see FN 5), 136.
17 WALLS, A. (2002), "Sierra Leone, Afroamerican Remigration and the Beginnings of Protestantism in West Africa (18th–19th Centuries)", in: Koschorke, K. (Ed.), *Transkontinentale Beziehungen in der Geschichte des außereuropäischen Christentums*: Transcontinental Links in the History of Non-Western Christianity (Wiesbaden), 45–56, here: 48.
18 WALKER (1976), *Black Loyalists* (see FN 5), 198.
19 Cf. WALKER (1976), *Black Loyalists* (see FN 5), 149. 180.

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Ministers Leading the Exodus

A short survey on some religious leaders or prominent members of different denominations will help us to understand the range of experience and religious sentiments these initial communities brought with them to West Africa.[20]

The largest denominational group were the Methodists[21] with a following of one third to half of the emigrant Nova Scotia black loyalists. Their leader was Moses Wilkinson,[22] a blind, crippled man, born as a slave in Virginia, like probably one third of all black loyalists who reached Nova Scotia. Already during the years in slavery and in New York after his flight from the South he had gathered a number of people as a self-appointed Methodist preacher. Once in Nova Scotia, he settled in the all-black location Birchtown. Even if the white Methodists – and John Wesley himself – were aware of the huge number of black Methodists in the location, they were left to organize themselves. Wilkinson converted dozens of people and his chapel attracted the largest number of dwellers from Birchtown, some 300 to 400. Under his leadership, the Methodists represented the largest denominational group emigrating. One of the first religious services after landing in Sierra Leone was held by Wilkinson himself and he remained one of the influential Methodists leaders for almost two decades. However, the Methodists manifested fissiparous tendences and were inclined to split into separate congregations.[23]

Boston King,[24] another Methodist leader and disciple of Wilkinson, was born in slavery around 1760 in South Carolina on a plantation near to Charleston. His father had been enslaved in Africa and transported at a young age to the American South, where he was evangelized by SPG missionaries. After a life on a plantation and some years as an apprentice carpenter he escaped to the British lines in Charleston probably about 1780. For some time thereafter he remained attached to the British army and experienced the war. He was evacuated to New York and in 1782 to Birchtown in Nova Scotia. Here, his wife was converted by Moses Wilkinson and later on King himself went through a conversion experience. According to his account, in 1785 he began an active career as a preacher and two years later had the first thoughts about mission in Africa, although at that time there was no prospect for such an enterprise. In 1791 he moved to Preston to oversee a community of some two dozen people. In 1792 he left Nova Scotia with the other emigrants apparently not because he could not provide for his family but because of his desire to engage in mission in Africa. His wife died from malaria shortly after their arrival in Sierra Leone but he survived. Before erecting a temporary prayer place, services were held under a tree. Soon he volunteered to move on the opposite bank of Freetown to live

20 For an early discussion on the role of religion for the Nova Scotia settlers see the seminal article of WALLS, A.F. (1959), "The Nova Scotian Settlers and their Religion", in: *Sierra Leone Bulletin of Religion* 1, 1. 19–31; cf. as well SANNEH, L. (1983), *West African Christianity*. The Religious Impact (London), 76ff. For more general historical aspects see BROWN, W., "The Black Loyalists in Sierra Leone", in: PULIS, J. (1999) (Ed.), *Moving On* (see FN 3), 103–134.

21 For a survey of the first decade of the Methodism in Sierra Leone see FYFE, CH. (1961), "The West African Methodists in the Nineteenth Century", in: *Sierra Leone Bulletin of Religion* 3/1, 22–28.

22 Cf. CATRON, J.W. (2016), *Embracing Protestantism*. Black Identites in the Atlantic World (Gainesville, FI), 205f.; SANNEH, L. (1999) *Abolitionists Abroad*: American Blacks and the Making of Modern West Africa (Cambridge, MA), 80–85; WALKER (1976), *Black Loyalists* (see FN 5), 73ff.

23 Ch. FYFE (1962), "The West African Methodists in the Nineteenth Century" (see FN 11), 23.

24 Cf. KING, B. (March–June 1798), "Memoirs of the Life of Boston King, a Black Preacher, Written by Himself, During his Residence at Kingswood School", *The Methodist Magazine*, https://www.latinamericanstudies.org/slavery/Boston_King.pdf.

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among Bullom people and evangelize them. He began by teaching African children. Because of this inclination he was advised to go to England in order to get a better education. Between 1794 and 1796 he spent time at the Methodist Kingswood School (Bath, Somerset). On his return to Sierra Leone he engaged in educational activities as a schoolmaster. By 1793 some 300 children of school age were receiving formal education. When in 1794 differences between the Company and settlers grew and Company officials imposed restrictions on access to schools and settlers themselves boycotted the official school, the settlers organized their own schools along denominational lines, so that virtually every chapel had its school.[25] In this way settlers could preserve their independence from the Company, contributing to the consolidation of a settler society beyond patterns of past slavery or later colonialism. King spent the last years of his life as missionary among the Sherbro people a hundred miles to the east, until his death in 1802.[26] His involvement in mission shows how Atlantic Christianity,[27] forged by people with African ancestry between different corners of the Atlantic World stood at the beginning of Protestant mission in West Africa – before any significant involvement of western missionaries.

Henry Beverhout[28] was born as a free person of color on the Caribbean island of St Croix from a black mother and a white father. He came into contact with Christianity early in his life through the Moravian mission on his native island. It is not fully clear why, but Beverhout left the island for Charleston in South Carolina in the early 1770s, shortly before the American Revolution. It was not uncommon for native Moravian pastors and missionaries to travel between different places in the Caribbean Sea, the missionary station Bethlehem in Pennsylvania, Europe, and even Africa. Possibly under the influence of the British Methodist missionary Francis Asbury, he embraced this denomination in Charleston. However, because Methodism was suspected of being loyal to Britain, Beverhout chose to evacuate with the British army in 1783 and was transferred to Nova Scotia. He established himself in New Brunswick where he organized a Methodist community. 1792 he emigrated to Sierra Leone. Perhaps because he was accustomed to live in freedom he was regarded by the white authorities in Freetown as one of the most vocal critics of the Company's regime. Shortly after their arrival in West Africa, Beverhout instigated a revival among the early "London poor" immigrants from 1787 in the old settlement of Granville Town and was regarded as having a very "enthusiastic" religious temperament.[29] When the Anglican official chaplain of the Company denounced dreams as source of divine inspiration, Beverhout interrupted the sermon of the missionary by defending this widespread belief among the Nova Scotia settlers and leading his people out of the Anglican service.

Thomas Peters,[30] the London deputy and the man who established the initial contact with the Company, displayed the qualities of a born leader in secular matters. However, history demonstrated the strong endorsement of his opinions among the Methodists as a group and the fact that early Baptist-Methodist dissensions in Sierra Leone were caused by opinions about his doings. His biography is an undisputable, if not unique gem of transatlantic history.

25 WALKER (1976), *Black Loyalists* (see FN 5), 202ff.
26 CATRON (2016), *Embracing Protestantism* (see FN 22), 222.
27 Cf. CATRON (2016), *Embracing Protestantism* (see FN 22), 222.
28 Cf. CATRON (2016), *Embracing Protestantism* (see FN 22), 2f.
29 Cf. WALKER (1976), *Black Loyalists* (see FN 5), 198.
30 For a biographical account cf. also SANNEH (2009), *Abolitionists Abroad* (see FN 22), 50–53.

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Peters was a Yoruba born in the 1740s in Nigeria. He was kidnaped around 1760, sold to French traders and brought to the still-French Louisiana. He later came into the possession of a slave owner of Wilmington, North Carolina, and was there at the beginning of the war in 1775. The following year he went over the British lines and enrolled in the all-black regiment Black Pioneers. During the war he was elevated to the rank of sergeant. At the end of the war he was evacuated to Nova Scotia, finally settling in New Brunswick. Due to the harsh conditions and the unfulfilled land promises there, black loyalists from St John, New Brunswick, and Digby sent him to London in 1790 with a petition to the British Government. This act shows that they already saw themselves as free people – 'British subjects' – and that they were eager to fully enjoy this status. In London he made contact with Granville Sharp, who introduced him to the directors of the Sierra Leone Company and probably to government officials as well. One plea formulated in the petition was to relocate "wherever the Wisdom of Government may think proper to provide for them as free Subjects of the British Empire",[31] this implying free land possession and freedom. Such a request appealed immediately to the promotors of Sierra Leone, who were searching for free people of color for their colonization plan. Peters was enthusiastic about the offer and returned to Canada to organize his people for this aim. When John Clarkson arrived in Canada the following year, the black loyalists from Peters's area were expecting him.[32] Peters personally led a party of 90 people as emigrants to Halifax in spite of the passive resistance of local authorities and the opposition of whites, who understood that in this way they would be losing a source of cheap labor. During the months of delay in Halifax, Peters was appointed by Clarkson as his deputy, being charged with the supervision of many practical aspects of the scheme.

After the settlers had landed in Sierra Leone the initial hardships and improper treatment by white officials led to widespread disappointment among them. The settlers feared a return to old patterns of servitude from the side of the Company, and their disappointment grew to a racial antagonism between the black settlers and the white representatives of the Company. "[A]t Methodist evening prayer meetings he [Peters] stood before the people and berated the white clique which he saw as the cause of their problems, and he reminded them of the promises, all unfulfilled, that had been given them in Nova Scotia."[33] David George, the leading Baptist preacher, opposed this view and a first split between Methodists, who largely supported Peters, and Baptists, who opposed him, emerged. A petition addressed to Clarkson and signed by 132 settlers presented Peters as their representative.[34] Shortly afterwards Clarkson was told by informants opposing Peters that the dissatisfied group was aiming to replace him with Peters as governor. This plan was designed to put the colony under the leadership of a black fellow colonist. Even if Clarkson soon managed to defuse the situation and the open support for Peters decreased, he continued his campaign against the Company, not least during the regular all-night prayer meetings of the Methodists.[35] His public influence, though, vanished as he was found guilty by a jury of stealing from a dead man. A short time later he died. In spite of

31 Apud CATRON (2016), *Embracing Protestantism* (see FN 22), 214.
32 Cf. WALKER (1976), *Black Loyalists* (see FN 5), 118f.
33 WALKER (1976), *Black Loyalists* (see FN 5), 149.
34 Preserved documents from the side of settlers addressed to, or related to Clarkson were collected and published by FYFE, CH. (1991), *Our Children Free and Happy*. Letters from Black Settlers in Africa in the 1790s (Edinburgh). The petition mentioned here is, however, not contained here.
35 WALKER (1976), *Black Loyalists* (see FN 5), 151.

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this abrupt and dissatisfying end, his life story clearly demonstrates that transatlantic emancipation and return to Africa was possible even among enslaved Africans. Furthermore, Christianity was, at least in certain times and situations, the vehicle of emancipatory ideas and acts. Sierra Leonese Christianity thus contains in its genetic blueprint this entanglement between religious emancipation and freedom.

Even if Baptists[36] were the smallest group in Sierra Leone, their leader, David George,[37] played a major role in the history of the migration and the first years in West Africa. George was born in the 1740s on a plantation in Virginia to parents enslaved in Africa. He later also experienced life on plantations in South Carolina and Georgia. When his revolutionary master fled Savannah, Georgia, to escape the British army, he left his slaves behind and George found himself behind the British lines. He spent some time during the war in Charleston and as the British left the city he was evacuated north to Nova Scotia and settled in Shelburne.

According to his autobiographical account,[38] his conversion experience took place while he was still in a state of servitude under the influence of a fellow slave and preacher named Cyrus. He was probably baptized by Rev. Wait Palmer, who stood in the tradition of the 'New Lights' revival from New England. The influence of another known slave Baptist preacher, George Liele, who developed later mission work in Jamaica and the Bahamas also dates from this time. Receiving some instruction from both Palmer and Liele, George was among the founding members and a pastor of what in 1775 became one of the first – if not the first[39] – black independent congregation in America, the so-called Silver Bluff Baptist Church. Two years later he helped with the foundation of a branch in Savannah. It is not surprising, therefore, that once in Nova Scotia he began gathering fellow refugees around him. Nevertheless, in Shelburne he addressed whites as well and a public upheaval occurred when he baptized a white women. At various times white mobs called on him at home and in his chapel so that he and his family had to seek refuge outside the town. He was not welcomed even in the nearby Methodist-dominated, all-black Birchtown, allegedly because of his extremely emotional Christianity. Finally, he managed to get a preacher's license from the Governor's Office so he could carry on with his evangelical activities. These included regular missionary travels in the region.

The emigration plans of Clarkson in 1791 offered an exit from this fraught and hostile situation. His congregation migrated as a whole. David George became one of the three superintendents during the time of resettlement from Nova Scotia to Sierra Leone. And, unlike Peters, George remained one of the leaders faithful to Clarkson and to the Company despite the many difficulties in Sierra Leone. As Clarkson was recalled to England in late 1792, David George accompanied him and made contact with Baptists there. His request for missionary help resulted in two missionaries being sent from London in 1796, but they worked for only a short time in the colony. The Sierra Leone Baptists remained on their own and when George died in 1810 Hector Peters, a Charlestown-born settler, took over.

36 For a survey of the first decade of the Baptists in Sierra Leone see FYFE, CH. (1963), "The Baptist Churches in Sierra Leone", in: *Sierra Leone Bulletin of Religion* 5, 2. 55–60.

37 For a biographical account cf. also SANNEH (2009), *Abolitionists Abroad* (see FN 30), 74–80; cf. as well FYFE, "Baptist Churches" (see FN 36), 55–57.

38 GEORGE, D., "An Account of the Life of Mr. David George (as told to Brother John Rippon)", in: *Baptist Annual Register*. Vol. I (1790–93), 473–84.

39 Cf. ROBOTEAU, A.J. (2004), *Slave Religion*. The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South (Oxford), 139f.

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The spiritual experience of George during his life in the American South and Nova Scotia, with its demand for social freedom and spiritual redemption, materialized both in the organization and the expression of religion. As James Walker observed, "David George and his Baptist church offered freedom on a scale beyond the reach of the other denominations working among the Black Loyalists. […] Though the other black churches were to achieve a *de facto* kind of independence, … only David George proclaimed it and gloried in it from the outset as a positive virtue which kept his followers free from the contaminations of a lost outside world."[40] This redeeming freedom influenced George's worship style: "exciting sermons and rousing hymns promised to wash them white in the Blood of the Lamb, to free them forever from the shackles of sin." These were accompanied by emotional attitudes with weeping or the like.

Apart from the leading figures mentioned above, there were many other names who complete the picture. Among them should be mentioned the Huntingdonians[41] Cato Perkins and William Ash, both from Charleston; the Methodist John Ball; the Anglican and later Methodist preacher and teacher Joseph Leonard; as well as his Anglican teacher colleagues Catherine Abernathy and Isaiah/Isaac Limerick. They all found their way from the American South to Nova Scotia after the Revolution and eventually left for Sierra Leone. While in Canada, they all shared the same interest in building religious communities and schools for the black emigrants. Whether officially recognized or not, these functioned in *de facto* independence from white control.

Developments After 1792

"Thus in 1792", Adrian Hastings describes the situation in Sierra Leone after the arrival the Nova Scotians, "the already existing, English-speaking, Protestant society which had come into existence in [sc. the American] diaspora over the preceding half-century established a foothold in Africa".[42] After landing the new arrivals marched ashore, singing "one of their favorite hymns, 'Awake and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb': Exodus, from the slavery of Egypt into the promised land of one's ancestors, was being renewed."[43]

Not all the Nova Scotians were Christians, but the majority was. In any case Freetown – port city and later capital of Sierra Leone – "became from its start an emphatically Christian town".[44] This didn't change in the subsequent years; and the ecclesial independency, enjoyed by the black Methodist or Baptist Churches in Freetown, was being kept – even when an increasing number of European missionaries appeared on the spot. Thus, in 1811, the Freetown black Methodists expelled an English missionary from their chapel who just recently had been sent to them by the Methodist Conference in Britain. "But this disruption did not end the association of the Freetown Methodists with the British conference",[45] and they continued as a semi-autonomous body.

40 WALKER (1976), *Black Loyalists* (see FN 5), 76.
41 For a survey of the first decade of the Huntingdonian Connexion in Sierra Leone see FYFE, CH. (1962), "The Countess of Huntingdon's Connection in Nineteenth Century Sierra Leone", in: *Sierra Leone Bulletin of Religion* 4, 2. 53–61.
42 HASTINGS (1994), *The Church in Africa* (see FN 1), 181.
43 HASTINGS (1994), *The Church in Africa* (see FN 1), 181.
44 HASTINGS (1994), *The Church in Africa* (see FN 1), 180.
45 WALLS (2002), "Sierra Leone" (see FN 17), 50f.

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In 1808 Sierra Leone became a British crown colony. Following the success of the parliamentary campaign in the United Kingdom for the abolition of the slave trade in 1807 – which had been pushed forward by evangelical and other humanitarian minded circles –, Sierra Leone was designated as the place to which intercepted slave ships would be brought, and their human cargoes settled. This resulted in a demographic transformation of Sierra Leone. Since 1808, a growing number of enslaved people from various West African regions were resettled there. Coming as they did from different locations and ethnic groups across West- and sometimes even Central Africa, they had no common language or identity and usually no connection with Christianity.

But it was in Freetown that a remarkable number of these "recaptives" first came in contact with Christianity. Some of them were converted there. Later they returned to their places of origins working there as Christian evangelists and spreading the Gospel among their countrymen. "The recaptives became the new basis of the colony and the Christian community that emerged became the first success story of the [sc. Protestant] missionary movement in Africa."[46]. The most famous among these converted recaptives was Samuel Ajayi Crowther (ca. 1806/1808 – 1891). He gained international reputation as the "slave boy who became bishop". Kidnapped by slave hunters in his native Oyo state (in current Nigeria) around 1821 and taken aboard a Portuguese vessel, he was freed on its way to Brazil by the British Navy and taken to Freetown, where he adopted Christianity. Later he was ordained an Anglican priest and worked, among other places, as Bible translator and missionary in what is now Nigeria. In 1864, he became the first African in modern times to be consecrated bishop in the Anglican Church at Lambeth Palace in London. Sierra Leone thus became a decisive hub in the process of Christianization of West Africa by producing a multilingual indigenous Christian elite familiar both with the anglophone evangelical world as with the variety of local African idioms.

But also the transatlantic connections continued to play an decisive role. Ministers like David George and Henry Beverhout, mentioned above, remained aware of the transoceanic networks of black Christians they belonged to. These included regions from the Caribbean Sea over to the American South around the North Atlantic reaching to Britain, continental Europe, and West Africa. The later American – both black and white – interest in West Africa, culminating in the colonization of what became Liberia, and other unfulfilled resettlement plans testify to this. These have been important elements in the formation of, what John Carton has called "Atlantic African Christianity"[47] and Andrew Barnes a "Christian Black Atlantic"[48] . This has been the result of a strong awareness of belonging to an international Christian community, permanent struggle for emancipation, and an ongoing exchange of and between people of color in the Atlantic basin.

Looking back at the role of black Protestant ministers (and lay people) in the course of the Sierra Leone experiment, Catron comments: "[Boston] King and [David] George adopted a black Atlantic identity that, while not African, combined the desire for freedom, equality, and a sense of their African roots with their modified American Christian ideals. […] From their first settlement in the 1790s, Sierra Leone's Atlantic Africans began to travel throughout West and Central Africa as Christian missionaries, and that gospel, a blend of African, European, Caribbean, and North American religious, economic, and

46 WALLS (2002), "Sierra Leone" (see FN 17), 51.
47 CATRON (2016), *Embracing Protestantism* (see FN 22), 5f. 223.
48 BARNES, A.E. (2017), *Global Christianity and the Black Atlantic*. Tuskegee, Colonialism, and the Shaping of African Industrial Education (Waco), 19.

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political influences, was disseminated by black ministers whose movement within the Atlantic world brought all these disparate elements together."[49]

Abstract

The beginnings of Protestant Christianity in West Africa have usually been described as the result of missionary activities by various European societies such as the Anglican 'Church Missionary Society' (CMS) or the Swiss-German Basel Missions in early 19th century. There was, however, an earlier – and partially even more important – initiative: the remigration of former African-American slaves who had become Christians in the New World and were now returning to Africa. Two regions played here a significant role in the course of 19th century: Sierra Leone and Liberia. This article deals with the initial phase of the Sierra Leone experiment around the turn from late 18th to early 19th centuries. Special attention is being paid to four black ministers leading the exodus in 1792. Their initiatives contributed significantly to the formation of what John Carton has called "Atlantic African Christianity" and Andrew Barnes a "Christian Black Atlantic".

Das westafrikanische Christentum und seine transatlantischen Wege: Sierra Leone im späten 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert

Die Anfänge des protestantischen Christentums in Westafrika gelten in der Regel als das Ergebnis der Missionstätigkeit verschiedener europäischer Gesellschaften wie der anglikanischen 'Church Missionary Society' (CMS) oder der schweizerisch-deutschen Basler Mission im frühen 19. Jahrhundert. Es gab jedoch eine frühere - und teilweise sogar wichtigere - Initiative: die Remigration ehemaliger afroamerikanischer Sklaven, die in der Neuen Welt Christen geworden waren und nun nach Afrika zurückkehrten. Zwei Regionen spielten hier im Laufe des 19. Jahrhunderts eine bedeutende Rolle: Sierra Leone und Liberia. Dieser Artikel befasst sich mit der Anfangsphase des Experiments in Sierra Leone um die Wende vom späten 18. zum frühen 19. Jahrhundert. Ein besonderes Augenmerk richtet sich dabei auf vier schwarze Geistlichet, die 1792 den Exodus anführten. Ihre Initiativen trugen wesentlich zur Herausbildung dessen bei, was John Carton als "atlantisches afrikanisches Christentum" und Andrew Barnes als "Christian Black Atlantic" bezeichnet hat.

49 CATRON (2016), *Embracing Protestantism* (see FN 22), 222–223.

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Race, Religion, and Repatriation: Ideological Origins of the Back-to-Africa Movement, 1770–1820

JAMES T. CAMPBELL

More than two hundred years have passed since the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade, and more than a hundred fifty years since the trade ended in fact. The castles and barracoons that once lined the African coast are mostly gone. But a few remain, some of which have become pilgrimage sites for African Americans. At several of these sites, visitors are invited to step through the "Door of No Return", the portal through which captives passed *en route* to the waiting ships. For many visitors, it is an emotional, even traumatic, experience, as they symbolically reenact the moment in which their forbears left behind their ancestral continent and entered the maelstrom of New World slavery.[1]

For most of the 12.8 million Africans trafficked in the transatlantic trade, slavery was indeed a voyage of no return. But over the centuries, a few of those who survived the Middle Passage, and many more of their descendants, have found their way back to Africa. The roster includes missionaries and musicians, artists and entrepreneurs, poets and Peace Corp volunteers, political exiles and tourists – the whole panoply of African American life. Much of my scholarship over the years has centered on these journeys of return. The particulars vary, but the basic premise of the work is that the Atlantic Ocean was not simply a one-way highway for black people but a zone of interaction and exchange. To explore this "Black Atlantic" (to use Paul Gilroy's formulation) is to discover a world in motion, populated by people whose lives and imaginations do not necessarily conform to the borders of the nation state, carrying with them all the things that human beings carry – cultural traditions, political ideas, performance styles, and (most important for this volume) a diverse array of religious beliefs and practices. As Gilroy puts it, black history is a story not of "roots" but of "routes".[2]

What I would like to do in this essay is to pull on one strand of this historical web, by recounting the first organized attempts to return enslaved and formerly enslaved African

1 For a moving evocation and astute analysis of the experience, see HARTMAN, S. (2008), *Lose Your Mother*. A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route (New York).

2 GILROY, P. (1993), *The Black Atlantic*. Modernity and Double Consciousness (Cambridge, MA). Gilroy's formulation has been elaborated and critiqued by numerous scholars in the thirty years since his book appeared. Most pertinent in the context of this volume is the work of Andrew Barnes, who has developed the concept of the "Christian Black Atlantic", a network of interaction and exchange connecting black Christian communities across the Atlantic World. See BARNES, A.E. (2018), "The Christian Black Atlantic. African Americans, Ethiopianism, and Christian Newspapers in Africa", in: Koschorke, K. et al. (Eds.), *"To give publicity to our thoughts"*. Journale asiatischer und afrikanischer Christen um 1900 und die Entstehung einer transregionalen indigen-christlichen Öffentlichkeit (STAECG Vol. 31; Wiesbaden), 345–362; and BARNES, A.E. (2017), *Global Christianity and the Black Atlantic*. Tuskegee, Colonialism, and the Shaping of African Industrial Education (Waco, TX).

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American people to their ancestral continent. Historians interested in such things typically think of Liberia, a settlement, later a nation, established by the American Colonization Society on the Windward Coast of Africa in 1821, but what follows focuses on the half century before. It looks in particular at the lives and thought of four contemporaries: Daniel Coker, Absalom Jones, Paul Cuffe, and Thomas Jefferson. The group represents the very definition of a motley crew: two Christian ministers, one black and one brown, both formerly enslaved (though only one was actually born into slavery); a freeborn ship's captain of mixed African and Native American descent; and a white slaveowner who also happened to be the third President of the United States. Yet for all their differences, the four had certain things in common. All lived through the Revolution and its tumultuous aftermath. All thought deeply about slavery and freedom, race, and the meaning of the American experiment. And all concluded that black people's destiny did not lie in the United States but in Africa.[3]

Jefferson and the Intellectual Origins of African Colonization

Let us begin with the obvious outlier in the group, Thomas Jefferson. White and wealthy, a slaveowner rather than a slave, Jefferson lived a very different life from the others. He also thought about the world in very different ways. Jones, Coker, and Cuffe were all evangelical Christians, who viewed history in distinctly providential terms. What was God's purpose for black people? Jefferson was a thoroughgoing rationalist, who regarded such thinking as a relic of an older, pre-Enlightenment age, in which human beings remained in thrall to superstition and "priestcraft". But Jefferson belongs here because he was one of the intellectual founders of African colonization, a movement based on the idea that black people could never be incorporated as citizens of the United States but should instead be returned to their ancestral continent. As such, he helped to create the intellectual and political context in which Jones, Coker, Cuffe and other African Americans operated.

Jefferson, as every American schoolchild knows, wrote the Declaration of Independence, whose soaring preamble – "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness" – continues to stir the hearts of liberty-loving people all over the world. Yet he was also (as at least some American schoolchildren now learn) a slaveowner, who over the course of his life owned more than six hundred fellow human beings. We also know, thanks to recent DNA tests on descendants, that he fathered some of those he owned – at least five, probably six children, borne by an enslaved woman named Sally Hemings. Though he never acknowledged these children, the two still living on his plantation at Monticello at the time of his death were emancipated in his will, while Hemings was "given her time" – in effect, freed as well.

3 The account that follows revisits and extends themes from a number of different works I have written over the years. See CAMPBELL, J.T. (1995), *Songs of Zion*. The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa (New York); CAMPBELL, J.T. (2006), *Middle Passages*. African American Journeys to Africa, 1787–2005 (New York); CAMPBELL, J.T. (1998), "Models and Metaphors. Industrial Education in the United States and South Africa", in: Greenstein, R. (Ed.), *Comparative Perspectives on South Africa* (Basingstoke, England); and CAMPBELL, J.T. (2014), "Afterword", in: Lindsay, L./ Sweet, J.W. (Eds.), *Biography and the Black Atlantic* (Philadelphia, PA).

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They were the only enslaved people at Monticello accorded this consideration. The rest were sold at auction to help defray Jefferson's debts.[4]

When I bring up Jefferson with my students, their usual response is outrage; to them, he is simply a hypocrite. But outrage is not a useful posture for historians, and the charge of hypocrisy overlooks what makes him so interesting historically. A slave-owning apostle of freedom, Jefferson embodied the central paradox of American history. He also exemplified the contradictory possibilities of the 18th century Enlightenment, a sweeping transformation in Western thought offering new intellectual resources for both asserting human equality and delineating human difference. Jefferson's writing, both public and private, provides abundant evidence of his uneasiness about slavery, which he regarded not simply as a violation of the American nation's professed principles but as a threat to its very survival. A "perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions", slavery degraded blacks and corrupted whites, draining away the habits of equality and self-reliance upon which republican government depended. The problem was that Jefferson was also a racist. And I use the word strictly, in the sense that he believed that nature had divided the human species into distinct groups or "races", each with its distinctive features, attributes, and capacities. In the notorious Query 14 of his *Notes on the State of Virginia*, he systematically catalogued what he saw as the inferior "endowments" of black people. They were deficient "in faculties of reason and imagination". They lacked "forethought". Few had ever uttered "a thought above the level of plain narration", and fewer still were "capable of tracing and comprehending the investigations of Euclid". Anticipating the environmentalist objection, Jefferson insisted that this "inferiority" was "not the effect merely of their condition of life" but an expression of black people's inherent nature, a claim he supported with various citations to classical authors extolling the accomplishments of "white" slaves in ancient Greece and Rome.[5]

The result, for Jefferson, was a conundrum. Though unquestionably entitled to freedom, black people were incapable of exercising it responsibly. As he put it in his unfinished autobiography, written near the end of his life, "Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate than that these people are to be free, nor is it less certain that the two races, equally free, cannot live in the same government". In a letter to his friend John Holmes, written at about the same time, he put the matter more pointedly, with an image borrowed from one of his classical authorities, the Roman historian Suetonius: "We have the wolf by the ear, and we can neither hold him, nor safely let him go."[6]

Jefferson found the solution to his conundrum in colonization – what he called "expatriation". When exactly he conceived the idea is unclear, but he proposed it formally in 1779, just three years after American independence, in the context of a revision of the Virginia legal code. At first glance, his proposal resembled the gradual abolition statutes under consideration in northern states like Pennsylvania and Connecticut, providing that children born of enslaved mothers after a specified date would not be slaves for life but instead serve a term of years – twenty-one years for males, eighteen years for females – after which they would become free. But Jefferson's proposal included an additional stipulation. Once free, these young people would not remain in Virginia, but would instead

4 See GORDON-REED, A. (2008), *The Hemingses of Monticello*. An American Family (New York).
5 JEFFERSON, T. (2002, orig. pub. 1785), *Notes on the State of Virginia* (Boston), 175–181, 195.
6 Autobiographical fragment, 8 February, 1821, *tjrs.monticello.org/letter/1410*. Letter to Holmes, 22 April, 1820, *loc.gov/exhibits/Jefferson/159.html*. Jefferson's library included a 1718 edition of Suetonius's collected works; see *https://tjlibraries.monticello.org*.

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"be colonized to such places as the circumstances of the time should render most proper, sending them out with arm, implements of household and of the handicraft arts, feeds, pairs of the useful domestic animals, &c. to declare them a free and independent people". The Virginia legislature chose not to take up the proposal, but the essential idea – solving the nation's "race" problem by removing one of its "races" – would endure.[7]

The 'Black Poor' of London and the Birth of Sierra Leone

At the very moment that Jefferson was recounting his colonization plan in *Notes on the State of Virginia*, a group of wealthy white Englishmen was putting a version of it into action. In 1787, the London-based "Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor" established a colony for formerly enslaved Africans and African Americans at the mouth of the Sierra Leone River, on the Windward Coast of Africa. As the name suggests, members of the committee conceived Sierra Leone as a philanthropic venture – a "refuge" for indigent Black people, whose numbers in Britain had grown dramatically amidst the crisis in North America. Sponsors also imagined it as a new front in the fight against the slave trade. Rehearsing a claim that would become a staple of British anti-slavery thought, they argued that a flourishing colony of freed people on the African coast would stimulate "legitimate commerce", thus weaning Africans from their dependence on the commerce in human beings. (The argument would be put to the test soon enough: the settlement, named "Freetown", was just a few miles downriver from Bunce Island, one of the largest slave "factories" on the Windward Coast.)[8]

Today, more than two centuries later, historians continue to debate the motivations and meaning of the Sierra Leone venture. Many of the founders, notably Granville Sharpe, would go on to play critical roles in the successful campaign to outlaw the transatlantic slave trade. That said, the Sierra Leone venture was also a clear case of what we today would call "ethnic cleansing"; it sought to rid London of a population that many white people saw as anomalous and unwelcome. In contrast to Jefferson's proposal, resettlement was intended to be purely voluntary, but that principle was not always honored. Promoters had little difficulty recruiting volunteers for the initial expedition, but as the departure date approached, rumors swirled about the true conditions in Sierra Leone and many reconsidered their decision. Rather than surrender their dream, colony sponsors resorted to the time-honored custom of the press-gang, gathering up black people off the streets and marching them onto the Africa-bound ships. Upwards of one hundred white prostitutes were also swept up and transported.[9]

The settlement itself proved to be anything but the "tropical Elysium" that promoters had promised. Torrential rains washed away crops. Yellow fever, malaria, and other endemic diseases took a fearsome toll; in the first four months alone, 122 settlers, almost a third of the colony, perished. Colonists also faced mounting hostility from neighboring African chiefs, who showed little interest in divesting themselves of the slave trade. In 1789, Chief Tom, angry at the bombardment of one of his villages by a British warship, gave inhabitants two weeks to pack up before burning Freetown to the ground. Most

7 JEFFERSON (2002), *Notes on the State of Virginia* (see FN 5), 175.
8 FYFE, C. (1962), *A History of Sierra Leone* (London).
9 See, for example, SCANLAN, P.X. (2017), *Freedom's Debtors*. British Antislavery in Sierra Leone in the Age of Revolution (New Haven, CT).

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colonists found refuge in local villages, but some moved upriver to the slave fort at Bunce Island, where they took jobs as clerks, shipwrights, and the like. Sponsors in London were shattered by the news, but remained committed to their vision. New colonists were dispatched from Britain to replace those who had died or fled. Sierra Leone also proved a convenient dumping ground for anomalous populations in other British possessions, including Black Loyalist soldiers, many of whom had ended up in Nova Scotia after the Revolutionary War, and a contingent of Jamaican Maroons – enslaved rebels – who agreed to put down their arms in exchange for passage to Africa. In the years after 1807, Freetown would also become the port-of-call for so-called "recaptives" – Africans liberated from slave ships by the British Navy in its campaign to suppress the transatlantic slave trade.[10]

As the foregoing suggests, Sierra Leone was something less than a success story. But for many, its very existence offered proof of concept for colonization. It would take another generation, but in the early 1820s a group of white Americans would create a second colony on the Windward Coast, just south of Sierra Leone, called Liberia. But before turning to it, let us shift our focus from the white promoters of "expatriation" to those they proposed to remove. What did Black people themselves have to say about Africa? Where did they imagine their destiny to lie?

Absalom Jones, Providentialism, and the Rise of an African American Emigration Movement

In the spring of 1773, officials in Massachusetts received a petition from four enslaved men: Sambo Freeman, Felix Holbrook, Chester Joie, and Peter Bestes. Independence was still three years in the future, but revolution was already in the air, with "Sons of Liberty" across North America denouncing taxes imposed by Parliament without the approval of their local legislatures not simply as a violation of their rights but as a British plot to reduce them to "slavery". "[T]hose who are governed at the will of another, and whose property may be taken from them … without their consent … are in the miserable condition of slaves", wrote Stephen Hopkins in his influential pamphlet, *The Rights of Colonies Examined*. The irony was not lost on the petitioners. "The efforts made by the legislative of this province in their last sessions to free themselves from slavery gave us, who are in that deplorable state, a high degree of satisfaction", they began, with ill-concealed sarcasm. "We expect great things from men who have made such a noble stand against the designs of their *fellow-men* to enslave them." Given the wind-up, what the petitioners asked was quite modest: an opportunity to labor one day per week on their own behalf, and to use the proceeds to purchase their freedom. Once free, they proposed to "leave the province … from our joynt labours procur[ing] money to transport ourselves to some part of the Coast of Africa, where we propose a settlement".[11]

The legislature did not respond to the petitioners, whose fate is unknown. But the vision of a self-directed African return would endure in African American political life, just

10 WILSON, E.G. (1976), *The Loyal Blacks* (New York). CAMPBELL, M.C. (1993), *Back to Africa*. George Ross and the Maroons (Trenton, NJ). The settlement of formerly enslaved African Americans in Sierra Leone -- and the arrival of the Nova Scotia settlers, in particular -- also marked a watershed in the growth of Protestant Christianity in West Africa, as Ciprian Burlăcioiu argues in his contribution to this volume; see chapter 3 (p. 45-56 in this volume).

11 HOPKINS, S. (1765), *The Rights of Colonies Examined* (Providence), 3–4. APTHEKER, H. (1951), *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States.* Vol. 1 (Secaucus, NJ), 7–8.

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as Jefferson's colonization idea endured among white Americans. Unlike their white counterparts, black emigrationists did not question their capacity to live fruitfully as free people or to exercise the responsibilities of republican citizenship. What they questioned was whether white people would ever allow them to do so. As with any visionary political movement, support for emigration ebbed and flowed over time, typically surging in times of political reaction – the years following the collapse of Reconstruction, the so-called "nadir of American race relations", are the obvious example – and receding in times of relative racial progress. Certainly this was the pattern in the early national period. In the aftermath of independence, seven states took steps to abolish slavery; a few, notably Massachusetts, extended black men the right to vote. Even those places in which the institution survived, such as Jefferson's Virginia, witnessed a dramatic increase in private manumissions. Amidst this "contagion of liberty", interest in African repatriation receded. Unfortunately, the contagion did not last. With the explosive growth of cotton cultivation in the early 1800s, slavery gained a new lease on life. The wave of state abolitions stalled, and many states, including Virginia, erected new barriers to private manumission. Free people of color everywhere faced intensifying racial prejudice, as well as a growing battery of discriminatory laws. In this context, interest in emigration revived.[12]

The ebb and flow of African repatriation sentiment can be traced through the career of the Rev. Absalom Jones. Born into slavery, Jones is best remembered today as one of the founders of African American independent Christianity. In 1792, he and another minister, Richard Allen, led a walkout from Philadelphia's St. George's Methodist Church, after white leaders there attempted to remove black worshippers to a segregated balcony. Their action led directly to the creation of the nation's first black denomination, the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church. But Jones was not just a cleric; he was also a brilliant political polemicist. In 1793, he drafted the first African American petition ever submitted to the United States Congress, a withering critique of slavery, written in response to the recently enacted Fugitive Slave Law. "If notwithstanding all that has been publicly avowed as essential principles representing the human right to freedom we cannot claim the privilege of representation in your councils, yet we trust we may address you as fellow men", the petition began. And black people, Jones continued, were indeed fellow men, endowed with "natural affections, social and domestic attachments and sensibilities". As such, their enslavement represented "a Governmental defect, if not a direct violation of the declared fundamental principles of the Constitution". For various reasons, it took four years for the petition to be taken up by the Congress, which immediately declined to hear it, but Jones was unbowed. Two years later, he penned a second petition, this one addressed to both Congress and the President. "If the Bill of Rights or the declaration of [Independence] are of any validity", he wrote, "we beseech that as we are *men*, we may be permitted to partake of the Liberties and unalienable Rights therein held forth".[13]

As the petitions make clear, Jones dreamed of a future in which African Americans would enjoy all the rights and privileges promised in the nation's founding documents. But

12 On "the nadir", see LOGAN, R. (1954), *The Negro in American Life and Thought*. The Nadir, 1877–1901 (New York). On the "contagion of liberty", see BAILYN, B. (1967), *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, MA), 230–319.

13 On the 1793 petition, see KAPLAN, S./ KAPLAN, E.N. (1989), *The Black Presence in the Era of the American Revolution* (Amherst, MA), 267–271. On the 1799 petition, PORTER, D. (1971), *Early Negro Writing, 1760–1837* (Boston, MA), 330–332. On the walkout at St. George's, see CAMPBELL, J.T. (1995), *Songs of Zion*. The African Methodist Church in the United States and South Africa (New York), 8–11.

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as the shackles of racism cinched tighter in the early years of the 19th century, his faith in that future flagged. On January 1, 1808, in a Thanksgiving sermon marking the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade, he announced his conversion to African emigration. "It has always been a mystery why the impartial father of the human race should have permitted the transportation of so many millions of our fellow creatures to the country to endure the miseries of slavery", he observed. "Perhaps his design was that a knowledge of the gospel might be acquired by some of their description, in order that they might become qualified to be the messengers of it, to the land of their fathers… Who knows, but that a Joseph may rise up among them, who shall be the instrument of feeding the African nations with the bread of life."[14]

The providential interpretation of Black history that Jones espoused would remain a staple of emigrationist thought for the rest of the century. Like the Israelites of the Exodus, African Americans were a chosen people, whose enslavement had been ordained by God to prepare them for their part in his unfolding purpose. And now, like the Israelites before them, the time had come for them to recross the waters and return to their Promised Land, carrying with them all they had acquired in the hard school of slavery.

Rise to Be a People: The Career of Paul Cuffe

Even if Jones's scriptural speculations were correct, a practical question remained: How were African Americans to get to Africa? An answer presented itself in the figure of Paul Cuffe. Born on an island off the coast of Massachusetts, the son of an enslaved African father and a Native American mother, Cuffe took to the sea in his youth, rising to become a ship's captain and, in time, a merchant of considerable means. Like Jones, he fought strenuously for his rights as an American citizen. In 1778, with the Revolutionary War still raging, he and his brother launched what appears to be the first voting rights campaign in American history. The campaign was directed against Dartmouth, Massachusetts, the town in which they lived, after selectmen there had denied them the right to vote. Citing the revolutionary slogan "No taxation without representation", the brothers announced that they would no longer pay property tax. The dispute dragged on for years, and the men spent several months in jail, but they ultimately prevailed: in 1783, the Massachusetts legislature guaranteed black men's right to vote.[15]

Cuffe prospered in the years after the Revolution; by some accounts, he became the wealthiest black man in the United States. Yet for all his success, he felt the sting of racial discrimination keenly and, like Absalom Jones, he grew increasingly pessimistic about black prospects in the United States. In 1808, the years of Jones's Thanksgiving sermon, he was contacted by leaders of the "African Institution", a London-based anti-slavery group that had succeeded the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor as the primary sponsor of the Sierra Leone colony. The correspondence does not survive, but the group clearly hoped to enlist his help in recruiting and transporting African American emigrants to the struggling colony. Cuffe spent the better part of a year considering the offer, consulting with free black leaders all along the eastern seaboard, the vast majority of whom endorsed

14 PORTER (1971), *Early Negro Writing* (see FN 13), 335–342.
15 THOMAS, L. (1986), *Rise to be a People*. A Biography of Paul Cuffe (Urbana, IL).

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the idea. In early 1809, he announced that he would undertake an "exploratory" mission to Sierra Leone.[16]

The deepening conflict between the United States and Great Britain delayed Cuffe's departure, but he finally embarked for Sierra Leone in early 1811. After long palavers with colony officials and local African chiefs, he sailed to England, where he met with leaders of the African Institution. To his surprise, he was greeted as a hero, heralded in the press and hailed by William Wilberforce, Thomas Clarkson, and other lions of the British anti-slavery movement as a divine instrument for "promoting the civilization of Africa". After four months in Britain, Cuffe returned to Freetown, where he spent another three months, making preparations for the first contingent of emigrants. He then sailed home, his ship laden with a cargo of Sierra Leonean products, the beginnings of a commerce that he hoped would be sufficient to offset the costs of emigration.[17]

The homecoming began inauspiciously. Relations with Britain had deteriorated further in Cuffe's year away, leading to the imposition of a commercial embargo – an embargo that he had unwittingly violated. Facing financial ruin, he rushed to Washington, DC, in hopes of persuading federal officials to release his confiscated cargo. Such was his celebrity – and so appealing was the idea of black expatriation to many white leaders – that officials acceded to the request. Cuffe was even granted an audience with President James Madison, becoming the first African American to be officially received at the White House. On his return from Washington, he stopped in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York, where he found emigration sentiment at a fever pitch. Local branches of the African Institution were launched in each city, and hundreds of would-be settlers came forward. A pamphlet, *A Brief Account of the Settlement and Present Situation of the Colony of Sierra Leone in Africa*, was rushed into print, recounting Cuffe's voyage and describing the bounteous future awaiting emigrants in their ancestral land. The pamphlet included an open letter to African Americans from residents of Freetown, encouraging their brethren to flee their "Egyptian bondage" and return home.[18]

With the outbreak of war between the United States and Britain, Cuffe was once again compelled to delay his plans. He petitioned Congress for a law exempting him from restrictions on trafficking with the enemy, but the bill, which passed the Senate, became ensnared in partisan rivalries in the House and failed. In the end, he had to wait until the war's end in 1815 to undertake his voyage. He successfully carried 38 emigrants to Freetown, but the trip proved a financial disaster, as well as a severe strain on Cuffe's increasingly frail health. He died a few months after his return from Africa. What evidence there is suggests that he spent his final days in a dark frame of mind. By clinging to slavery, he wrote, echoing the sentiments of Thomas Jefferson forty years before, white Americans were "preparing instruments for their own execution". Yet they would never rid themselves of the institution until they had some "safe ground" to which they could send the formerly enslaved. As for African Americans themselves, they could never "rise to be a

16 HARRIS, S.H. (1972), *Paul Cuffe*. Black American and the Africa Return (New York).

17 ALLEN, W. (1847), *Life of William Allen*. With Selections from His Correspondence. Vol. 1 (Philadelphia), 103.

18 CUFFE, P. (1812), *A Brief Account of the Settlement and Present Situation of the Colony of Sierra Leone, in Africa*. As Communicated by Paul Cuffe (A Man of Colour) to His Friend in New York. Also, an Explanation of the Object of His Visit, And Some Advice to the People of Colour in the United States (New York).

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people" until they had a nation of their own. The "peace and tranquility of the world" depended on African Americans' returning to their ancestral land.[19]

The American Colonization Society and the Politics of Black Removal

As Paul Cuffe exited the historical stage, the torch of African repatriation was taken up by a white organization, the American Colonization Society. Chartered in December, 1816, the A.C.S. was a private "philanthropic" organization, much like the Committee for the Black Poor that had launched the Sierra Leone colony a generation before. But A.C.S. leaders had learned at least some of the lessons of their predecessors, not least that relocating large numbers of people was impossible without substantial government support. In hopes of securing it, they located their headquarters not in New York or Philadelphia but in Washington DC, the nation's new capital city, much of which was still a literal swamp. They also recruited some of the nation's most prominent politicians to serve as colonization's public face. Supreme Court Justice Bushrod Washington, George Washington's nephew and heir, became the Society's first president, while the inaugural vice presidents included Speaker of the House Henry Clay and General (later President) Andrew Jackson. Scores of other prominent political leaders were enlisted as supporters, including outgoing president James Madison and his newly-elected successor, James Monroe. (The A.C.S. would later honor Monroe by naming the capital of their African colony Monrovia.)[20]

For all the endorsements it garnered, the A.C.S. failed to secure significant federal support. Though the Civil War was more than forty years in the future, slavery was already a fraught topic in American politics. While many leaders continued to hew to a moderately anti-slavery position – hoping, like Thomas Jefferson before them, that the institution would somehow die a natural death, without undue cost or upheaval – a growing number, particularly in the Lower South, were unapologetically pro-slavery. Though happy to entertain the idea of removing free people of color, long regarded as a dangerous influence on the enslaved, these leaders were unwilling to support anything that smacked of abolition, no matter how gradual. Recognizing the problem, the Society's supporters adapted their message to whomever they were talking to at the time. When addressing anti-slavery audiences in the North or Upper South, they painted colonization in roseate hues. African repatriation would facilitate abolition by removing the primary impediment to it: the unwillingness of many white Americans to live alongside the formerly enslaved in a common society. African Americans, secure in a nation of their own, would rise to a status they could never attain in the United States, even as they uplifted their ancestral continent with the leaven of Christianity, civilization, and commerce. When addressing southern audiences, however, colonizationists changed tack, emphasizing the dangers of the nation's growing population of free people of color. In his speech at the A.C.S.'s inaugural meeting in December, 1816, Congressman Henry Clay advised delegates to avoid the "delicate question" of abolition altogether, and to focus instead on colonization's ancillary benefits, including black removal. His final peroration exemplified the approach: "Can there be a nobler cause, than that which, whilst it proposes to rid our country of a useless and

19 HARRIS (1972), *Paul Cuffe* (see FN 16), 202. 206. 215.

20 MILLER, F.J. (1975), *The Search for Black Nationality*. Black Emigration and Colonization, 1787–1863 (Urbana, IL).

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pernicious, if not dangerous portion of its population, contemplates the spreading of the arts of civilized life, and the possible redemption from ignorance and barbarism of a benighted quarter of the globe?"[21]

A.C.S. leaders were well aware of the work of Paul Cuffe – they corresponded extensively with him – and they confidently expected that the enthusiasm for African repatriation he had aroused would naturally transfer over to their project. But they failed to recognize the distinction that free people of color drew between emigration and colonization – between, that is, a self-directed, voluntary repatriation venture and what looked suspiciously like a state-sponsored scheme to deport them. They also failed to appreciate the impact of Henry Clay's widely reported remarks at the A.C.S.'s inaugural meeting. Expecting support, they encountered a solid wall of opposition. In Philadelphia, more than 3,000 people gathered in Richard Allen's Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church to denounce the "unmerited stigma" that Clay had "cast upon the reputation of the free people of color" and to declare their determination to remain in the United States, "the land of our nativity", a land "manured" with the "blood and sweat" of black people. They also expressed their determination to fight for the freedom of those still in bondage: "We will never separate ourselves voluntarily from the slave population of the country; they are our brethren by ties of consanguinity, of suffering, and of wrong; and we feel that there is more virtue in suffering privations with them, than fancied advantages for a season."[22]

The resolutions adopted at Bethel Church established the terms of black opposition to colonization through the Civil War and beyond. They also startled leaders of the A.C.S., who hastened to the city to offer assurances that colonization would remain strictly voluntary. But their words fell on deaf ears. At a second meeting at Bethel, black Philadelphians sharpened the attack on colonization, portraying it as a plot to strengthen slavery by removing the institution's most determined opponents. "Let no purpose be assisted which will stay the cause of the entire abolition of slavery", they resolved.[23]

Philadelphians' virtually unanimous rejection of the A.C.S. was doubly remarkable, considering how many of those in attendance had previously endorsed the work of Paul Cuffe. The list included not only Absalom Jones and Richard Allen, who chaired the Bethel meetings, but also James Forten, a wealthy black sailmaker who had helped Cuffe outfit his ship for Sierra Leone. In a letter to his "esteemed friend", Forten explained his apparent reversal. "[T]he whole continent seems to be agitated concerning Colonizing the people of color, and the free people here [are] very much frightened", he wrote. "We had a large meeting of males at the Rev. R. Allen's church the other evening. Three thousand at least attended, and there was not one soul that was in favor of going to Africa. They think that the slaveholders want to get rid of them so as to make their property more secure." Yet even as he endorsed the consensus, Forten confessed his continuing belief that the future destiny of the race lay not in America but in Africa. "My opinion is that that they will

21 STAUDENRAUS, P.J. (1961), *The African Colonization Movement, 1816–1865* (New York), 28. On the politics of colonization, see HAMMANN, A.F. (2017), *Emancipation and Exclusion.* The Politics of Slavery and Colonization, 1787–1865 (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University).

22 APTHEKER (1951), *Documentary History of the Negro People* (see FN 11), 17–19.

23 GEORGE, C.V.R. (1973), *Segregated Sabbaths*. Richard Allen and the Rise of Independent Black Churches, 1760–1840 (New York), 149–153.

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never become a people until they come out from amongst the white people", he told Cuffe. "But as the majority is decidedly against me, I am determined to remain silent…"[24]

The Pilgrimage of Daniel Coker

Not every free person of color rejected the A.C.S.'s overtures. At the very moment that his comrades in Philadelphia were rallying against colonization.

Americans in the 19th century referred to slavery as "the Peculiar Institution", and the life of Daniel Coker reminds us just how peculiar it was. Born on a Maryland plantation, he was the son of a white woman and an enslaved black man. His original name was Isaac Wright. Because of the status of his mother, he was legally free at birth, but his very existence constituted a scandal; white women did not bear brown children. According to Maryland law, the offspring of such unions were to be bound out as servants for terms of thirty-one years, but in this case local officials did the law one better, registering the infant as the son of an enslaved mulatto woman. Thus was the white community spared a scandal, at the cost of making a freeborn citizen a slave.[25]

Unlike most enslaved people, Coker received a fine education, thanks to the stubbornness of his white half-brother, who refused to attend school without him. At some point in the 1790s, he escaped to New York City, where he began preaching in a Methodist Church. While living there, he adopted his half-brother's name, Daniel Coker, as his own, in an apparent attempt to throw off his pursuer. In 1807, he returned to Maryland, to Baltimore, where he ministered to a small black church and opened the city's first school for black children. (A local Quaker merchant agreed to buy his freedom, sparing him the risk of re-enslavement.) In 1816, Coker and his congregation joined with other dissident black Methodists around the country to establish the A.M.E. Church. At the inaugural General Conference later that year, delegates elected Coker as the church's first bishop, but they then held a second vote and conferred the title on Richard Allen. "He being nearly white, the people said that they could not have an African Connection with a man as light as Daniel Coker as its head", one delegate remembered. It was a portent of the difficulties awaiting Coker in Africa.[26]

Perhaps because of the strange turnings of his own life, Coker was keenly attuned to the "interpositions of providence" in human affairs, particularly in regard to black people. Like generations of black Christians, he found solace in the Book of Exodus, a story of enslavement, dispersal, and return that seemed eerily to parallel the experience of African Americans. But surviving sermons and writings suggest that he was also deeply invested in the writing of the Prophets: not only Daniel, his namesake, but also Micah (who foretold a day when those "cast far off" would return to live under their own vine and fig tree, where "none shall make them afraid") and Isaiah (who foresaw a people from "beyond the rivers of Ethiopia … scattered and peeled … meted out and trodden under foot" regathered by God at the foot of Mount Zion). For Coker, the entire Old Testament augured a return to Africa. Not surprisingly, he was an enthusiastic supporter of Paul Cuffe; he led the Baltimore branch of the African Institution. More unusually, he supported the A.C.S.,

24 KAPLAN/ KAPLAN (1989), *Black Presence in the Era* (see FN 13), 162. On Forten, see WINCH, J. (2002), *A Gentleman of Color*. The Life of James Forten (New York).

25 On Coker, see CAMPBELL (2006), *Middle Passages* (see FN 3), 46–53.

26 SMITH, D. (1881), *Biography of Rev. David Smith of the A.M.E. Church* (Xenia, OH), 33.

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which he saw as a providential instrument. If God could turn slavery itself into a means for good, surely he could do the same with the A.C.S.[27]

In early 1820, Coker embarked for Africa, accompanied by 88 colonists, many of them children, most of them recruited from cities along the eastern seaboard. The group was accompanied by three white agents of the A.C.S. and a U.S. Navy warship, dispatched by the federal government to assist the agents in negotiating a permanent settlement site with African chiefs.

I have recounted Coker's journey elsewhere so will only rehearse it briefly here. It was, in a word, a disaster. Even before the ship landed in Africa, the company was riven by conflict between the colonists and white agents, with the "mulatto" Coker caught in the middle. Colonists were not reassured when they saw the initial settlement site, a muddy promontory on the edge of a mangrove swamp on Sherbro Island, about sixty miles south of Freetown. Things deteriorated from there. Local Africans, deeply invested in the slave trade, were wary; as Coker observed in his journal, "They well know, if we get foot hold, it will be against the slave trade". (Relations were not improved when a group of colonists, led by Coker, tried to liberate a group of shackled Africans being loaded on to a Spanish ship.) At the same time, the settlement was ravaged by disease. By the end of three months, more than a quarter of the colonists had died, as had all three white A.C.S. agents, leaving Coker in uneasy command. By the end of six months, the settlement was in a state of virtual insurrection. Fearing for his life, Coker fled to Sierra Leone, accompanied by a dozen loyalists. He remained there for the rest of his days – he lived until 1846 – ministering to a small congregation in a "recaptive" village called Hastings.[28]

Leaders of the A.C.S. pressed on. A second group of colonists arrived in 1821. This group fared better, negotiating with a local chief for title to a swath of land around Cape Mesurado, two hundred miles down the coast from Freetown. (When the chief hesitated to sign the treaty, a U.S. Navy officer put a pistol to his head and cocked it. He signed.) Coker followed the news of Liberia's founding with interest, but he never went there himself. "Moses was, I think, permitted to see the promised land but not to enter in", he wrote in his journal. "I think it likely that I shall not be permitted to see our expected earthly Canaan. But this will be of small moment so that some thousands of Africa's Children are safely landed."[29]

Lessons and Legacies

In the end, the white colonization movement and the black emigration movement both failed to accomplish their stated goals. Despite relentless lobbying, the A.C.S. never succeeded in attracting significant federal support, nor did it ever overcome black suspicions that it was a pro-slavery plot. The numbers tell the tale. In the years between 1820 and the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, the total black population in the United States, slave and free, grew from just under two million to over 4.4 million, an increase of nearly 60,000 people per year. Over the same period, the A.C.S. transported perhaps

27 COKER, D. (1970, orig. pub. 1820), *Journal of Daniel Coker, a Descendant of Africa. On a Voyage to Sherbro, in Africa* (Nendeln, Liechtenstein), 14–15; APTHEKER (1951), *Documentary History of the Negro People* (see FN 11), 67–69.

28 COKER (1970), *Journal of Daniel Coker* (see FN 27), 36.

29 "Diary of Daniel Coker, April 21-September 21, 1821", in: Peter Force Collection, Library of Congress, Series 8D, Reel 12, entry for May 3, 1821.

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12,000 African Americans to Africa, which is to say about 300 people per year. Slavery would be abolished in the United States, but the end would not come through colonization, and it would not come peacefully.

The A.C.S. continued to operate after the end of the Civil War; revealingly, it outlived the institution that it was ostensibly created to help abolish. In the remaining years of the 19th century, the Society would dispatch a few thousand more colonists to Liberia, some in the immediate aftermath of the war, most in the dark days after the collapse of Reconstruction. But the political and practical impediments to large-scale colonization remained, as did the essential absurdity of trying to solve the problem of American racism by removing the people who were its primary targets – people who were now, by the letter of the U.S. Constitution, fully enfranchised citizens. Karl Marx's famous *bon mot* about the Bonapartist coup in France in 1851 – "History repeats itself, first as tragedy, second as farce" – applies to the history of the American Colonization Society, which finally ceased operation in 1919.

Judged in strictly numerical terms, the black emigration movement proved even more barren of results. In the century after the voyages of Paul Cuffe and Daniel Coker, the United States would produce all manner of Back-to-Africa movements, led by visionary leaders prepared to answer the Mosaic call: Martin Delany and Henry Highland Garnet, Alexander Crummell and Henry McNeil Turner, Chief Alfred Sam and, of course, Marcus Garvey, whose Black Star Line bore a more than passing resemblance to Cuffe's Sierra Leone venture. In the end, however, none of these movements succeeded in returning more than a handful of black Americans to their ancestral continent. The paltry scale of African American emigration to Africa is particularly striking when set in the context of the current historical moment, which has seen a dramatic upsurge of African immigration to the United States – more than two million people in the last twenty years alone. For better or worse, the United States remains one of the chief places in which "the destiny of the African race" will be decided.[30]

And yet we should not dismiss the significance of these early Back-to-Africa ventures too quickly. For all their initial (and subsequent) travails, Sierra Leone and Liberia both survive today as independent nations. And there were other legacies as well. From the Revolution through the 1820s, indeed right through the Civil War, African repatriation remained a subject not only of fierce political debate but also of sustained religious and philosophical reflection. These debates and speculations shaped the political imaginations of both white and black Americans in enduring ways. In the case of white Americans, it is hard to see the impact as anything other than baleful. At best, the dream of African colonization operated as a kind of beguiling fantasy, enabling generations of white Americans to evade the demanding moral and political questions that slavery and emancipation posed. At worst, colonizationism – and the A.C.S. in particular – crystallized a set of racist beliefs that continue to deform American democracy to this day: that black people are somehow alien and underserving; that white racial prejudice is natural and inevitable; that the American republic is fundamentally a government of, by, and for white people.

The intellectual and political legacies of the African repatriation movement for African Americans are more complicated. On one hand, the fierce debate over colonization helped to hone African American citizenship claims. The resolutions adopted by black

30 See CAMPBELL (2006), *Middle Passages* (see FN 3).

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Philadelphians at Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church would be echoed by Frederick Douglass, as fierce a critic of the A.C.S. as ever lived, and by countless other black political leaders in the centuries since, all demanding what the Philadelphians had demanded so eloquently: the right of African Americans to live as free people in the land of their nativity, a land manured by their sweat and blood. On the other hand, the decades-long debates about Africa both reflected and reinforced African Americans' sense of themselves as a people apart, strangers in a land that could never truly be their home. James Forten attended the meeting at Mother Bethel and endorsed the resolutions – he may have helped to write them – yet even he believed, as he told Paul Cuffe, that African Americans would "never become a people until they come out from amongst the white people".

"One ever feels his two-ness", wrote W.E.B. Du Bois in *The Souls of Black Folk*. "An American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder". Yet as Du Bois's own experience makes clear, this painful predicament is also a condition of creative possibility, opening the door to new identities and solidarities, new kinds of political organization, new forms of cultural and spiritual expression. It is hard to imagine individuals who better exemplify the point than Absalom Jones, Paul Cuffe, and Daniel Coker. In the end, they did not find their "earthly Canaan", nor did they resolve all the riddles of African American history. But they did help to create what we today call the Black Atlantic, fashioning new identities and imaginative connections that others would embrace and elaborate, blazing new "routes" that others would follow.[31]

Abstract

In recent decades, the study of Black Christianity has been transformed by two developments: first, by the rise of the "Black Atlantic" paradigm, which examines the history of African and African-descent people within a transatlantic rather than narrowly national or continental perspective; and, second, by the rise of the so-called "Munich School" of World Christianity, with its emphasis on "polycentrism" and transregional exchange. The result has been a new scholarly field – what historian Andrew Barnes has called "the Christian Black Atlantic". The article that follows contributes to this developing field by re-examining one of its originary moments: the debate over African repatriation that unfolded among both white and black Americans in the half century after United States independence.

Rasse, Religion und Repatriierung. Die ideologischen Ursprünge der Back-to-Africa-Bewegung 1770-1820

In den letzten Jahrzehnten hat sich die Erforschung des schwarzen Christentums durch zwei Entwicklungen verändert: erstens durch das Aufkommen des "Black Atlantic"-Paradigmas, das die Geschichte von Afrikanern und Menschen afrikanischer Herkunft aus einer transatlantischen (und nicht nur nationalen oder kontinentalen) Perspektive untersucht, und zweitens durch das Aufkommen der so genannten "Munich School" des Weltchristentums mit ihrer Betonung des "Polyzentrismus" und von Prozessen eines transregionalen

31 DU BOIS, W.E.B. (1903), *The Souls of Black Folk* (Chicago, IL), 3.

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Austauschs. Das Ergebnis ist ein neues wissenschaftliches Feld – das der Historiker Andrew Barnes den “christlichen schwarzen Atlantik” genannt hat. Der folgende Artikel trägt zu diesem sich entwickelnden Feld bei, indem er eines seiner Ursprungsmomente neu untersucht: die Debatte über die Rückkehr von Afrikanern nach Afrika, die sich im halben Jahrhundert nach der Unabhängigkeit der Vereinigten Staaten sowohl unter weißen als auch schwarzen Amerikanern entwickelte.

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Rediscovering African Agency in the History of the Reformation: Ethiopian Monks, European Reformers, and the Global Circulation of Religious Knowledge

STANISLAU PAULAU

1. Introduction

Today, Africa stands out as the continent with the largest number of Christians, a significant proportion of whom identify as Protestant.[1] Yet, in the annals of Protestant history, Africa remains conspicuously underrepresented. The further we venture into the history of Protestantism, the more Africa's contributions and presence seem to diminish. This oversight is particularly pronounced in discussions surrounding the Protestant Reformation itself.

The sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation stands as a monumental episode in the history of Christianity, with reverberations felt not just within the confines of Latin Christendom, but also in shaping the trajectory of global Christian thought and practice. The ways in which the Reformation legacy has taken root and found contextualized expressions around the world – particularly in Africa, Asia, and Latin America – constitute one of the most vibrant research fields within the academic discipline of World Christianity.[2]

This paper seeks to push the boundaries of this understanding further. It challenges the notion that the Reformation was initially an exclusively European phenomenon that became global in the subsequent centuries as a result of worldwide transmission and cross-cultural diffusion of its impulses. Instead, it argues that the Reformation had been considerably influenced by non-European actors as well as by religious knowledge produced within non-European Christian contexts – such as for example Ethiopia – and thus can itself be seen as a product of transcontinental interconnectedness of the Christian world.

2. Martin Luther, Ethiopian Christianity, and the Making of the Wittenberg Reformation

Reformation historians repeatedly argued that Martin Luther had neither encountered Africans nor possessed substantial knowledge of African Christianity. Typically, the

1 JOHNSON, T. M./ ZURLO, G. A. (2023) (Eds.), *World Christian Database* (Leiden/ Boston, accessed: 20th October 2023).

2 Cf. e.g. LUDWIG, F. et al. (Ed.) (2019), *Reformation in the Context of World Christianity.* Theological, political and social interactions between Africa, Asia, the Americas and Europe (Wiesbaden); IRVIN, D. T. (2017), *The Protestant Reformation and World Christianity* (Grand Rapids).

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Wittenberg reformer is portrayed as being largely indifferent to the Christian world outside of Latin Europe. However, the opposite appears to be true. Even in the early stages following the release of his *95 Theses*, Luther's writings provide compelling evidence that his understanding of the church was shaped by perspectives on Christianity beyond Rome's jurisdiction. In the *Acta Augustana*, his account of discussions with Roman Cardinal Legate Cajetan in October 1518, Luther specifically referenced the "Christians of the entire Orient and Africa".[3] Through this, he asserted that the Church of Christ transcends geographical and temporal boundaries and that allegiance to the Roman Pope shouldn't be the only criterion to identify one as a Christian.

The awareness of the existence of Christianity in the Orient and Africa has significantly influenced the development of the Protestant self-perception. During the Leipzig Disputation in the summer of 1519, Martin Luther's discourse with Johannes Eck demonstrated his recognition of the existence of older Christian churches, that were independent of Rome, yet still a part of the "Lordship of Christ over the whole world".[4] Thus, unlike late medieval Latin theology, Luther maintained that the Eastern churches, while not acknowledging the Pope's primacy as a divine right, were neither heretical nor schismatic.[5]

However, Martin Luther did not only know about the existence of Christian Churches in Africa, he also engaged in direct contact with one of its proponents. Already in the year 1534 an Ethiopian Orthodox monk and deacon *Abba* Mikaʾel (ሚካኤል) traveled to Wittenberg in order to meet the Wittenberg reformer.[6] He arrived on 31 May and stayed until 4 July 1534. During his stay, *Abba* Mikaʾel repeatedly met Martin Luther and Philipp Melanchthon for theological discussions. The most important sources that provide information about their interaction include the letter of recommendation for *Abba* Mikaʾel prepared by Philipp Melanchthon and signed by Martin Luther,[7] Melanchthon's letters to Benedikt Pauli and Martin Bucer,[8] the statements of the reformers handed down in the

3 "Christianos totius orientis et Africae". LUTHER, M. (1884), "Acta Augustana (1518)", in: Böhlau, H. (Ed.), *D. Martin Luthers Werke.* Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Vol. 2, *Schriften, Predigten, Disputationen 1518/19* (Weimar), 20.

4 "Herrschaft Christi über den ganzen Erdkreis". LUTHER (1884), "Acta Augustana (1518)" (see FN 3), 276.

5 LUTHER (1884), "Acta Augustana (1518)" (see FN 3), 276.

6 The following explanations are partly based on my book: PAULAU, S. (2021), *Das andere Christentum*. Zur transkonfessionellen Verflechtungsgeschichte von äthiopischer Orthodoxie und europäischem Protestantismus (VIEG 262; Göttingen). Open Access: https://doi.org/10.13109/9783666336041.

7 Cf. the critical edition of the letter of recommendation: SCHEIBLE, H. (2005) (Ed.), *Melanchthons Briefwechsel.* Kritische und kommentierte Gesamtausgabe. Vol. T6, *Texte 1395–1683 (1534–1535)* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt), 123f. Cf. earlier editions: MELANCHTHON, P. (1565), *Epistolarum D. Philippi Melanchthonis Farrago* (ed. by J. Manlius) (Basel), 367f.; LUTHER, M. (1781), *D. Martin Luthers bisher ungedruckte Briefe.* Vol. 2, SCHÜTZE, G. (Ed.) (Leipzig), 319f.; LUTHER, M. (1827), *Dr. Martin Luthers Briefe, Sendschreiben und Bedenken,* vollständig aus den verschiedenen Ausgaben seiner Werke und Briefe, aus andern Büchern und noch unbenutzten Handschriften gesammelt, kritisch und historisch bearbeitet. Vol. 4 (ed. by W. M. Leberecht de Wette) (Berlin), 550; MELANCHTHON, P. (1835), *Philippi Melanthonis Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia*. Vol. 2 (ed. by C. G. Bretschneider) (Halle (Saale)), 737; LUTHER, M. (1903), *Dr. Martin Luther's Briefwechsel* 10 (ed. by L. Enders) (Frankfurt a.M.), 60f.; LUTHER, M. (1937). *D. Martin Luthers Werke.* Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Briefwechsel. Vol. 7, *1534–1536* (Weimar), 86.

8 Letter of Melanchthon to Benedikt Pauli 31.05.1534, SCHEIBLE (2005), *Melanchthons Briefwechsel* (see FN 7). Vol. T6, 99f. Cf. MELANCHTHON, P. (1835), *Philippi Melanthonis Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia*. Vol. 2 (ed. by C. G. Bretschneider) (Halle (Saale)), 730f. See also the recent introduction and translation in: WENGERT, T. J. (2021), "Melanchthon's First Letter about an Ethiopian Visitor to Luther's Wittenberg", in: *Lutheran Quarterly* 35, 182–188. For the view arguing that Melanchthon possibly refers in this letter to a

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"Table Talks",[9] as well as Luther's sermon in which he explicitly refers to the encounter with an Ethiopian Christian.[10]

This meeting, that largely remains ignored to this day,[11] should be regarded not only as the starting point for the interaction between the Protestantism and the Ethiopian Church, but also as the very first Protestant-Orthodox encounter. At the same time, the travel of an Ethiopian monk into the cradle of Reformation challenges the perception of the early modern time as a period in the history of globalization of Christianity performed exclusively by the Europeans discovering the wider world and expanding its missionary work.

By the turn of the sixteenth century, Ethiopian Orthodox Christians were by no means rare guests in the Latin West.[12] As supposed subjects of the legendary Prester John, a monarch who was believed to rule over a powerful Christian empire amid Muslims and pagans, they were not only tolerated but rather treated with great respect (at least in most cases). Having established a network of diasporic communities in the Mediterranean region – the most prominent ones could be found in Jerusalem, Cairo, Nicosia, and Rome – Ethiopian Christians facilitated the increasing circulation of knowledge between Northeast Africa and Latin Europe and widely engaged in interaction with Latin Christianity.[13] The

different visitor, see: DANIELS III, D./ ANGLIN, L. (2018), "Luther and the Ethiopian Deacon", in: *Lutheran Quarterly* 32, 428–434.

9 LUTHER, M. (1916), *D. Martin Luthers Werke.* Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Tischreden 1531–1546. Vol. 4, *1538–1540* (Weimar), 152f.; LUTHER, M. (1919). *D. Martin Luthers Werke.* Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Tischreden 1531–1546. Vol. 5, *1540–1544* (Weimar), 450f.

10 LUTHER, M. (1912). *D. Martin Luthers Werke.* Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Vol. 47: *Reihenpredigten aus den Jahren 1537 bis 1540* (Weimar), 235f.

11 Among church historians Martin Brecht and Tom G. A. Hardt are an exception in this regard. However, they mention the meeting of Martin Luther and *Abba* Mikaʾel only briefly and do not go into detail about it. Cf. BRECHT, M. (1987), *Martin Luther*. Vol. 3*, Die Erhaltung der Kirche.* 1532–1546 (Stuttgart), 67; HARDT, T. G. A. (1999), "The Confessional Principle. Church Fellowship in the Ancient and in the Lutheran Church", in: *Logia. A Journal of Lutheran Theology* VIII, no. 2, 27. Furthermore, recently David Daniels drew attention to this meeting and emphasized its extraordinary importance for church historical studies: "I believe the dialogue between Luther and Michael the Deacon is historically significant. For historical studies, it might be on par with the colloquy between Luther and Zwingli." DANIELS, D. (2019), "Luther and Ethiopian Christianity", in: Ludwig, F. et al. (Eds.), *Reformation in the Context of World Christianity.* Theological, Political and Social Interactions Between Africa, Asia, the Americas and Europe (Wiesbaden), 28.

12 Cf. ASGHEDOM, S. (1974), "Contributo dell'Ospizio di Santo Stefano degli Abissini agli Studi Etiopici in Europa", in: *IV Congresso Internazionale di Studi Etiopici (Roma, 10–15 April 1972).* Vol. 1 (Roma), 393. On the myth of Prester John (Lat. Pres[by]ter Iohannes) and its association with Ethiopia, see BAUM, W. (1999), *Die Verwandlungen des Mythos vom Reich des Priesterkönigs Johannes.* Rom, Byzanz und die Christen des Orients im Mittelalter (Klagenfurt); GUMILEV, L. (1987), *Searches for an Imaginary Kingdom.* The Legend of the Kingdom of Prester John (Cambridge); FIACCADORI, G. (2010), "Prester John" (*Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* 4, 209–216).

13 For Ethiopian journeys to Europe in the 16th century and Ethiopian diasporic communities in the Mediterranean see: DE LORENZI, J. (2010), "Red Sea Travelers in Mediterranean Lands. Ethiopian Scholars and Early Modern Orientalism, ca. 1500–1668", in: Kavey, A.B. (Ed.), *World-Building and the Early Modern Imagination* (New York), 173–200; KELLY, S. (2020), "Medieval Ethiopian Diasporas", in: Kelly, S. (Ed.), *A Companion to Medieval Ethiopia and Eritrea* (Leiden), 427–441; SALVADORE, M. (2017), *The African Prester John and the Birth of Ethiopian-European Relations, 1402–1555* (London); SALVADORE, M. (2011), "The Ethiopian Age of Exploration. Prester John's Discovery of Europe, 1306–1458", in: *Journal of World History* 21/4, 593–627; FIACCADORI, G. (2009), "Venezia, l'Etiopia e l'Europa", in: Barbieri, G./ Fiaccadori, G. (Eds.), "*Nigra sum sed formosa*". Sacro e bellezza dell'Etiopia cristiana (13 Marzo – 10 Maggio 2009) (Crocetta del Montello); KELLY, S./ NOSNITSIN, D. (2017), "The Two Yoḥannəses of Santo Stefano degli Abissini, Rome. Reconstructing Biography and Cross-Cultural Encounter Through Manuscript Evidence", in: *Manuscript Studies: A Journal of the Schoenberg Institute for Manuscript Studies* 2/2.

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visit of *Abba* Mikaʾel in Wittenberg has to be seen within this context. Since the Ethiopian monk could speak Italian,[14] it can be assumed that he spent a long time in an Italian-speaking environment. Most likely he belonged to the Ethiopian monastic community in Rome. The church of *Santo Stefano dei Mori* (or *Santo Stefano degli Abissini*), adjacent to St. Peter's, which had served as the main meeting place and guest house for Ethiopian pilgrims from the 1480s onwards, developed into an important centre of Ethiopian Orthodox intellectual life and also received the formal status of an Ethiopian Orthodox monastic community in 1515.[15] A longer stay of *Abba* Mikaʾel in Rome would also explain, how he became aware of the Reformation movement and decided to undertake a journey to Wittenberg.

Significant is, however, not only a mere fact of such an early encounter between Martin Luther and an Ethiopian Orthodox monk, but also and foremost its theological dimension. This meeting brought about a remarkable theological dialogue about the core issues of the Christian doctrine. Undoubtedly the most important result of the dialogue between *Abba* Mikaʾel and Martin Luther was the conviction that the adherents of the Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity and of the Wittenberg Reformation belonged to the same Church of Christ. The basis for this conviction was perceived agreement on such central issues of the Christian teaching as the doctrine of the Trinity and the understanding of the Lord's Supper.[16] The existing differences in some ceremonies were not regarded as essential and, consequently, were seen as adiaphora. This fundamental conviction was reflected in the formal letter of recommendation that the Wittenberg reformers issued to the Ethiopian monk before his departure from Wittenberg.

> Testimonium datum cuidam Aethiopi a d[omino] Mart[ino] Luth[ero]. Φ[ίλιππος] M[elanthon] f[ecit]. Fuit nobiscum in Germania dominus Michael, Aethiops diaconus, cum quo de doctrina christiana familiariter colloquentes audivimus eum cum symbolo, quod habet ecclesia occidentalis, recte convenire nec de trinitate aliud sentire, quam cum quod sentit ecclesia occidentalis. Ideo, quantum nos quidem possumus, commendamus eum bonis viris. Nam etsi orientalis ecclesia habet aliquas dissimiles ceremonias, ipse quoque iudicat, quod dissimilitudo earum non tollat unitatem ecclesiae nec pugnet cum fide, quia Christi regnum est spiritualis iustitia cordis, timor dei et per Christum fiducia. Hanc sententiam et nos probamus. Comperimus etiam ex eo, quod ritus, quem nos observamus in usu coenae domini et missa, convenit cum orientali ecclesia. Optamus autem, ut omnes gentes agnoscant et glorificent Christum et ei obediant vera fiducia misericordiae ipsius et dilectione proximi. Ideo rogamus bonos viros, ut christianam dilectionem et huic hospiti praestare velint. Witeb[ergae] 1534, 4. Non[as] Iulii.
>
> Martinus Lutherus[17]

14 Letter of Philipp Melanchthon to Benedikt Pauli, 31.05.1534. SCHEIBLE (2005), *Melanchthons Briefwechsel* (see FN 7). Vol. T6, 99f. Cf. also MELANCHTHON, P. (1835), *Philippi Melanthonis Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia*. Vol. 2 (ed. by C. G. Bretschneider) (Halle (Saale)), 730f.

15 Cf. FIACCADORI, G. (2010), "Santo Stefano dei Mori", in: *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* 4, 528–532; EURINGER, S. (1935), "San Stefano dei Mori (Vatikanstadt) in seiner Bedeutung für die abessinische Sprachwissenschaft und Missionsgeschichte", in: *Oriens Christianus* 32/3; DA LEONESSA, M. (1928), *Santo Stefano Maggiore degli Abissini e le relazioni romano-etiopiche* (Vatican); CHAÎNE, M. (1911), "Un monastère éthiopien à Rome au XVe et XVIe siècle", in: *Mélanges de la Faculté Orientale, Bayreuth* 5; GRÉBAUT, S. (1927), "Contribution à l'histoire du couvent éthiopien San-Stefano-dei-Mori", in: *Revue de l'Orient chrétien* 26/3; GRÉBAUT, S. (1929), "La règle de Santo Stefano dei Mori", in: *Revue de l'Orient chrétien* 27/3.

16 For a detailed analysis of the theological dialogue, see: PAULAU, S. (2022), "An Ethiopian Orthodox Monk in the Cradle of the Reformation. *Abba* Mikaʾel, Martin Luther, and the Unity of the Church" in: Paulau, S./ Tamcke, M. (Eds.), *Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity in a Global Context*. Entanglements and Disconnections (Texts and Studies in Eastern Christianity 24, Leiden), 81–109. Open Access: https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004505254_007.

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> A letter of recommendation given to an Ethiopian by Mister Martin Luther. Φίλιππος Melanthon drafted it.
> Mister Michael, an Ethiopian deacon, was with us in Germany. We spoke with him about the Christian doctrine on friendly terms and heard him rightly agree with the creed that the Western Church holds. Nor does he think about the Trinity any differently than what the Western Church thinks. Therefore, as much as we can, we recommend him to good people. For although the Eastern Church observes some divergent ceremonies, he [= *Abba* Mikaʾel] judges that this difference does not undermine the unity of the Church nor conflict with faith, because the Kingdom of Christ is spiritual righteousness of heart, fear of God, and trust through Christ. We, too, approve of this opinion. We also learned from him that the rite, which we observe at the Lord's Supper and the Mass, is in accord with the Eastern Church. We wish, however, that all peoples acknowledge and glorify Christ and obey him through true trust in his mercy and through love of the neighbor. Therefore, we entreat good people that they, too, would show Christian love to this visitor. Wittenberg, July 4, 1534.
>
> Martin Luther[18]

This letter that was drafted by Melanchthon and signed by Luther can be regarded as the key document of this encounter and expression of a mutually shared conviction that Ethiopian Orthodox Christians and proponents of the Wittenberg Reformation belong to the very same Church of Christ.

The assertion that the fathers of the Reformation and Ethiopian Orthodox Christians confess essentially the same faith was quite extraordinary in the context of the advancing polarization and enduring theological polemics within Latin Christianity in the 16th century.[19] Even though the lack of accurate knowledge about the theological positions of the respective other and possible misinterpretations caused by the difficulties of communication may have contributed to this Orthodox-Protestant ecumenical understanding, this does not undermine the fact that both parties seem to have been genuinely convinced of this accord. Both Luther and Melanchthon have themselves

17 The text of the letter of recommendation is given according to the critical edition of Melanchthon's correspondence: SCHEIBLE (2005), *Melanchthons Briefwechsel* (see FN 7). Vol. T6, 123–124.

18 Translation – S.P.

19 With regard to Luther's ecumenically open attitude towards the church of Ethiopia it must be noted that even before his meeting with the Ethiopian deacon he tended to be benevolent towards the Orthodox churches. Thus, in contrast to late medieval Latin theology, he expressed at the Leipzig Disputation in the summer of 1519 the opinion that the Orthodox churches, were neither heretical nor schismatic, although they do not recognize the primacy of the pope as divine right. Furthermore, in his writing *Von dem Papstthum zu Rom gegen den hochberühmten Romanisten zu Leipzig* published in 1520, Luther defended the thesis of the communion of faith and sacraments with the Orthodox Christians: "[Man könne nicht behaupten,] das alle andere Christen in der gantzen welt ketzer und abtruniger sein, ob sie gleich die selben tauff, sacrament, Evangelium und alle artickel des glaubens mit uns eintrechticklich halten, auszgenommen, das sie yhre priester und bischoffe nit von Rom bestetigen lassen, [...] als da sein die Moscobiten, weysse Reussen, die Krichen [= Griechen], Behemen und vil andere grosse lendere in der welt. Dan disse alle glewben wie wir, teuffen wie wir, predigen wie wir, leben wie wir." LUTHER, M. (1888), *D. Martin Luthers Werke.* Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Vol. 6, *Schriften 1519/20 (einschließlich Predigten, Disputationen)* (Weimar), 287. Admittedly, this conviction of unity in the fundamental principles of the Christian faith, expressed with regard to the Eastern Churches at the beginning of the Reformation, must not be detached from its polemical anti-Roman context. Regarding the position of the Orthodox churches in Luther's ecclesiology see: VON LILIENFELD, F. (1997), "Zum Wesen der Kirche. Einheit, Kontinuität und Universalität der heiligen katholischen und apostolischen Kirche in der Theologie Martin Luthers und in der 'eucharistischen Ekklesiologie' des 20. Jahrhunderts" in: Felmy, K. C. et al. (Eds.), *Sophia – Die Weisheit Gottes.* Gesammelte Aufsätze 1983–1995 (Erlangen), 3–12. Cf. also PÓSFAY, G. (1992), "'The Whole Christian Church on Earth'. Luther's Conception of the Universality of the Church", in: *Lutheran Theological Seminary (Gettysburg) Bulletin* 72.

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repeatedly spoken about the encounter with the Ethiopian monk, highlighting the perceived accord in the main issues of faith. For instance, three years after the meeting with *Abba* Mikaʾel, on 17th November 1537,[20] Luther mentioned:

> Ante triennium nobiscum hic erat monachus Aethiops, cum quo disputabamus per interpretem, et iste omnibus nostris articulis conclusus dicebat: Ista eta bona creda, id est, fides.[21] (Three years ago, there was an Ethiopian monk with us, with whom we had a discussion through an interpreter. He summed up all our articles [of faith] by saying, "This is a good 'credo,'" that is, faith.[22])

This statement demonstrates a striking parallelism with the passage from Luther's Wittenberg sermon dating from the same year, in which he spoke of the unity of the true church of Christ, referring to a certain Ethiopian as an example of a fellow believer.[23] The fact that Luther had repeatedly, and in various contexts, expressed the conviction that he professed the same faith with the Orthodox Ethiopians and belonged together with them to the one true Church of Christ, demonstrates the importance of this idea for his theological reflection. This conviction touched upon one of the core issues of the ecclesiological self-understanding of the Reformation movement, the question regarding the Protestant understanding of the article of faith declaring the unity of the church in light of growing polarization within the Latin Christendom.[24] As long as the Lutherans found themselves in a formative stage, the 'Ethiopian Other' played a stabilizing role. In the context of theological polarization within Latin Christianity, the idea of common belonging to the very same church with Christians in distant parts of the world gave credibility to the article of creed regarding the unity and universality of the church. Furthermore, for Luther, the agreement with *Abba* Mikaʾel became not least a means of inscribing the Reformation into the global Christian context. Ultimately, the theological dialogue between *Abba* Mikaʾel and Martin Luther adds to our understanding of how new and connected forms of world-building between Europe and Africa, as well as between Protestantism and Oriental Orthodox Christianity, were negotiated.

3. Beyond Wittenberg: Ethiopian Christianity as Part of the Protestant Theological Discourse Across Europe

The Wittenberg reformers' encounter with the Ethiopian monk and deacon *Abba* Mikaʾel was by far not an episodic occurrence. The very fact that *Abba* Mikaʾel had a letter of recommendation prepared for him suggests that he sought further contacts with the representatives of the reformation movement. And in fact, another letter from Melanchthon indicates that the Ethiopian monk also intended to travel to Strasbourg to meet there the

20 In the edition of the *Table Talks*, "17 November 1538" is given as the date, but this may be an error. Insofar as Luther speaks of the monk visiting him *ante triennium* ("three years ago"), this statement would have to be from the year 1537.

21 LUTHER, M. (1916), *D. Martin Luthers Werke.* Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Tischreden 1531–1546. Vol. 4, *1538–1540* (Weimar), 152f. See also LUTHER, M. (1919), *D. Martin Luthers Werke.* Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Tischreden 1531–1546. Vol. 5, *1540–1544* (Weimar), 450f.

22 Translation – S.P.

23 LUTHER, M. (1912), *D. Martin Luthers Werke.* Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Vol. 47, *Reihenpredigten aus den Jahren 1537 bis 1540* (Weimar), 235f.

24 Still in the year 1532 Luther had to defend this article of the creed in his epistle to Duke Albrecht of Prussia (1490–1568). Cf. LUTHER, M. (1910), *D. Martin Luthers Werke.* Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Vol. 30 (Weimar), 552.

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reformer Martin Bucer.[25] It is, however, not known whether these plans were carried out or not.

Regardless, entanglements between proponents of the reformation movement and Ethiopian Christianity were by no means anecdotal. The increasing spreading of knowledge about the "discovery" of an ancient Christian Church in Ethiopia – at that time believed to be the land of the legendary Prester John – in the early 16th century, created a vigorous intellectual discourse among European reformers. Writings about this African form of Christianity were read and discussed by the leading figures of both humanism and reformation across the continent. I would like to illustrate it, by analyzing the reception of two books that were printed in the early 1530s and gave European readers a first glimpse of the Ethiopian Orthodox faith. First, *Legatio magni Indorum imperatoris Presbyteri Ioannis* (initially published in Antwerp in 1532), prepared for printing by the Portuguese humanist Damião de Góis.[26] And second, *Legatio David Aethiopiae Regis* (initially published in Bologna in 1533), by an anonymous editor.[27]

The strength of both books was that they not only provided an overview of the history of Portuguese-Ethiopian interaction, but also contained genuine Ethiopian documents. For example, *Legatio magni Indorum imperatoris Presbyteri Ioannis* reprinted the letter of *Ǝtege*[28] Ǝleni (እሌኒ)[29] to King Manuel I, written in 1509, in which she made known her interest in cooperation and unity of faith with Latin Christianity. In addition, the booklet contained a thesis-like account of Ethiopian Christianity and the political constitution of the

25 Cf. letter of Philipp Melanchthon to Martin Bucer, 04.07.1534, in which he recommends *Abba* Mikaʾel travelling to France: "[S. D. Fuit hic nobiscum Aethiops homo cupidus cognoscend(i).] S. D. Hic hospes mirabili studio tenetur cognoscendi varias nationes. Fuit itaque nobiscum et, cum familiariter multa de relligione et doctrina christiana collocuti essemus, visus est non abhorrere a studio pietatis. Ideo dedi hoc epistolium roganti et commendo eum tibi, mi Bucere, commendandum etiam aliis fatribus. Videre cupit Galliam. Melanthon." SCHEIBLE (2005), *Melanchthons Briefwechsel* (see FN 7). Vol. T6, 122.

26 DE GÓIS, D. (1532) (Ed.), *Legatio magni Indorum Imperatoris Presbyteri Ioannis, ad Emanuelem Lusitaniae Regem, Anno Domini. M. D. XIII* (Antwerp). Damião de Góis had already witnessed the stay of an Ethiopian legation in Lisbon as a thirteen-year-old page of King Manuel I in 1514 and was deeply impressed by it. On his Legatio, see BLACKBURN, E. (1967), "The Legacy of 'Prester John' by Damião de Goes and John More", in: *Moreana* 4, 14, 37–98.

27 Legatio David Aethiopiae Regis ad sanctiss. D. N. Clementem Papam VII una cum obedientia eidem sanctiss. D. N. praestita, Bononiae 1533. The two *legationes* are regularly confused or identified with each other in the research literature, for example in UHLIG, S./ BÜHRING, G. (1994) (Eds.), *Damian de Góis' Schrift über Glaube und Sitten der Äthiopier* (ÄthF 39; Wiesbaden), 31.

28 *Ǝtege* (እቴጌ) – the title designated the wife of an emperor who was crowned in a special ceremony (traditionally three days after the emperor). This title must be distinguished from the *Nəgaśtä Nägäśtat* (ንግሥተ፡ ነገሥታት, "Queen of Kings"), a title that designated an empress ruling in her own right. Cf. RUBINKOWSKA, H. (2005), "Ǝtege", in: *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* 2, 392.

29 Ǝleni (throne name: ʾAdmas Mogäsa, አድማስ፡ ሞገሳ) was the childless widow of the Ethiopian emperor Zärʾa Yaʿəqob. In 1508, when she had already passed her 75th year, she was elected regent for the emperor, who was not yet of age at the time. Interestingly, *Ǝtege* Ǝleni herself originally came from a Muslim family. She was the daughter of the ruler of Hadiyya (a Muslim vassal state of Ethiopia) Mähmad and converted to Christianity only before her marriage to Zärʾa Yaʿəqob. BRAUKÄMPER, U. (2012), "A History of the Hadiyya in Southern Ethiopia" (ÄthF 77, Wiesbaden), 88f. In Ethiopia, she is remembered to this day not only as the most prominent female figure in early modern Ethiopian politics, but also as the author of two important mariological hymnological works *Ḫoḫätä Bərhan* (ፍኖተ፡ ብርሃን; "The Gate of Light") and *Ǝnzirä Səbḥat* (ዕንዚራ፡ ስብሐት; "The Lyre of Praise"; also known as *Arganonä Wəddase*). VAN DEN OUDENRIJN, M. (1961) (Ed.), *Helenae Aethiopum reginae queae feruntur preces et carmina* (CSCO 208, 211 [CSCO.Ae 39, 40]; Louvain). On her see: CHERNETSOV, S. (2005), "Ǝleni", in: *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* 2, 253f.

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country, based on information communicated by the Ethiopian envoy Mateus.[30] The *Legatio David Aethiopiae Regis*, in a sense, completed the picture by communicating the letters of the Ethiopian emperor Ləbnä Dəngəl (ልብነ፡ ድንግል)[31] written in the period of 1521 and 1524. The leitmotif of his letters, addressed to the Portuguese kings Manuel I and his successor João III, as well as to Pope Clement VII, was the quest for church unity and closer cooperation.

These books were reprinted several times in short intervals and were soon available in different languages.[32] Their success was related, on the one hand, to the great need for information regarding the existence of Christians in the distant legendary lands, but on the other hand, the call for transcontinental cooperation and church unity formulated in the Ethiopian letters was in line with the discourse that was being conducted in European humanist-cosmopolitan circles.[33]

At the same time, an increasingly distanced attitude toward the Christian empire in the Horn of Africa emerged in both Lisbon and Rome in the early 1530s, which paradoxically can be seen as an unintended consequence of the Reformation. For it was in the course of the Counter-Reformation realignment of theology and church policy, of all things, that Pope Clement VII, concerned with rapid intra-European developments (both religious and political), took note of the Ethiopian king's letter in 1533 without consequence,[34] and that, under the influence of the court theologians Diogo Ortiz de Vilhegas and Pedro Margalho,

30 Mateus (so in European sources; real name Abraham) was an Armenian who was supposed to be related to *Abunä* Marqos (ማርቆስ) and therefore had the best relations with the Ethiopian imperial court. He departed in 1508, but did not reach Portugal until 1514 and remained there until 1515. On him see: ABBINK, J. (2007), "Mateus", in: *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* 3, 866f. Cf. AUBIN, J. (1976), "L'ambassade du Prêtre Jean à D. Manuel", in: *Mare Luso-Indicum* 3, 1–56.

31 On Ləbnä Dəngəl (throne name: Dawit II, ዳዊት) see: KLEINER, M. (2007), "Ləbnä Dəngəl", in: *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* 3, 535–537.

32 Thus, only in 1533 – apart from numerous additional Latin editions and two Italian translations – two German editions of the Legatio David Aethiopiae Regis appeared. Bottschafft des groszmechtigsten Konigs David aus dem großen und hohen Morenland den man gemein nennet Priester Johann an Babst Clemens den siebenden zu Bononia vorhort in offnem consistorio am XXIX. Tag Januarii anno M.D.XXXIII, Nuremberg 1533 and Bottschafft des groszmechtigsten Konigs David aus dem großen und hohen Morenland den man gemein nennet Priester Johann an Babst Clemens den siebenden zu Bononia vorhort in offennem consistorio am XXIX. Tag Januarii anno M.D.XXXIII, Dresden 1533.

33 To gain an impression of the enthusiastic reception of the *Legatio magni Indorum imperatoris Presbyteri Ioannis* in humanist circles, one can consult the introduction to its English edition. The translator of the text from Latin John More, the son of the famous humanist Thomas More, writes: "And therfore yt greatly may, & of reason greatly ought to reioyce all good chrysten people, to perceyue that though there are dyuerse thynges wherein they and we dyffere in rytes, lawes, customes, and ceremonyes: yet in all other thynges necessarilyly perteynynge as well to the vertues of fayth and relygyon, as all other vertues morall, they so farreforth accorde and agre wyth these cristen nacyons of ours, and wyth the catholyque doctryne of the chyrche, that yt may well appere euen by that thynge alone, that the spyryte of god hath wrought and worketh this full agrement & consent, in so many thynges necessary to saluacyon, thorowe so many great countreys and regyons as ours are and theyres both, ye tone by so longe space hauynge so lytle accesse vnto the tother, that of many yeres tyl nowe very late, we coulde not wel tell whyther they were well cristened or not. [...] But syth that we begyn nowe eache to heare more of other, I pray god as there is in bothe many thynges very good, and some thynges that myght be better: eche peple may learn & take of other those thynges that be good, and lette the badde go by. And that we may make bothe so but one chyrche mylytant here in erth, that we may both be partes of one gloryouse chyrche, that euer shall be tryumphaunt in heuen." MORE, J. (1533) (Ed.), *The Legacye or embassate of the great emperour of Inde prester Iohñ*, vnto Emanuell kynge of Portyngale, in the yere of our lorde M.v.C.xiii. Of the fayth of the Indyans, ceremonyes, relygyons &c. Of the patryarche & his offyce. Of the realme, state, power, maiesty, and order of the courte of prester Iohñ (London), 3f.

34 Cf. ROGERS, F. (1962), *The Quest for Eastern Christians*. Travels and Rumor in the Age of Discovery (Minneapolis), 148–152.

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people in Lisbon began to reflect on the supposed heterodoxy of the Ethiopian church.[35]

While the Church of Rome thus began to distance itself from Ethiopian Christianity, another group gradually emerged alongside humanist scholars that took a special interest in Ethiopian Christians – the Protestants. The confrontation of leading reformers of Europe with the *Legatio magni Indorum imperatoris Presbyteri Ioannis* and their personal contacts with its editor can be dated to 1534 at the latest.[36] Ironically, this information has only been preserved thanks to meticulous record keeping by the Portuguese Inquisition. Specifically, these are the documents of the Inquisition proceedings against Damião de Góis, which were initiated in April 1571.[37] They consist partly of the reports that the humanist had written independently for his defense and partly of the interrogation files.[38] Among other things, they reveal that when the Portuguese stayed with Erasmus of Rotterdam in Freiburg im Breisgau between April and August 1534,[39] he took the opportunity to make further acquaintances with leading representatives of the Reformation: According to his own account, he met in Geneva the reformer of French-speaking Switzerland and John Calvin's predecessor, Guillaume Farel; in Basel, the intellectual and reformer Simon Grynaeus; and finally, in Strasbourg, the important theologians and reformers Martin Bucer, Kaspar Hedio, and Wolfgang Capito. The files show that at these meetings the "discovery" of Ethiopian Christians and their faith was discussed in connection with the *Legatio* recently published by Damião de Góis, which had apparently already been read by the reformers.[40]

However, the two *Legationes* were by no means read and discussed only in the intellectual centers of Protestantism. Rather, quite a few Protestant pastors apparently also received these writings. This is indicated by the private library of Johannes Block, the first Protestant pastor of the Pomeranian ducal town of Barth.[41] As one of the very few intact private book collections of the Luther era, Block's book ensemble, which consists of about 125 volumes, has outstanding historical value and is considered a prime example of an

35 Cf. MARCOCCI, G. (2012), *A consciência de um império*. Portugal e o seu mundo (Sécs. XV–XVII) (Coimbra), 179f. On the two court theologians, see: D'ALÒS-MONER, A.M. (2015), *Envoys of a Human God*. The Jesuit Mission to Christian Ethiopia, 1557–1632 (Jesuit Studies 2; Leiden), 18, and MARCOCCI, G. (2012), *A consciência de um império*, 152f.

36 The Portuguese humanist's first contacts with the Reformers took place even earlier, at a time when his *Legatio* was still in preparation. In the spring of 1531, he met the local reformer Johannes Bugenhagen in Lübeck and visited Luther and Melanchthon in Wittenberg. Cf. SCHREIBER, H. (1902), *Die Reformation Lübecks* (SVRG 74, Halle), 74; GENNRICH, P.W. (1942), "Damião de Goes", in: *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 39, 197–220, here: 200–202; FEIST HIRSCH, E. (1967), *Damião de Gois*. The Life and Thought of a Portuguese Humanist, 1502–1574 (The Hague), 31–35 and FEIST HIRSCH, E. (1950), "Damião de Goes und die Reformation", in: *Theologische Zeitschrift* 6, 39–58, here: 47–50. On his connections with Protestantism, see also: AUBIN, J. (1979–1980), "Damião de Góis dans une Europe Évangelique", in: *Humanitas* 31–32, 1–56. In view of the general curiosity about Portuguese rapprochement with the "land of the priest-king John", it cannot be ruled out that, among other things, the recently established contacts with the African Christian empire might have been mentioned.

37 Cf. FEIST HIRSCH (1967), *Damião de Gois* (see FN 36), 208–220.

38 The documents are available in an edition: HENRIQUES, G. (1898) (Ed.), *Ineditos Goesianos.* Vol. 2: *O processo na Inquisição, documentos avulsos, notas* (Lisboa).

39 For an overview of intellectual exchanges between the two humanists and their discussion of the role of Ethiopian Christianity, which found expression, among other things, in the Erasmian work *Ecclesiastes. Sive de ratione concionandi (*1535), see FEIST HIRSCH, E. (1985), "Damião de Gois", in: *Contemporaries of Erasmus* 1, 114–117.

40 HENRIQUES (Ed.) (1898), *Ineditos Goesianos* (see FN 38), 127f. Cf. FEIST HIRSCH (1985), "Damião de Gois" (see FN 36), 66f.; AUBIN (1979–1980), "Damião de Góis" (see FN 36), 27f.

41 On his person and library, see: GEISS-WUNDERLICH, J./ GUMMELT, V. (2018) (Eds.), *Johannes Block*. Der pommersche Reformator und seine Bibliothek (HerChr.S 22; Leipzig).

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early Reformation preacher's library.[42] Its holdings include the *Legatio David Aethiopiae Regis*.[43]

While the European reformers in the 1530s were primarily interested in those characteristics of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church that could be presented as characteristic of the entire Christian East, a conspicuous change of trend in the Protestant perception of Ethiopian Christianity can already be observed in the 1540s. The unique characteristics of this religious tradition now came to the fore. The reason for the new discursive location of Ethiopian Christianity is primarily to be found in the considerable expansion of Ethiopia-related knowledge.

One of the key figures in this complex process of transcontinental circulation of religious knowledge was another Ethiopian Orthodox monk, Ṣägga Zäᵊab (ጸጋ፡ዘአብ). Unlike *Abba* Mikaᵊel, he belonged to one of the highest levels of the church hierarchy and came to Europe in the 1520s with official status, namely as an envoy of the Ethiopian Emperor Ləbnä Dəngəl. However, his most significant long-term contribution was not in the field of politics, but in the field of theology. Ṣägga Zäᵊab wrote a work that aimed at providing European readers with an authentic account on the doctrine and practices of the Ethiopian Church. The text under the Latin title *De Æthiopum Moribus* ("Of the Customs of the Ethiopians") was originally published in 1540.[44] The importance of this highly influential work appeared in numerous editions in the 16th and 17th centuries for development of Protestant theology is hard to overestimate. Ṣägga Zäᵊab did not only become the first theologian from Sub-Saharan Africa whose work appeared in print, but also the most widely read Orthodox theologian among Protestants of the early modern period. Martin Bucer, for example, explicitly referred to the information that "the noble and highly learned Herr Damian Goes from Portugal wrote down from the mouth of a bishop and legate from Ethiopia named Zegazabo [=Ṣägga Zäᵊab] and printed it".[45]

It becomes evident that, as early as the 1530s, Ethiopian Christianity played a significant role in the Protestant theological discourse, not just in Wittenberg but also among the broader first generation of reformers across Europe. Luther's interaction with *Abba* Mikaᵊel should not be viewed as a singular, isolated incident. Instead, it should be understood and analyzed within the broader context of this transcontinental exchange.

4. Conclusion

In revisiting the landscape of the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation, this paper has illuminated the intricate tapestry of global influences that have woven into its fabric, challenging conventional narratives that relegate it to a strictly European origin. As we

42 Cf. GEISS-WUNDERLICH, J. (2018), "Eine Büchersammlung der Lutherzeit. Aspekte der Erforschung von Blocks Gelehrtenbibliothek", in: GEISS-WUNDERLICH/ GUMMELT (Eds.), *Johannes Block* (see FN 41), 13–22, here: 14f.

43 GEISS-WUNDERLICH, J. (2018), "Katalog der erhaltenen Bücher aus Blocks Gelehrtenbibliothek", in: GEISS-WUNDERLICH/ GUMMELT (Eds.), *Johannes Block* (see FN 41), 179–238, here: 208f. Block's collection has since been digitized by the Greifswald University Library. His copy of the *Legatio David Aethiopiae Regis* can be found at URL: http://www.digitale-bibliothek-mv.de/viewer/object/PPN857211056/1/ (accessed: 20th October 2023).

44 It initially appeared as part of the book of Portuguese humanist Damião DE GÓIS (1540), *Fides, Religio, Moresque Æthiopum.* sub imperio Preciosi Johannis degentium una cum enarratione confoederationis ac amicitiae inter ipsos Æthiopum imperatores et reges Lusitaniae initae […], (Lovanii), 51–93.

45 DE GÓIS (1540), *Fides, Religio, Moresque* (see FN 44), 565.

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have seen, the Reformation was not just a recipient of worldwide transmission, but was, from its inception, influenced by non-European actors and religious knowledge from diverse Christian contexts, most notably Ethiopia. This recognition not only broadens our understanding of the Reformation's roots but also emphasizes the inherent interconnectedness of the Christian world, transcending continental boundaries. As the study of World Christianity continues to flourish, it remains imperative to approach historical phenomena with a lens that captures their global and interconnected dimensions, ensuring a more holistic and inclusive understanding of our shared religious past.

The encounter of the Ethiopian monk *Abba* Mikaʾel with Martin Luther and Philip Melanchthon exemplifies how global epistemic entanglements shaped the early formation of the Wittenberg Reformation. Similar processes can be observed in regard to reception of Ethiopian Orthodox knowledge by the reformer of French-speaking Switzerland William Farel in Geneva, by Simon Grynaeus in Basel, as well as by Martin Bucer, Caspar Hedio and Wolfgang Capito in Strasbourg, just to name a few examples. The European reformers as well as their followers in the subsequent decades hold the Ethiopian Orthodox religious knowledge in high esteem and drew upon it for various purposes that were by no means limited to anti-Catholic polemics. African Christian text – or in some cases texts about African Christianity – were used in early Protestant exegetical and historiographical works. Moreover, some of them were even incorporated into Protestant devotional literature.

At the same time, circulation of religious knowledge between Europe and the Horn of Africa in the course of the early 16th century was characterized by an asymmetry. The transfer of knowledge from Africa to Europe clearly prevailed, so that it was African theology that impacted Protestant thought, and not vice versa.

The story of the Reformation, often dominantly Eurocentric in its narratives, finds a significant counter-narrative in the prominent agency of Africa, particularly Ethiopia, in shaping its theological and historical trajectory. The engagements of figures like the Ethiopian monk *Abba* Mikaʾel or Ṣägga Zäʾab with leading European reformers underscores Africa's influential role, not as a passive recipient, but as an active contributor to Reformation thought. Instances such as the reception of Ethiopian Orthodox knowledge by renowned reformers across European centers indicate a profound respect and integration of African religious insights. These were not mere instances of intercontinental intellectual exchange; they were testimonies to the rich theological contributions from Africa. This predominant flow of religious knowledge from Africa to Europe during the early 16th century dispels notions of a one-way European influence. Instead, it spotlights the African agency and its pivotal role in the Reformation, thereby emphasizing the deeply interconnected and diverse fabric of World Christianity.

Abstract

This paper questions the conventional narratives of the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation traditionally framed as a predominantly European phenomenon. Focusing on the interaction between Ethiopian monks and European reformers, first of all Martin Luther and Philipp Melanchthon, the paper highlights how Ethiopian Orthodox religious knowledge profoundly influenced early Protestant thought, challenging the Eurocentric narrative and underscoring the interconnectedness of the Christian world. By documenting these engagements, the paper not only broadens our understanding of the Reformation's roots but also amplifies the narrative to include Africa's active role in shaping the

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theological and historical trajectory of global Christianity. Ultimately, the paper calls for a more inclusive and interconnected approach to the history of Christianity that acknowledges the diverse contributions that have shaped its development.

Die Wiederentdeckung der afrikanischen Wirkmächtigkeit in der Geschichte der Reformation: Äthiopische Mönche, europäische Reformatoren und die globale Zirkulation von religiösem Wissen

Der Beitrag stellt die gängige Darstellung der protestantischen Reformation im 16. Jahrhundert in Frage, die traditionell als ein vorwiegend europäisches Phänomen dargestellt wird. Er konzentriert sich auf die Interaktion zwischen äthiopischen Mönchen und europäischen Reformatoren, allen voran Martin Luther und Philipp Melanchthon, und zeigt, wie äthiopisch-orthodoxes religiöses Wissen das frühe protestantische Denken tief beeinflusste. Dabei wird die eurozentrische Perspektive in Frage gestellt und die vielfältigen Verflechtungen innerhalb der christlichen Welt aufgezeigt. Durch die Dokumentation dieses Engagements wird nicht nur unser Verständnis der Wurzeln der Reformation erweitert, sondern auch die aktive Rolle Afrikas bei der Gestaltung der theologischen und historischen Entwicklung des globalen Christentums in den Blick genommen. Schließlich plädiert der Beitrag für einen umfassenderen und stärker vernetzten Forschungsansatz zur Geschichte des Christentums, der die vielfältigen Impulse anerkennt, die seine Entwicklung geprägt haben.

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The Aksumite Kingdom and the Wider Christian World: A Transtemporal Approach to Early South-South Links in the History of World Christianity

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1. Introduction: Towards a Transtemporal Approach

The history of the Aksumite Kingdom, an African Christian civilisation of late antiquity, provides a compelling case study for investigating early south-south links that predate the more frequently discussed north-south and south-south interactions of later centuries. This paper seeks to explore these links through a two-pronged approach.

The first part looks at the formation of the Aksumite Kingdom's transregional entanglements. It examines the intricate web of trade networks that the kingdom spun across the Red Sea and Mediterranean regions. These networks not only facilitated the exchange of commodities but also fostered the dissemination of religious ideas and practices, thereby knitting Aksum into the fabric of a broader interconnected Christian world. The paper focuses not only on the establishment of historical links between the Christian Aksumite Kingdom and the Roman Empire, but also on its expansion into the Arabian Peninsula.

The second part of the paper shifts focus to the role of these south-south links in shaping the conceptualization of world Christianity during the early sixteenth century. Through the lens of the Aksumite Kingdom's early connections with South Arabia, particularly under the reign of King Kaleb, the paper explores how these historical ties informed and were reinterpreted within the context of the early modern time. The military campaigns of King Kaleb against the Himyarite kingdom serve as a case study for understanding the dynamics of religious power and the construction of a global Christian identity.

By examining these two distinct but interrelated themes, the paper seeks to illuminate the role of the Aksumite kingdom within the broader context of the history of world Christianity. It aims to illustrate how late antique African-South Arabian interactions were crucial to world Christianity in the sixteenth century. In doing so, the paper seeks to challenge the prevailing chronological limitations by arguing for an inclusive historiographical model that integrates the critical period of late antiquity into the broader narrative of world Christianity.

The necessity for a transtemporal approach arises from the recognition that the roots of many theological, cultural, and institutional developments in Christianity, not least formation of early south-south links, trace back to periods well before the 1500s. And at the same time they are of importance in order to understand the dynamics of world Christianity

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that unfolded during and after the 1500s. The transtemporal approach proposed in this paper is hence not merely a call for a chronological expansion but a methodological reorientation, that bridges divides of conventional historical periodization and stronger integrates *longue durée* developments into the history of world Christianity.

2. An African Christian Civilization of Late Antiquity in a Transregional Context: Formative Links in the Mediterranean and Red Sea Regions

The town of Aksum is now just a small district centre in the northern Ethiopian province of Tigray. In late antiquity, however, it was one of the most important political and religious centres in the world. Aksum gave its name to a powerful kingdom that flourished during the first seven centuries of the Common Era and played a decisive role in the early history of Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa.

The Aksumite kingdom owed its power primarily to its extensive international trade networks and its position on the Red Sea, from where it could control both land and sea passages to the Indian Ocean. The kingdom's seaport of Adulis was the main centre of trade between the countries of the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean. The *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, a mid-first-century Greek text that served as a guide for merchants trading in the Red Sea and western Indian Ocean, describes Adulis as a bustling trading centre where ivory, tortoiseshell and rhinoceroses' horn were exchanged for cloth, clothing, tools, weapons and iron from as far away as the Roman Empire and north-western India.[1]

As the power and wealth of the Aksumite kingdom grew in the second and third centuries, so did its political ambitions. Several inscriptions attest to Aksumite kings waging war against other peoples in Africa and, from about 200 onwards, in southern Arabia.[2] Its links with other countries, whether through diplomacy, cultural exchange, trading enterprise, or military campaigns, made Aksum part and parcel of the international community of the late antiquity.[3] The language of ancient Aksum, Gəʿəz (sometimes referred to by scholars as Classical or Old Ethiopian), was not only a spoken language but was also used for writing, supporting the development of a unique Aksumite civilisation. At the same time, Greek inscriptions on coins and multilingual inscriptions on monumental stone structures (written in three scripts: Gəʿəz, Sabaean and Greek) attest to the early links of the Aksumite state with the Hellenistic Mediterranean and South Arabian cultural realms.[4]

The Aksumite kingdom brought together many cultural influences from a variety of sources and incorporated them into a unique, locally rooted civilisation that was known and respected far beyond the Red Sea region. For example, the third-century Persian religious leader Mani, founder of the Manichaean religion, is reported by his followers to have said, "There are four great kingdoms in the world. The first is the kingdom of the land of Babylon and of Persia. The second is the kingdom of the Romans. The third is the kingdom

1 CASSON, L. (1989), *The Periplus Maris Erythraei*. Text with Introduction, Translation, and Commentary (Princeton), 52–53.

2 HATKE, G. (2020), "The Aksumites in South Arabia: An African Diaspora of Late Antiquity", in: Preiser-Kapeller, J. et al., *Migration Histories of the Medieval Afroeurasian Transition Zone.* Aspects of Mobility between Africa, Asia and Europe, 300–1500 C.E. (Leiden), 291–326, here: 295–305.

3 PHILLIPSON, D.W. (2014), *Foundations of an African Civilization.* Aksum & the Northern Horn 1000 BC – AD 1300 (Woodbridge, Suffolk), 195–207.

4 PHILLIPSON (2014), *Foundations of an African* (see FN 3), 51–56.

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of the Aksumites. The fourth is the kingdom of Silis [Chinese?]. These four great kingdoms exist in the world; there is none that surpasses them".[5] This remark illustrates the extent to which Aksum's fame spread throughout the world in late antiquity.

Our knowledge of the arrival of Christianity in Aksum and its early development in the region is based on a variety of sources: written texts from outside the Aksumite kingdom, coins and other archaeological materials, and inscriptions from Aksum and related sites.

The primary account of the advent of Christianity to the Kingdom of Aksum is contained in the *Ecclesiastical History* by Rufinus of Aquileia. The larger part of this work contains a translation into Latin of a Greek *Ecclesiastical History* by Eusebius of Caesarea which covered developments up to the death of Constantine the Great in 337. Rufinus extended this account by adding two new chapters, devoted to the years 337–95. It is there (Book X, 9–11) that the story of Christianisation of Aksum is to be found.[6] Rufinus claims that his information derived from Aedesius of Tyre, who had been a prisoner and servant in the royal household at Aksum with Frumentius, the future bishop. There is however general agreement among scholars that Rufinus' work was largely based on a now-lost work written by another historian, Gelasius, Eusebius' successor as Bishop of Caesarea, in the 380s.[7] Rufinus' brief account was repeated by several fifth-century church historians, such as Socrates Scholasticus, Theodoret of Cyrrhus, and Sozomen. All of them wrote Greek works entitled *Ecclesiastical History* and their narratives have been directly derived from that of Rufinus. Remarkably, also one of the most important literary sources regarding Christianization of Aksum written in Gəʿəz, the *Homily in Honour of St. Frumentius*, has striking similarities to the narrative described by Rufinus. The text preserved in the fourteenth-century manuscripts appear to be based on Greek sources and composed in the Aksumite period, between the fourth and the seventh centuries.[8]

Rufinus suggests that Frumentius' initial activities were focused on the Greek-speaking merchants of the Roman Empire living in Aksum, some of whom were no doubt already Christian. His main task was probably to facilitate their trading activities and to enable them to practise their religion by providing them with places of worship. It has been speculated that these communities, which enjoyed the official protection of the state in the form of the young Frumentius, could become the cells of the gradual Christianisation of the local population.[9] However, it was not until the consecration of Frumentius and the conversion of the Aksumite court to Christianity that this process became historically tangible.

From the consecration of Frumentius as the first bishop, the Christian Church of Aksum, established as a single bishopric, was under the spiritual authority of the Patriarchate of Alexandria (which would later become the Coptic Orthodox Church). Therefore, only the Patriarch of Alexandria could appoint the bishop – or rather the metropolitan – who served as the head of the Aksumite Church and could ordain priests and deacons. This metropolitan, known locally as *abun* or *pappas*, was almost always a Coptic

5 GARDNER, I. (1995), *The Kephalaia of the Teacher.* The Edited Coptic Manichaean Texts in Translation with Commentary (Leiden), 197.

6 RUFINUS OF AQUILEIA (2016), *History of the Church* (tr. by P. R. Amidon) (Washington, D.C.), 394–96.

7 WALLRAFF, M. et al. (2018) (Eds.), *Ecclesiastical History.* The Extant Fragments with an Appendix Containing the Fragments from Dogmatic Writings written by GELASIUS OF CAESAREA (tr. by N. Marinides) (Berlin), xxxiii–xxxvii.

8 HAILE, G. (1979), "The Homily in Honour of St. Frumentius Bishop of Axum (EMML 1763 ff. 85v–86r)", in: *Analecta Bollandiana* 97/3, 309–18.

9 ESLER, P.F. (2019), *Ethiopian Christianity.* History, Theology, Practice (Waco, Texas), 34–35.

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monk sent from Egypt, and he was expressly forbidden to consecrate bishops or possible successors in the Aksumite kingdom itself. It seems that this custom had its advantages for both the Alexandrine patriarchs and the Aksumite kings. From the point of view of the Alexandrine patriarchs, it kept the Aksumite kingdom within the sphere of influence of the See of St Mark. The patriarch retained the right, established by Athanasius' consecration of Frumentius, to choose a bishop for the metropolitan see of Aksum. As far as the Aksumite ruler was concerned, this meant that he had as his local head of the Church a foreigner who was probably almost completely ignorant of local conditions and even of the language; in short, one whose interference in local politics was likely to be minimal and who could offer little rivalry to the king's decrees. It is not certain when this arrangement was institutionalised, but it was later 'established' by an apocryphal canon attributed to the Council of Nicaea.[10]

While the origins of Aksumite Christianity are well documented, there is much less reliable evidence for the subsequent development and organisation of the local church. Although the area in which Christian communities were established in the fourth century may initially have been confined to the major political centres of the state, the new faith did spread, reaching the coastal areas of the Red Sea on the one hand, and regions such as Wag and Lasta on the other. The influence of Christianity was also felt in more remote areas, especially around the Aksumite military outposts and along the trade routes. In particular, Aksumite pilgrims began to appear in Jerusalem as early as the fourth century, where Jerome of Stridon noted their presence.[11] Several fourth-century Aksumite coins recently found there and in Caesarea confirm these links.[12]

It can be assumed that, after an initial period in which Greek may have been the language of worship, during the next two centuries basic worship books, including the Psalter, must have been translated into Gəʿəz. The penetration of Christianity into non-urban areas most probably took place in the late fifth century. This period, in which Christianity begins to spread throughout the northern region of Ethiopia, is also known as the "second Christianisation". In traditional Ethiopian history, these developments are associated with the arrival of the so-called Nine Saints, monastic figures from the "Roman", i.e. Byzantine, Empire. They are credited with the establishment of many important monastic centres and churches, especially in the northern Ethiopian region of Tigray. Tradition emphasises their role as missionaries who spread the faith and translated the Bible and other important religious texts. The Nine Saints are also traditionally credited with the introduction of monasticism.

Several scholars have suggested that the arrival of the Nine Saints in the Aksumite Kingdom in late fifth-century was connected with the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon.[13] This council, held in 451, sought to resolve a major disagreement that had arisen in the first half of the fifth century between those who held that the human and divine natures of Jesus Christ were distinct and those who believed that his humanity and divinity were indistinguishable in a single nature. The Council condemned the second, miaphysite, position and its adherents were subsequently persecuted by the Byzantine state. The Aksumite kingdom, which had not accepted the decisions of this council, could potentially be an attractive destination for miaphysite Christians seeking refuge. It should

10 MUNRO-HAY, S.C. (1991), *Aksum.* An African Civilisation of Late Antiquity (Edinburgh), 204.
11 CERULLI, E. (1943), *Etiopi in Palestina.* Storia della comunità etiopica di Gerusalemme. Vol. I (Roma), 1.
12 BARKAY, R. (1981), "An Axumite Coin from Jerusalem", in: *Israel Numismatic Journal* 5, 57–59.
13 BRITA, A. (2007), "Nine Saints", in: *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica.* Vol. III, He–N, 1188–91, here: 1188.

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be noted that it was the compromise adopted at Chalcedon – i.e. the dyophysite position – that was the innovation; those who rejected it, the miaphysites, simply preferred to retain their earlier faith.

However, no contemporary source has been able to provide reliable evidence of the real purpose of the arrival of the Nine Saints or their identity. A number of hagiographical works written from the fourteenth century onwards, long after the events described in the book, provide a much later interpretation of the facts, transmitted against a medieval cultural background. The question of the origin of the Nine Saints has long been debated. According to their biographies, they came from different provinces of the Byzantine Empire: Rome, Constantinople, Cilicia, Antioch, Caesarea and Egypt.[14] However, it was generally accepted that they came from Syria. This assumption has been intensively debated and challenged by recent scholarship.[15]

By the early sixth century, during the reign of King Kaleb (throne name: ƎllämAṣbäḥa), who ruled from about 510 to 540, Aksum had become a major Christian power in the late ancient world.[16] The Byzantine traveller Cosmas Indicopleustes reports that in Aksum there were "innumerable churches with bishops, large Christian communities and many martyrs and hermit monks".[17] A clear manifestation of the role of Christianity as the state religion was the campaign which King Kaleb is reported to have launched against the local southern Arabian ruler Dhu Nuwas of Himyar in modern-day Yemen, who had converted to Judaism and embarked on a policy of expulsion of the local Christians in the 520s, culminating in the massacre of the major Christian communities in Zafar, Tihama and Najran.[18] The exceptional echo of the persecution in a large part of the Christian world caused the Byzantine Emperor Justin, through the Patriarch of Alexandria, to formally ask Kaleb, the king of Aksum, to launch a punitive military expedition against Himyar and provided him 70 ships to ferry the Aksumite forces across the Red Sea. The subsequent invasion finally ended with the complete defeat of the Himyarite king and the conquest of South Arabia by the Aksumites in 525, who then governed it for some time. While staying in Yemen, Kaleb rebuilt and constructed new churches in the most important cities of Himyar.[19] This period of intervention in South Arabia is characterized by a policy of appointing sympathetic Christian members of the local elite to rule Ḥimyar on behalf of Aksum, supported by Aksumite troops and a cadre of Aksumite officials.

Kaleb's reign had a lasting impact on the Aksumite kingdom and the fate of Christianity in the larger region. Although Aksumite rule of Himyar officially ended at some point between 531 and 540, Aksumites maintained a significant presence in South Arabia.[20] Importantly, Kaleb considerably strengthened Aksumite ties with the Christian world

14 BRITA (2007), "Nine Saints" (see FN 13).

15 Cf. MARRASSINI, P. (1990), "Some Considerations on the Problem of the 'Syriac Influences' on Aksumite Ethiopia", in: *Journal of Ethiopian Studies* 23, 35–46.

16 FIACCADORI, G. (2007), "Kaleb", in: *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*. Vol. III, He–N, 329–32.

17 WOLSKA-CONUS, W. (1968) (Ed. and trans.), *Topographie Chrétienne.* Introduction, Texte Critique, Illustration, Traduction et Notes written by COSMAS INDICOPLEUSTES. Vol. 1 (Paris), 504–5.

18 HATKE, G. (2020), "The Aksumites in South Arabia: An African Diaspora of Late Antiquity" in: Preiser-Kapeller, J. et al., *Migration Histories of the Medieval Afroeurasian Transition Zone.* Aspects of Mobility between Africa, Asia and Europe, 300–1500 C.E. (Leiden), 291–326, here: 308.

19 For more details about the campaign, see BOWERSOCK, G.W. (2013), *The Throne of Adulis.* Red Sea Wars on the Eve of Islam (Oxford).

20 HATKE (2020), "The Aksumites in South Arabia" (see FN 18), 316–21.

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beyond its borders.[21] According to several sources, after his return to Aksum, Kaleb sent his crown to Patriarch John III of Jerusalem to suspend on the Holy Sepulchre as a thanksgiving for his victory. Furthermore, he is said to have abdicated in order to end his life as a hermit next to his monastic mentor, *abba* Pantalewon (who is considered to be one of the Nine Saints), in a mountainous area closed to Aksum.[22] The figure of Kaleb, who is considered a saint in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, perfectly exemplifies what became a dominant feature of Aksumite – and later on Ethiopian – Christian monarchy, namely an idealized synthesis of absolutist power and piety rooted in monastic ethos.

The historical links between the Christian Aksumite kingdom and both Egypt and the Roman Empire as a whole are widely recognised and documented. However, the kingdom's connections with southern Arabia have often escaped scholarly attention. These connections, epitomised by the figure of King Kaleb, were instrumental in shaping the self-perception of the Aksumite kingdom, as well as the succession of Christian states that emerged in its place. Moreover, the narrative of King Kaleb's expedition to southern Arabia became a significant narrative that was disseminated worldwide in the early modern period. In the discussion that follows, I aim to elucidate this aspect of the story, highlighting its reception in sixteenth-century world Christianity.

3. Reimagining King Kaleb: Global Circulation of a Late Antique Aksumite Topos in the Early Modern World

By the seventh century, the power of the Aksumite kingdom had weakened considerably.[23] Aksum's role in the Red Sea trade was long thought to have suffered from the political upheavals caused by the expansion of the Muslim empire in Arabia, the eastern Mediterranean and Egypt in the 640s. Despite the decline of Aksum, however, Christian states persisted in the Ethiopian and Eritrean highlands. Monasteries, in particular, survived the political upheavals and continued to function. Monastic networks of small, autonomous centres were more resilient to historical disruption. They were able to preserve the distinct Christian Aksumite identity that became the basis for the revival of Christian kingship in the Middle Ages.

This specific Aksumite identity found its most profound articulation in the highly influential medieval treaties *Kəbrä Nägäśt* ("Glory [or Nobility] of the Kings")[24] that substantiated the claim of *translatio imperii* from ancient Israel to Aksum in a twofold way. Firstly, by creating a genealogical link of the Aksumite monarchy with Solomon, King of Israel, and the Queen of Sheba. And secondly, by putting forward an elaborate narrative about the transfer of the Ark of the Covenant from Jerusalem to Aksum, which in its turn was interpreted as a visible sign of the divine election of Ethiopians as God's new chosen people. Consequently, the idea of the superiority of the Christian Ethiopian kingship was inseparably bound to the monarch's claim for Zion, i.e. the Ark of the Covenant preserved

21 Cf. PAULAU, S. (2022), "Introduction: Placing Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity into a Global Context" in: Paulau, S./ Tamcke, M. (Eds.), *Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity in a Global Context.* Entanglements and Disconnections (Leiden), 1–13, here: 1–3.

22 FIACCADORI, G. (2007), "Kaleb", in: *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*. Vol. III, He–N, 329–32, here: 330.

23 LUSINI, G. (2022), "The Decline and Collapse of the Kingdom of Aksum (6th–7th CE): An Environmental Disaster or the End of a Political Process?" in: Gehler, M. et al. (Eds.), *The End of Empires* (Wiesbaden), 321–36.

24 MARRASSINI, P. (2007), "Kebrä Nägäst", in: *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* Vol. III, He–N, 364–68.

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in, and ultimately identified with, Aksum. Thus, even after its political decline in the seventh century, Aksum remained an important spiritual and symbolic centre of Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa.

Moreover, the story of King Kaleb's campaign against Himyar plays central role in the *Kəbrä Nägäśt*. The idea of unity in faith that is to be achieved by Ethiopian and "Roman" (i.e. Byzantine) Emperors prior to the last battle against the "enemies of God" and advent of Christ is illustrated there with help of King Kaleb's military expedition to South Arabia, which was performed with help of the Byzantine ruler. Similar prophecies became embedded in other Ethiopian Christians apocalyptic texts, such as the *Third Miracle of Saint Victor* (*Śaləs Täʾammər zä-Qəddus Fiqtor*)[25] and *Visions of Shenute* (*Raʾəyä Sinoda*).[26] These narratives, showcasing Kaleb as a defender of the faith, reinforced the notion of a divinely ordained Ethiopian Christian kingdom. Thus, in the Ethiopian Christian consciousness, the figure of King Kaleb assumed a central role.

In the early sixteenth century, the legacy of King Kaleb emerged as a cornerstone in the diplomatic engagements between Ethiopia and the Latin Christian realm. The dissolution of the Eastern Roman Empire necessitated a profound re-assessment of the eschatological traditions linked to Kaleb and his affiliations with the Eastern Roman Empire. The initial overtures between Ethiopia and Portugal, particularly illuminated through the correspondence between Queen Ǝleni and King Manuel in 1509, revealed a nuanced reinterpretation of these traditions within the milieu of an evolving Christian geopolitical landscape.[27] It was within this context that the conceptual framework shifted: the locus of eschatological alliances transitioned from the emperors of the Eastern Roman Empire to the dominions of the Roman Church.

This paradigmatic shift is further evidenced in the communications of King Ləbnä Dəngəl with Pope Clemens VII in the 1520s.[28] These exchanges not only underscored the religious and political significance of Kaleb's narrative but also mirrored the intricate dynamics shaping the Christian world during this period. Through these diplomatic interactions, Kaleb's legacy was not merely revisited but redefined, playing a pivotal role in the international diplomatic sphere and contributing to the reshaping of Christian identities and alliances. The enduring impact of Kaleb's story thus illustrates a remarkable example of how historical narratives can influence the course of international relations and the collective self-understanding of societies.

The narratives surrounding King Kaleb enjoyed widespread dissemination also throughout the Eastern Christian world, distinguished not by their apocalyptic content but rather through hagiographic literature. This underscores the transmission of King Kaleb's story through a variety of mediums and traditions, highlighting its broad appeal and significance across different Christian communities. The corpus of materials related to King Kaleb's campaign to South Arabia includes both first-hand accounts and texts that have undergone literary embellishment, available in languages such as Arabic, Syriac,

25 LITTMANN, E. (1903), "Abyssinian Apocalypses", in: *AJSL* 19/2, 83–95.

26 GROHMANN, A. (1913), „Die im Äthiopischen, Arabischen und Koptischen erhaltenen Visionen Apa Schenute's von Atripe. I. Die im Äthiopischen erhaltenen Visionen", in: *ZDMG* 67, 187–267.

27 *Legatio magni Indorum Imperatoris Presbyteri Ioannis, ad Emanuelem Lusitaniae Regem, Anno Domini. M. D. XIII*, Antwerpen 1532.

28 *Legatio David Aethiopiae Regis ad sanctiss. D. N. Clementem Papam VII una cum obedientia eidem sanctiss. D. N. praestita*, Bononiae 1533.

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Greek, and Gəʿəz.[29] Among the most noteworthy of these texts is the Greek hagiographical work, the *Martyrdom of Arethas*, which chronicles the life and trials of Arethas, the presumed leader of the community in Najran. This text not only survived in Arabic and Gəʿəz versions, but has also been translated into several other languages pertinent to the Christian East, including Armenian, Georgian, and Old Slavonic. The *Martyrdom of Arethas* thus serves as a pivotal example of the transregional reverence for King Kaleb, illustrating the intercultural exchange of religious narratives and the shared heritage among Eastern Christian communities.

Thanks to this hagiographic text, the King Kaleb (known also as Elezvoi and Elesbaan; from Greek Ἐλεσβάς, Ἐλέσβααν) emerged as a notable figure in the Eastern Christian world. The influence of Aksumite King Kaleb on early modern Russia, particularly on Ivan the Terrible, stands out as a testament to the global reach of historical narratives and their power to shape leadership ideals across continents and epochs. King Kaleb of Aksum, known for his military campaigns and Christian zeal, emerges as a figure of emulation for Ivan the Terrible, especially in the context of the latter's military campaigns to Kazan in 1552. This cross-cultural admiration underscores the ways in which the legacy of African leadership influenced Russian imperial strategies and religious rhetoric.

The connection between King Kaleb and Ivan the Terrible is vividly illustrated in Russian historical and literary sources, which highlight how Ivan IV saw in Kaleb not just a military leader but also a moral and spiritual exemplar. In the *Kazan Chronicle*, Ivan's campaign against Kazan is framed in a narrative that draws explicit parallels with Kaleb's actions. According to this text, the tsar marched "against the godless and pagan Kazan [...] to avenge the blood of Christians, just as Elizvoi, the Ethiopian king, [did] on the Jewish ruler Dunas [i.e. Dhu Nuwas] of Omir"[30]. This passage not only highlights the religious fervour motivating Ivan's campaign but also situates Kaleb as a historical precedent for such a conquest, suggesting a divine justification and historical continuity in the defence of Christianity.

Furthermore, Ivan IV's letter to the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery elevates King Kaleb's austere lifestyle to an exemplar of asceticism worthy of emulation. Ivan IV asks, "And Elizvoi, the Ethiopian king, what kind of severe life did he lead?".[31] This rhetorical question serves not only to highlight Kaleb's piety and self-discipline but also to position these virtues as integral to the leadership and moral authority that Ivan sought to embody in his rule.

This adaptation of Kaleb's story in the Russian context underscores the transcultural appeal and adaptability of his narrative within various Christian traditions. It reveals the intricate web of historical narratives that transcend geographical and cultural boundaries, enriching our understanding of how historical figures are appropriated and idealized in contexts far removed from their original settings.

The narrative of King Kaleb reached a global audience through its inclusion into Latin ecclesiastical tradition in the sixteenth century. It was significantly bolstered by the influential work of Cardinal Cesare Baronio, a renowned ecclesiastical scholar and church

29 Bausi, A. (2007), "Nagrān", in: *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* Vol. III, He–N, 1114–16, here: 1115.

30 "Царь идет на безбожную и поганую Казань […] мстити крови христианския, яко Елизвои Ефиопский царь на Омирского князя Дунаса жидовина". *Kazanskaja Istorija*, chapter 49. Critical edition of the work: http://lib.pushkinskijdom.ru/Default.aspx?tabid=5148 (accessed: 11.02.2024).

31 "А Елизвой, царь Эфиопский, какой суровой жизнью жил?". *Poslanie v Kirillo-Belozerskij monastyr'*. Critical edition of the text: http://lib.pushkinskijdom.ru/Default.aspx?tabid=9118 (accessed: 11.02.2024).

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historian. In his magnum opus, the *Annales Ecclesiastici*, and notably within his edition of the *Roman Martyrology*, Cardinal Cesare Baronio highlighted Kaleb's Christian zeal and his military campaign against the Jewish kingdom in South Arabia, which was interpreted as a defence of the Christian faith.

Baronio's inclusion of Kaleb as Saint Elesbaan in the *Roman Martyrology* in 1586 elevated the Aksumite king's profile, integrating him into the liturgical life of the Catholic Church.[32] His feast day was to be celebrated on 27 October. This act of ecclesiastical recognition resonated profoundly within the Portuguese empire, where the pursuit of Christian orthodoxy was intertwined with imperial expansion. Portugal, at the forefront of European exploration and colonization during the sixteenth century, found in Saint Elesbaan a figure that mirrored its own endeavours to spread Christianity and establish dominion over new lands.[33]

In regions extending from Brazil to Goa, the cult of Saint Elesbaan took root, embodying the ideals of Christian kingship and missionary zeal. This adoption was facilitated by the syncretic nature of colonial religious practice, where local traditions and the universalist claims of Christianity were woven together. Saint Elesbaan became a symbol of divine favour for rulership, a protector of the faith, and a celestial intercessor for colonial enterprises that often sailed under the banner of a missionary ethos.

The figure of Saint Elesbaan, propagated through the ecclesiastical authority of Baronio's works, served as a bridge between the ancient Christian kingdom of Aksum and the modern ambitions of the Portuguese empire. It illustrated the enduring power of hagiography to shape political narratives and provided a heavenly patron for colonial rulers and missionaries alike. Through the celebration of his feast and the invocation of his name, the memory of King Kaleb was enshrined within the spiritual heritage of Portugal and its colonies, leaving an indelible mark on the religious landscape of the early modern Atlantic world.

In sum, the sixteenth century marked a period of global circulation for the story of King Kaleb. From its roots in the Aksumite Christian tradition, the story transcended regional boundaries and found resonance in different Christian contexts. Whether in diplomatic communications, liturgical commemorations, or military justifications, the legacy of Kaleb in this period exemplifies the transtemporal and transcontinental influence of late antique narratives and early south-south links in shaping the course of world Christianity.

4. Conclusion

The paper has aimed to recalibrate the traditional historiographical focus, which often emphasizes the European Christian experience, by shedding light on the south-south interactions that shaped early Christianity. The transtemporal perspective adopted here underscores the significance of the late antique period in the wider history of Christianity, particularly as it relates to the formative interactions between African and Arabian Christian communities.

32 BARONIO, C. (1586), *Martyrologium Romanvm* (Rome), 486.

33 VINCENT, B. (2014), "Les empires ibériques et les saints noirs: les exemples d'Elesbaan et d'Iphigénie", in: Garavaglia, J.C./ Poloni-Simard, J./ Rivière, G. (Eds.), *Au miroir de l'anthropologie historique*. Mélanges offerts à Nathan Wachtel (Rennes). http://books.openedition.org/pur/43735 (accessed: 11.02.2024).

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The study of the trans-regional religious entanglements of the Aksumite kingdom has revealed a complex tapestry of south-south links that have been central to the historical and theological developments of world Christianity since late antiquity. This paper has shown that Aksum's extensive trade networks across the Red Sea and Mediterranean regions were instrumental in spreading Christianity and integrating the kingdom into the wider Christian world.

In particular, the reign of King Kaleb marks a turning point for the Aksumite kingdom as its influence extended into southern Arabia. The religiously motivated military campaigns against the Himyarite kingdom were understood not merely as territorial conquests, but rather as expressions of the Aksumite commitment to defending and spreading the Christian faith.

The later global reception of the Aksumite expansion into southern Arabia, particularly through the figure of King Kaleb, highlights the influence of these early south-south links across geographical and temporal boundaries. These reception processes, illustrated in the paper using the example of the sixteenth century, offer insights into the formation of an early modern global Christian identity. The legacy of the Christian Aksumite Kingdom, therefore, is not confined to the annals of late antiquity but extends into the fabric of modern Christian thought and practice. Of particular importance is the fact that the Aksumite campaign in southern Arabia was interpreted in both Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox contexts as an exemplary Christian colonial endeavour. As such, it was used to legitimise both Portuguese and Russian colonial projects in the sixteenth century – the consequences of which continue to shape our world today.

In advocating for a methodological reorientation, this paper has highlighted the importance of integrating *longue durée* developments into the study of world Christianity. By doing so, it challenges conventional historical periodization, offering a more holistic and interconnected view of the past. The Aksumite Kingdom, through its sophisticated engagement with surrounding regions, exemplifies the dynamic and interconnected nature of history. It invites scholars to consider the enduring impact of early south-south links and their significance in the ongoing narrative of world Christianity.

Abstract

The paper introduces a transtemporal approach to the study of early south-south links in the history of world Christianity. By focusing on the Aksumite Kingdom, an African Christian civilization of late antiquity, and its transregional entanglements in the Mediterranean and Red Sea regions the study challenges conventional historiographical boundaries and argues for a more holistic and interconnected view of the past that acknowledges the enduring impact of early south-south connections on the later history of Christianity. In particular, the legacy of the early African-South Arabian interactions is shown to extend far beyond late antiquity, influencing global early modern Christian thought and legitimizing Portuguese and Russian colonial projects in the sixteenth century that continue to shape our world today.

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Das aksumitische Königreich und die weitere christliche Welt: Eine transtemporale Perspektive auf frühe Süd-Süd-Verbindungen in der Geschichte des Weltchristentums

Der Beitrag führt einen transtemporalen Ansatz zur Untersuchung der frühen Süd-Süd-Verbindungen in der Geschichte des Weltchristentums ein. Durch die Fokussierung auf das Aksumitische Königreich, eine afrikanisch- christliche Zivilisation der Spätantike, und seine transregionalen Verflechtungen in der Welt des Mittelmeers und des Roten Meers stellt die Studie konventionelle historiographische Grenzen in Frage. Sie plädiert für eine ganzheitlichere und vernetztere Sicht auf die Vergangenheit, die die andauernden Auswirkungen früher Süd-Süd-Verbindungen auf die spätere Geschichte des Christentums anerkennt. Insbesondere wird gezeigt, dass das Erbe der frühen afrikanisch-südarabischen Interaktionen weit über die Spätantike hinausreicht, indem sie das frühmoderne globale christliche Denken beeinflusst sowie portugiesische und russische Kolonialprojekte im 16. Jahrhundert legitimiert, die unsere Welt bis heute prägen.

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Transatlantic Ethiopianism: Ethiopia as a Symbol of Redemption and Independency Among Black Christians on Both Sides of the Atlantic

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Pre-remarks: Ethiopia and Ethiopianism in the Context of World Christianity Studies

Ethiopia plays a crucial role in the History of World Christianity in two different respects. On the one hand, as a classical paradigm of a very ancient and autonomous type of African Christianity predating European colonialism and Western missionary activities — with specific traditions not found in other branches of the contemporaneous Christian world. On the other hand, it became important as a stimulus and point of reference for a very modern movement of emancipation among black Christians on both sides of the Atlantic in 19th and 20th centuries. I am referring to the widespread and multifaceted movement usually labelled (and labelling itself) as "Ethiopianism" — which was an important factor in the rise and transatlantic networking of independent black Christian communities in the past two centuries.

Unfortunately, in traditional historiography, both aspects are usually dealt with separately. Classical Ethiopianist studies have usually been limited primarily to philological research and are less interested in (and sometimes even unaware of) the enormous relevance of Ethiopia for the formation of modern African Christianity. Scholars of contemporary World Christianity, on the other hand, often have only restricted knowledge of the East African country and its unique Christian legacy. What is needed, therefore, is an integrated approach — paying proper attention both to Christian Ethiopia in its historical context and to the role it later played in the imagination of African believers as a symbol of both political and religious independency. This essay deals with various aspects of the Ethiopianist discourse of 19th and early 20th century and its ramifications in different regions and fields of religious, social and political life.

I. A Letter of King Menelik II to an European Missionary (1896)

I would like to begin with a letter sent in February 1896 by "Menelik [II.] King of Abyssinia" to "a European Missionary". Obviously, this missionary — probably an Anglican from Great Britain — had intended to go to Ethiopia to preach the Gospel there. Quite remarkably, an English translation of this letter was printed in a West African journal (The Lagos Standard, June 17, 1896). There is no need for European missionaries, says the African monarch in his epistle, to come to Ethiopia because his kingdom is already a

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Christian country. And differently from the people of Europe who only know a "mutilated gospel", Ethiopian believers follow "the true Gospel" — by paying proper attention both to the Old and the New Testament. In addition, the Ethiopian king himself claims responsibility for Christian missions in Africa: "I am having it taught in Africa". If the European missionaries want to spread the Gospel they can do so in other regions: "Teach it in Europe and Asia". Especially in Europe much work still needs to be done: "What you need is to return to our God to observe all his ordinances". In addition, the European Jews should be treated better. There is no justification to harass them ("Our Lord Jesus forgave them on the cross"). "You, at least", the African monarch admonishes the European Christians, "do not persecute them"[1].

There are some debates about the authenticity of this letter.[2] In the context of our study, however, these doubts are ultimately irrelevant. Because what this letter — printed in a "black" West African periodical and read by an educated African audience — demonstrates is how Ethiopia was looked at from the outside: as a Christian (and "black") nation in Africa, ecclesiastically and politically independent and both willing and able to make the task of christianizing the continent their own commitment — and not to leave it to European missionaries.

At the same time, King Menelik was the Ethiopian emperor who had succeeded in this very year 1896 – at the peak of Western colonialism and imperialism — in overcoming and expelling an invading Italian army from his territory. Adwa, the place where the Italian invaders had suffered a crushing defeat, subsequently became the symbol of a great "African victory – attained through unity, brilliance, determination, perseverance and great sacrifice of the Ethiopian people" (as it is written on a memorial stone at the site). A map of colonial Africa around 1900 shows the continent divided among various rivaling European powers usually marked in different colors — British, French, Portuguese, and Belgian, Italian and German (as colonial newcomers). There are only two countries in sub-Saharan Africa not marked in one of the colonial colors — and both have been "Christian" nations: the independent republic of Liberia, on the one hand, the country of "liberty", founded in 1847 as a home for African American returnees from the United States; and Ethiopia, on the other hand, site of an ancient African Church, and free of colonial occupation[3]. The very name of Ethiopia – being black, Christian and independent – thus was to gain a magical significance. In late 19th and early 20th centuries, it became a crucial point of reference for various movements of emancipation among black people on *both* sides of the Atlantic and a symbol of religious and political independence.

One prominent (and intensively explored) example had been the 'Ethiopian Church' founded in 1892 in South African Pretoria by the former Methodist pastor Mangena Mokone[4]. He broke with the white missionaries because they denied respect and equal treatment to the ordained native ministers. His 'Ethiopian Church' was not the first

1 Reprinted in: KOSCHORKE, K. et al. (2016) (Eds.), *Discourses of Indigenous Christian Elites in Colonial Societies in Asia and Africa around 1900* (Wiesbaden), 325f. This collection includes also another letter of Menelik (ibid, p. 324f) reprinted in the West African Press ('The Lagos Standard', June 17, 1896). Here Abyssinia is designated as "the only Christian kingdom in Africa" and Menelik portrayed "as a true Christian" who took arms against the Italian invaders only after "having exhausted all means of conciliation" and trying to avoid "any criminal effusion of Christian blood".

2 Prof. Wolbert Smidt (Mekele University, Ethiopia), for example, considers the letter cited here (in contrast to others) to be spurious (email of February 14, 2019, and May 10, 2020).

3 See map 'Colonial Africa around 1900' (Appendix, on p. 263)

4 See fig. 9 (Appendix, on p. 262)

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mission-independent black Church under African leadership in the region. But it was the first one denominating itself as "Ethiopian" — thus serving as an example in later years for many other African-led churches and movements labelling themselves as "Ethiopian". In the following years South Africa became a hotspot of Ethiopianism. Similar movements also arose in other parts of Africa — first independently of each other, but later also increasingly interconnected. Especially in the early years, people often had only very vague ideas about this miraculous country "Ethiopia" – where it was located on a map, who the people living there were etc. But, in any case, for them "Ethiopia" was a symbol of hope and a promise of salvation – comparable to the heavenly "Jerusalem" in biblical tradition.

II. Elements of the "Ethiopian Discourse"

As such this "Ethiopian discourse", however, is much older[5]. It originated towards the end of 18th century among the African Protestant diaspora (mostly of enslaved Blacks) in the Americas (New England, Caribbean) from where it spread in the course of 19th century to Western and Southern Africa (and other places). Since 16th century the name of Ethiopia had served as a generic term for Africa. "Ethiopian" was used interchangeably with "African" or "black" and applied to all people of African descent. In African debates in the 1890s, the term "possessed both a literal reference, to contemporary Abyssinia, the one African state not yet under colonial rule, and a metaphorical one, to an undifferentiated biblical Africa", related to a glorious past and an ancient kingdom already Christian at a time when Europe was sunk in paganism. "In practice, the two references shaded into one another"[6].

Biblical References

This "Ethiopian discourse" contained various elements and led to manifold experiments, with different results. Highly important were certain biblical references that were repeated again and again. The most relevant included, inter alia,

– 1Kings 10/ 2Chronicles 9: the story of the encounter of King Solomon and the Queen of Saba, enriched with numerous legends. This could already be seen in the Ethiopian national epos 'Kebra Nagast' of the 13th/14th centuries, where two sons

5 On the "Ethiopian discourse" and rise of the Ethiopianist movement in general see: KALU, O.U. (2005), "Ethiopianism in African Christianity", in: Kalu, O.U. (Ed*.), African Christianity*: An African Story (Pretoria; 258–277); CAMPBELL, J.T. (1998), *Songs of Zion*. The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa (Chapel Hill/ London); KAMPHAUSEN, E. (2002), „Äthiopien als Symbol kirchlicher und politischer Unabhängigkeit", in: Koschorke, K. (Ed.), *Transcontinental Links in the History of Non-Western Christianity* (Wiesbaden; 293–314); KAMPHAUSEN, E. (1976), *Anfänge der kirchlichen Unabhängigkeitsbewegung in Südafrika*. Geschichte und Theologie der Äthiopischen Bewegung, 1872–1912 (Bern/ Frankfurt a.M.); BARNES, A. (2018), "The Christian Black Atlantic. African Americans, Ethiopianism, and Christian Newspapers in Africa", in: Koschorke, K. et al. (Eds.), *"To Give Publicity to our Thoughts"*. Journals of Asian and African Christians Around 1900 and the Making of a Transregional Indigenous-Christian Public Sphere (Wiesbaden; 345–362); HANCILES, J. (2014), "The Black Atlantic and the Shaping of African Christianity, 1820–1920", in: Koschorke, K./ Hermann, A. (Eds.), *Polycentric Structures in the History of World Christianity* (Wiesbaden; 29–50).

6 CAMPBELL (1998), *Songs of Zion* (see FN 5), 119; cf. KAMPHAUSEN (2002), "Äthiopien als Symbol" (see FN 5), 293ff.

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are mentioned: not only Menelik I., portrayed as the ancestor of the governing 'Solomonic dynasty' in Ethiopia, but also a younger — and as such inferior — brother, presented as progenitor of the "Kings of Rum" (i.e. Byzantium), thus serving as symbol of occidental Christianity;
- Acts 8,26-40: the conversion of the Ethiopian chamberlain – often quoted as proof that Africa responded to the call of God prior to the arrival of European Christianity;
- Marc 15,21: African figures like Simon of Cyrene who helped Christ bear his cross to Calvary;
- 1Peter 2,9: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation"; and several other biblical texts.

Most important, however, was *Psalm 68, 31* (as translated in the King James Bible of 1611): "Princes come out of Egypt, Ethiopia stretches forth her hands unto God". This prophecy was understood as promise of salvation to all people of African descent. It exerted a profound influence on the emerging black Christianity in British Colonial America who, particularly since the Second Awakening in late 18th century, felt attracted to evangelical preaching. By most accounts, however, blacks understood the evangelical message very differently from whites. "The admixture of biblical faith and black religiosity fostered a new identity consciousness and stimulated religious protest that triggered the emergence of independent African denominations."[7] Increasingly, Psalm 68:31 became the watchword of a growing variety of African led movements of emancipation in the Atlantic world.

Literary Ethiopianism

Initially, Ethiopianist beliefs were diffused primarily through sermons by black preachers (such as Richard Allen), through spirituals, prayers and hymns in segregated worship or secret meetings on the cotton plantations, and other means of oral transmission. The early 19th century then saw also the beginnings of literary Ethiopianism by black authors in North America. Prominent examples are two publications in the year 1829:

- The "*Ethiopian Manifesto*", by Robert Alexander Young (New York); and the
- "*Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World*", *by* David Walker (Boston).

Walkers "Appeal" was directed "To the Coloured Citizens of the World, but in Particular, and Very Expressively, to Those of the United States of America". Young's pamphlet was addressed to his "fellow Ethiopians" and the "whole people of Ethiopia". He foretold the coming of a prophetic liberator of the African "race" whose appearance he described in great detail. The subsequent history of the "Ethiopian Prophecy in Black

7 HANCILES, J. (2005), "Back to Africa: White Abolitionist and Black Missionaries", in: Kalu, O.U. (Ed.), *African Christianity*: An African Story (Pretoria; 191–216), 208f.

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American Letters" - title of a monograph by Roy Kay in 2011 – have been intensively studied and attracted increasing attention[8].

Establishment of Black Churches

Already in 1783 a 'First Ethiopian Baptist Church' had already been established in Kingston (Jamaica), founded by George Liele (c. 1750-1830), a former slave and preacher from Savannah (Georgia). The new community consisted largely of freed slaves from the United States. Soon it became the nucleus of an island-wide network of black churches. Liele's ministry also contributed significantly to the establishment of a "three-cornered link" between black people "in Kingston, London and Freetown" (Sierra Leone)[9].

In 1816, the 'African Methodist Episcopal Church' (AME) was founded in Philaldelphia (US) by Richard Allen (1760-1831), born as a slave and a former Methodist preacher who later became the first bishop of the AME Church. The AME Church was the oldest independent church under black leadership in the US, with a wide dissemination not only in North America and the Carribean but beyond. Its first outposts in West Africa had existed since the 1820s/1850s. The Church has been in South Africa since 1896. Around 1906 the AME Church counted a membership of about 500 000 people in various regions. The AME's place in God's salvation history has been described in an AME publication on Allen's *Ethiopians* in these words:

> "We believe that as God prepared Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt, so he also prepared Richard Allen, and established the A.M.E. Church. First – to demonstrate to the world the capacity of the Negro races of self-government and intellectual development. Second – to carry the Gospel to the emancipated Freedmen of the South. Third – to redeem Africa, our Fatherland"[10].

In 1892, in Pretoria, South Africa the 'Ethiopian Church' was established by the former Methodist preacher Mangena Mokone. As already mentioned, it inspired many other movements under African leadership labelling themselves as "Ethiopian". Its fusion with the AME Church in 1896 transformed the AME into a really transcontinental Black Church.

Also within the historic mission churches "Ethiopian" associations were established. So, for example, again in South Africa, the 'Order of Ethiopia (*Ibanda lase Tiyopia*)' was founded in 1900 by James Mata Dwane as a semi-autonomous African-led group within the Anglican Church. Later (in 1999) it was renamed as 'Ethiopian Episcopal Church'.

8 KAY, R. (2011), *The Ethiopian Prophecy in Black American Letters* (Gainsville, FL); BROOKS, J./ SAILLANT, J. (2002), *"Face Zion Forward".* First Writers of the Black Atlantic, 1785–1798 (Lebanon, NH); CATRON, J.W. (2016), *Embracing Protestantism*. Black Identities in the Atlantic World (Gainesville, FL etc.), 208f.

9 HANCILES (2014), "Black Atlantic" (see FN 5), 42; RUSSELL, H.O. (2000), *The Missionary Outreach of the West Indian Church*. Jamaican Baptist Missions to West Africa in the 19th Century (New York/ Bern etc.), 9–23.

10 THOMPSON, W. (1903), "The Missionary Work of the AME Church, as it Relates to Africa", in: *AME Church Review* 20/1, 58–59. – On the AME in general, see: CAMPBELL (1998), *Songs of Zion* (see FN 5), passim; ENGEL, E. (2015), *Encountering Empire.* African American Missionaries in Colonial Africa, 1900–1939 (Stuttgart); KAMPHAUSEN (1976), *Anfänge* (see FN 5), 149–280.

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Remigration, Back-to-Africa Movements

There had been successive waves of Back-to-Africa movements among black Christians in the Americas since 18th century[11]. In the US, this movement reached a peak in the last quarter of the 19th century, after the end of the reconstruction period in 1877. Slavery had been abolished, but full rights for freedmen were still denied. The continued discrimination against African Americans as second-class citizens aroused bitter criticism. One prominent leader of the Back-to-Africa movement was the AME bishop Henry Turner (1834-1915). Other representatives of the black Christian community in the US, like Booker T. Washington (1856-1915), however, struggled for integration and equal rights of colored people in the given political context.

But there were clearly also earlier significant initiatives for a return to Africa. One of the most significant was the famous *Sierra Leone* experiment in 1792 – highly important for, inter alia, establishing for the first time a considerable black Protestant presence on the West African coast. By the 1780s, says African historian Adrian Hastings, "African Protestant Christianity was … very much a reality. The one place it did not exist was in Africa" - apart from some trading stations of the Dutch, English and Danes along the West African Coast. On the other side of the Atlantic, however, and especially in Nova Scotia (in modern-day Canada), there were countless freed blacks, many of whom had previously been in British service, who – with the Bible as their Freedom Charter in hand – wanted to return to Africa. And despite all setbacks and unfulfilled expectations, this initiative led in 1792 to the founding of a Christian settlement in Sierra Leone.[12] The newly-established port city Freetown was, from its beginning, a Christian city; and the emerging polyglot black elite of Sierra Leone subsequently would serve as a bridge in the further course of the Christianization of West Africa. "In this way, in November 1792 the first Protestant church in tropical Africa was established" — as the result of an African American initiative from the other side of the Atlantic. "It was a ready made African church, with its own structures and leadership."[13]

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11 HANCILES (2005), "Back to Africa" (see FN 7), 191–216); CAMPBELL (1998), *Songs of Zion* (see FN 5), 54–138; REDKEY, E.S. (1969), *Black Exodus*. Black Nationalist and Back-to-Africa Movements, 1890–1910 (New Haven, CT); PRAH, K.K. (2012) (Ed.), *Back to Africa*: The ideology and practice of the African returnee phenomenon from the Caribbean and North-America to Africa (Rondebosch, South Africa); PRAH, K.K. (Ed.) (2009), *Afro-Brazilian Returnees and their Communities*. Vol. 1 (Cape Town/ South Africa); OLDFIELD, J.R. (1990), *Alexander Crummel (1819–1898) and the Creation of an African-American Church in Liberia* (Lewiston etc). Cf. also: GRAY, R. (1990), *Black Christians and White Missionaries* (New Haven/ London) (on Black Catholic transatlantic networks in 18th century); SENSBACH, J.F. (2006), *Rebecca's Revival.* Creating Black Christianity in the Atlantic World (Cambridge, MA/ London, UK) (on Afro-Moravian connections in 18th century).

12 HASTINGS, A. (1994), *The Church in Africa 1450–1950* (Oxford), 177; ibid. 181: "Thus in 1792 the already existing African, English-speaking, Protestant society which had come into existence in diaspora over the preceding half-century established a foothold in Africa"; WALLS, A. (1999), "Sierra Leone, Afroamerican Remigration and the Beginnings of Protestantism in West Africa", in: Koschorke, K. (Ed.), *Transcontinental Links in the History of Non-Western Christianity* (Wiesbaden; 45–56); SANNEH, L., *Abolitionists abroad*. American Blacks and the Making of Modern West Africa (Cambridge/ London); HANCILES (2014), "Black Atlantic" (see FN 5), 29–50; WALKER, J.W.S.G. (1993), *The Black Loyalists*. The Search for a Promised Land in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone, 1783–1870 (Toronto etc.); CAMPBELL, C.M. (1993), *Back to Africa*. Georg Ross and the Maroons: From Nova Scotia to Sierra Leone (Trenton, NJ); KOPYTOFF, J.H. (1965), *A Preface to Modern Nigeria*: The Sierra Leoneans in the Yoruba, 1830–1890 (Madison).

13 WALLS, A. (1999), "Sierra Leone, Afroamerican Remigration and the Beginnings of Protestantism in West Africa (18th–19th Centuries)", in: Koschorke, K. (Ed.), *Transkontinentale Beziehungen in der Geschichte des*

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In the debates about the Sierra Leone experiment, too, Psalm 68:31 played a stimulating role. In an article about the religion of the Nova Scotia returnees Andrew Walls writes: "Sierra Leone was to be, not only an act of atonement for the slave trade …, not just an entrepôt for an increasing overseas trade, but a pattern to Africa … and a missionary base, from which the Gospel would spread steadily to an 'Ethiopia stretching out her hands unto God' (how often does this text appear in the early Christian literature of West Africa?) with Africans the agents of its expansion"[14].

African-American Missions in Africa

The early 19th century also saw the beginnings of African-American mission work in Africa. At the early stage, there were individual black Baptists or Methodists from Jamaica or the American East Coast who — usually still in the service of white dominated churches or societies — became active in West Africa.[15] Later the number of independent African-American initiatives and the establishment of societies under black leadership increased. This happened especially from the 1870s, when hopes for an equal coexistence of black and white people in US were shattered. Thus the post-Civil-war-period saw "a profound movement of African Americans toward African missions with independent black religious groups sending out more black missionaries".[16] Towards the end of the 19th century, African American missionaries were active in Southern Africa, Liberia, the Gold Coast, Nigeria and Belgian Congo. Around 1900, about 115 black missionaries were working in Africa.[17]

What were their motives? "These black Christians", says Sandy D. Martin, by accepting evangelical Christianity "also embraced the belief that they, more than any other group of people, had the responsibility to evangelize the continent of Africa". Again, a specific interpretation of Psalm 68,31 was especially relevant here. For them "'Ethiopia shall soon stretch forth her hands to God' meant that the African race, wherever it is found in the world, would be converted to Christianity. And, 'princes shall come out of Egypt' meant that Africa would regain political power … Black Christians, especially the mission-minded among them, believed that God had permitted (though not approved) European enslavements so that by coming into contact with Christianity they might be converted and become the instruments through whom God would act to convert the whole race … and to free the race in Africa and elsewhere of socio-economic oppression"[18].

Außereuropäischen Christentums/ Transcontinental Links in the History of Non-Western Christianity (Wiesbaden; 45–56), 55.

14 WALLS, A. (1959), "The Nova Scotian Settlers and their Religion", in: *The Sierra Leone Bulletin of Religion,* XX, June 1959, 19–31, 20.

15 Daniel Coker (1780–1846), for example, a founding member of the AME Church, was the first black sent out as a missionary. He settled in Liberia in 1820 and extended his ministry later to Sierra Leone.

16 MARTIN, S.D. (2002), "African American Christians and the African Mission Movement during the 19th Century", in: Koschorke, K. (Ed.), *Transcontinental Links in the History of Non-Western Christianity* (Wiesbaden; 57–72); MARTIN, S.D. (1989), *Black Baptist and African Missions*. The Origins of a Movement 1880–1915 (Macon, GE); RUSSELL (2000), *Missionary Outreach* (see FN 9); WILLIAMS, W.L. (1982), *Black Americans and the Evangelization of Africa, 1877–1900* (Madison, Wisconsin); JACOBS, S. M. (1982) (Ed.), *Black Americans and the Missionary Movement in Africa* (Westport, CT/ London, UK); ENGEL (2015), *Encountering Empire* (see FN 10).

17 HANCILES (2014), "Black Atlantic" (see FN 5), 42–45.

18 MARTIN (2002), "African American Christians" (see FN 16), 59. 60f.

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Evangelization of Africa by Africans

Emperor *Menelik II*., victor at the battle of Adwa in 1896 and self-proclaimed head of Christian missions in Africa, has already been mentioned.[19] A few years earlier, *Edward Wilmot Blyden* (18932-1912) — politician (in Liberia), educationalist and one of the leading representatives of West African Ethiopianism — delivered a quite remarkable interpretation of one of the classical biblical reference texts of the movement — the story of the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts 8:26-40. In his essay he focuses on African agency and specifically on the obligation of Africans to evangelize the continent. The chamberlain, we learn from the biblical text, was on his way back from Jerusalem when the encountered Philipp the evangelist who instructed and finally baptized him. Afterwards he continued his journey to his homeland. Possibly Philipp — portrayed by Blyden as prototype of the western missionary — may have had the intention to accompany him and to bring the Gospel himself to Africa. But this was prevented by the Spirit of the Lord who — as we learn in Acts 8,39 — "caught up Philipp; and the Eunuch saw him no more". Thus it was the African himself (and not Philipp) who subsequently introduced Christianity to his people.[20]

In 1905 the 'Christian Patriot' – an Indian journal published by Indian Christians themselves – refers to the *Church of Uganda* as a role model for India. That's because the people there "have made great success in the direction of self-support, self-extension and self-government". Not only do the Ugandan Christians "support the home work of [their] Church. They also send out and maintain Buganda (i.e. Ugandan) missionaries to many surrounding countries".[21]

In his short "working definition of Ethiopianism as it operated during the years at the end of the 19th century and start of the 20th century" Andrew Barnes focuses on this aspect of African agency: "Ethiopianism called for an African-led Christian evangelization of Africa. It advocated for African initiative in the economic, social and political development of Africa as well. 'Princes shall come out of Egypt and Ethiopia shall stretch forth her hands unto God', Psalms 68:31 proclaimed. Ethiopianists read this passage as a clarion call for people of African descent to build their own Christian civilization." [22]

III. Ethiopia's Victory at Adwa (1896) and the Rise of Ethiopianism

With Ethiopia's victory over Italy at Adwa in 1896, the Ethiopianist movement experienced another upswing. Comparable to Japan's victory over Russia in 1905 ten years later fueling nationalist movements and pan-Asian sentiments all over Asia, so also Adwa had a deep impact far beyond the region. Ethiopia — being black, Christian and independent, both religiously and politically — increasingly became a point of reference for a rising tide of

19 Menelik's pre-predecessor Tewodros II (1855-68) even had made plans for a crusade to "liberate" Jerusalem and place it again under Christian rule.

20 BLYDEN, E.W. (1887), "Philipp and the Eunuch: Discourse Delivered in the United States in 1882", in: Id., Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race (Edinburgh), 160f, reprinted in: Koschorke, K./ Ludwig, F./ Delgado, M. (2021) (Eds.), *Außereuropäische Christentumsgeschichte* (Göttingen), 168f [Text 170a].

21 Text n° 96 in: KOSCHORKE et al. (2016), *Discourses of Indigenous Christian Elites* (see FN 1), 114f. For details see KOSCHORKE, K. (2019), *"Owned and Conducted entirely by the Native Christian Community"*. Der 'Christian Patriot' and die indigen-christliche Presse im kolonialen Indien um 1900 (Wiesbaden), 165ff. 167-201.

22 BARNES (2014), "Christian Black Atlantic" (see FN 5), 346.

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African Independent Churches (AICs) - often without any concrete knowledge about the East African country and its Church traditions and leadership. At the peak of Western colonialism and missionary dominance, it developed into a counter model to European Christianity.

Southern Africa

It was especially South Africa that soon turned into a hotspot of Ethiopianism.[23] The 'Ethiopian Church' of Mangena Mokone (*1892) has already been mentioned. His example inspired a broad and mushrooming variety of movements labelling themselves as "Ethiopian" (or using "Ethiopian" symbols), with different agendas and focus. The "equality of believers" was a crucial point in all these debates.[24] This equality had once been promised, especially by anglophone missionaries who had presented Christianity and education as the "ladder towards civilization", with the prospect of full participation for African believers too. Now, with the rise of social Darwinism and racism and segregationist tendencies in colonial society, these promises were increasingly forgotten (or postponed to an indefinite future). "They cannot rise to equality", a letter to a missionary journal in 1899 explains as the reason for widespread discontent among African believers.[25]. "They are preaching the doctrine of equality", we learn about Ethiopianist activists in a report of 1903 to the 'Transvaal Agricultural Union' about "the danger of a Black Church". These preachers also insist that the "land belongs to the natives" and that "Africa is for the black race and not for the whites" [26].

Discrimination in the mission churches is the subject of constant complaints and justification for secession: "native ministers" are denied promotion, receive unequal pay and are permitted to function only in separate services. Western denominationalism and "sectarian" church structures are additional points of repeated criticism, combined with the vision of a "united" Church for all Africans irrespective of denominational affiliation. Social and political demands include the request for franchise and the land issue. "Africa for the Africans" had been the demand, inter alia, of the 'African Christian Union' established in 1896 aiming at the foundation of an "African Christian Nation"[27]. This program was closely connected with pan-African tendencies expressed by other groups such as the 'Native Vigilance Association' from New Kleinfontein (near Pretoria):

23 KALU (2005), "Ethiopianism in African Christianity" (see FN 5), 258–277; DUNCAN, G.A. (2015), "Ethiopianism in Pan-African Perspective, 1880–1920", in: *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* (Pretoria) 41/2, 198–218; KAMPHAUSEN (1976), *Anfänge der kirchlichen Unabhängigkeitsbewegung* (see FN 5), passim; DE GRUCHY, J.W. (2009), *Christianity and the Modernisation of South Africa, 1837–1936*. A Documentary History II (Pretoria), 1–51; KITSHOFF, M.C. (1996) (Ed.), *African Independent Churches Today*. Kaleidoscope of Afro-Christianity (Lewiston etc.).

24 ELPICK, R. (2012), *The Equality of Believers.* Protestant Missionaries and the Racial Politics of South Africa (Charlotteville/ London).

25 *The Christian Express*, December 1, 1899, p. 191 (reprinted in: Koschorke et al. [2016], *Discourses* [see FN 1], 164f.).

26 NEANE, E.L. (1905), "The Danger of a Black Church", in: *Empire Review* 10, 256–265 (together with other relevant documents reprinted in: Koschorke et al. [2021], *Außereuropäische Christentumsgeschichte* [see FN 20], 171f. 168ff.).

27 KOSCHORKE et al. ([5]2021), *Außereuropäische Christentumsgeschichte* (see FN 20, 169ff).

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> "We feel that our sympathies should be brought enough to include the whole of the African races … Undoutedly the time has come for the sons of Africa to stretch forth their hands unitedly, as was prophesised to us in Psalm 68 verse 31 … [God's Spirit] will pass through the whole of Africa from the Cape to Egypt".[28].

West Africa

In West Africa, too, Ethiopianist ideas stimulated a broad movement both within and outside the mission churches. The movement received an accelerated influx after the disempowerment of Samuel Ajayi Crowther (ca. 1806-1891) – the first black bishop in sub-Saharan Africa in modern times, consecrated at Canterbury Cathedral in 1864. His gradual removal from power and finally, after his death in 1891, his replacement by a white successor provoked a storm of protest along the West African coast. This "is the question of a cause in which all Africans are concerned", wrote a black journal from Sierra Leone in 1891.

Demand for indigenous leadership, ecclesial autonomy, and cultural indigenization were characteristics of West African Ethiopianism. Christianity is a universal religion open "for all races and peoples of the world", said *James Johnson* (1835-1917), a prominent member and later (since 1900) assistant bishop in the Anglican church in Nigeria. That's why there should be place not only for an "European Christianity", but also for an Asian or "African Christianity". "Africa is to rise once more", he says in another text. "Ethiopia is to stretch out her hands unto God, her tears will be wiped off her eyes …. Her Christian colleges are to be reestablished, her native literature is to revive, and science again is to dwell in her … Where this shall be the case then she will take her place with the most Christian, civilized and intelligent nations of the Earth".

Another prominent representative of West African Ethiopianism had been *Mojola Agbebi* (1860-1917). A co-founder of various independent Churches, he is also regarded as one of the pioneers of African nationalism. This he expressed also in his personal life by taking on an African name (originally he was David Brown Vincent) and by wearing African clothes. "English songs and hymns", he said in his inaugural sermon in the newly established 'African Church' (1902), are "unsuited to African aspiration and intelligence . …. We are come to the times when religious developments demand original songs and original tunes from the African Christian". He defended traditional African customs (such as polygamy) and criticized "denationalizing" tendencies of European Christianity as "a dangerous thing"[29].

Many debates among educated West African Christians revolved around the *concept of the "Three Selves"* — the ideal of a "Native Church", self-governing, self-supporting, and self-extending.[30] Originally this was a missionary concept, developed in the mid-19th century by missionary pioneers like Henry Venn from the Anglican 'Church Missionary Society' (CMS) and Rufus Anderson from the Congregationalist 'American Board of

28 Quoted in: FREDERICKSON, G.M. (1995), *Black Liberation*. A Comparative History of Black Ideologies in the United States and South Africa (New York/ Oxford), 89.

29 The texts of James Johnson and Mojola Agbebi quoted here are reprinted in: KOSCHORKE, K. et al. ([5]2021) (Eds.), *Außereuropäische Christentumsgeschichte* (see FN 20), 168–171.

30 KOSCHORKE, K. (2018), "'Dialectics of the Three Selves'. The Ideal of a "Self-governing, Self-supporting, Self-extending Native Church" – from a missionary concept to an emancipatory slogan of Asian and African Christians in 19th and early 20th centuries", in: Hofmeyr, H./ Stenhouse, J. (Eds.), *Internationalising Higher Education* (Centurion, SA), 127–142.

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Commissioners for Foreign Mission' (ABCFM). Around the turn of the 20th century, however, at the height of Social Darwinism and increasing reluctance by the dominant missionary bodies to grant autonomy to the local congregations, it became a slogan of emancipation by indigenous Christian elites and was turned against the Western missionaries. Instead they looked at alternative models of Christian authenticity — such as Ethiopia. Remarkably, we can observe at the same time analogous debates also in Asia, where local Christians were looking not at Ethiopia but, for example, rather at the Indian St. Thomas Churches as representatives of a non-colonial version of Christianity[31]. So, parallel developments took place simultaneously in various regions of the global South.

Trans-Regional Connections, Pan-African Networks

The emergence of pan-Africanist ideas was closely linked to the genesis of the Ethiopian movement. At the turn of the century, Pan-Africanism existed in a more political and a more religious version. In both, Christian actors played an important role. The first Pan-African congresses all took place with prominent participation by African church leaders. This was the case with the 'African Congress' in Chicago in 1893, the 'First Pan African Conference' in London in 1900 and the 'First Universal Races Congress' in 1911, also in London[32].

Already in 1896 the previously mentioned (and short-lived) 'African Christian Union' in South Africa had proclaimed as its goal the union of all Christians of African descent and the return of all Africans in the diaspora to their "fatherland", combined with the hope for social progress and economic development of the whole continent. In West Africa, the establishment of a "Conference of Prominent West African Natives" as a platform for concerted action was intensively discussed in regional newspapers around 1905. In general, the black press played a crucial role in connecting colored Christians on both sides of the Atlantic at the turn of 19th and 20th centuries.[33]

Of particular importance were also the communication networks of transatlantic black churches such as the 'African Methodist Episcopal Church' (AMEC) (especially since 1896) and the 'African Orthodox Church' (AOC). Founded in New York in 1921, the AOC had its first offshoot in South Africa as early as 1924, and a few years later also in East Africa. In each case, the connection came about not through targeted missionary activities, but through black political and church journals: "Without any direct Western missionary

31 KOSCHORKE, K. (2019), "'Oldest and in many ways a most important Christian community'. Die Thomaschristen in den Debatten der protestantischen Elite Südindiens zwischen 1890 und 1910", in: *Internationale Kirchliche Zeitschrift* 109, 51–61.

32 On the various (pan-)African congresses, see GEISS, I. (1968), *Panafrikanismus.* Zur Geschichte der Dekolonisation (Frankfurt a.M.), 138ff. 170ff. 184ff. 116ff (overview); MOORE, M.N. (1996), *Orishatukeh Faduma.* Liberal Theology and Evangelical Pan-Africanism 1857–1946 (Lanham, MD 1996), 17–31 ("The Missiological Roots of Evangelical Pan-Africanism"), 107ff. (on the 1895 'Congress on Africa' in Atlanta); LANGLEY, J.A. (1973), *Pan-Africanism and Nationalism in West Africa 1900–1945*. A Study in Ideology and Social Classes (Oxford), 27–40 (overview); ESEDEBE, O. (1982), *Pan-Africanism*. The Idea and Movement 1776–1973 (Washington); ADI, H./SHERWOOD, M. (2003), *Pan-African History*. Political Figures from Africa and the Diaspora Since 1787 (London); LIPEDE, A.A., *Pan-Africanism in Southern Africa 1900–1980* (Kaduna 2001), 35–53 ("Evangelical and Secular Pan Africanism in Southern Africa up to 1920").

33 BARNES (2018), "Christian Black Atlantic" (see FN 5), 345–366.

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activity, the glad tidings have bridged the Atlantic through the press", was highlighted in a self-portrayal of the AOC.[34]

The AOC was formed in the milieu (but independently) of Marcus Garvey's 'Universal Negro Improvement Association' (UNIA) — the largest mass movement of colored people between WW1 and WW2, with millions of followers. Meetings of the UNIA were opened with a sermon on Psalm 68:31; and the hymn "Ethiopia, Thou Land of Our Fathers" was declared the official anthem of the movement. Its activities included the establishment of a shipping line, the Black Star Line, to facilitate the return of "Ethiopians scattered in the New World" to their home continent. "Our desire", said UNIA's program, "is for a place in the world ... to lay down our burden and rest our weary backs and feet by the banks of the Niger and sing our songs and chant out hymns to the God of Ethiopia".[35]

Ethiopia as an Anti-Colonial Center

Italy's second invasion of Ethiopia in 1935/36 provoked strong protests and actions of solidarity in many countries. In US ports Italian ship were boycotted by African-American dock workers. In West Africa Italy's aggression fueled the nationalist movement[36] and in Southern Africa "Ethiopian" Churches again received a large influx. New independent Churches under black leadership were founded as well — such as the 'Ethiopian Star Church of God' or the 'Ethiopia Church of Abyssinia'. In 1937 Haile Selassie's exile government established the 'Ethiopian World Federation' in New York. Its purpose was "to effect unity, solidarity, liberty, freedom and self-determination" among the "black people of the world" and "to maintain the integrity of Ethiopia, which is our divine heritage".[37] After the Second World War, Ethiopia was one of the founding members and played a prominent role in the Non-Aligned Movement established in Bandung (Indonesia) in 1955. Finally, when in May 1963 — after the end of colonial rule in most parts of Africa — the 'Organization of African Unity' (OAU) was established by 32 African states, this happened in Addis Abeba, with its administrative center since then being sited in the Ethiopian capital.

IV. Jamaica and the Ethiopianist Movement

At the end of my presentation, I would like to draw your attention once more to Jamaica which has a special relationship with Ethiopia and Ethiopianism. As mentioned earlier, in 1783 an "Ethiopian Church" had already been established there, with a black pastor and Afro-Jamaican membership (most of them slaves). In the course of the 19th century, repeatedly black missionaries from Jamaica (often Baptists) became active in West Africa.[38] In 1936, volunteers from the island fought in Ethiopia against the renewed Italian

34 BURLĂCIOIU, C. (2015), *"Within three years the East and the West have met each other".* Die Genese einer missionsunabhängigen schwarzen Kirche im transatlantischen Dreieck USA-Südafrika-Ostafrika (1921–1950) (Wiesbaden), 48. 36ff.

35 KAMPHAUSEN (2002), "Äthiopien als Symbol" (see FN 5), 302f.

36 ASANTE, S.K.B. (1977), *Pan-African Protest*: West Africa and the Italo-Ethiopian Crisis, 1934–1941 (London).

37 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethiopian_World_Federation; (Accessed: 30.3.2023).

38 For details see: RUSSELL (2000), *Missionary Outreach* (see FN 9).

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invasion under Mussolini. When I visited Jamaica in 2001, there was hardly a single street lamp in the capital Kingston that was not painted in Red – Yellow – Green (the Ethiopian flag colors). You could see hand-painted shopping carts inscribed with Psalm 23 and, at the same time, advertising for Heineken beer. You entered the area of the True Divine Church of Salvation and Ethiopia Africa Black International Congress (naturally painted Red – Yellow – Green) and saw posters promising "Freedom, Redemptions and International Repatriation for all Black Royal Sons and Daughters in Captivity. 7'913 Miles of High Water Ships". They were illustrated with portraits of the "Prophet" Marcus Garvey (1887-1940), the "Priest" Leonard Howell (1898-1981) und the "King" Haile Selassie and the Star of Ethiopia[39].

This is not the place here to discuss in detail the Rastafaris — both a social and a religious movement — which, in any case, has been intrinsically linked with the Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie (reg. 1930–1974). They venerated him as messiah and second coming of Jesus. Selassie's pre-coronation name as prince had been Ras Täfäri Makonnen – from which their self-designation as Rastafarians is derived.[40] When Haile Selassie actually visited Jamaica in 1966 his plane couldn't land at first because thousands of enthusiastic Rastafaris had flooded the airport and entered the landing field. Already in 1955 Haile Selassie granted land for those Rastafaris wishing to "repatriate" to Ethiopia. A growing number came since the 1970s. Today Rastafaris can also be found in other African countries such as Ghana and South Africa[41].

But Haile Selassie's visit to Kingston also led to the establishment of a branch of the official Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Jamaica in 1969.[42] So Jamaica is remarkable for various reasons. On the one hand, it illustrates the broad variety of impulses coming from Ethiopia as a symbol of both religious and political emancipation — by giving birth to the Rastafaris as a highly syncretistic movement in the 1930s. On the other hand, it became the home of a branch of the ancient Ethiopian Orthodox Tehawedo Church in the Caribbean. In both aspects it presents a remarkable case in the study of the history of World Christianity.

V. Concluding Remarks

Ethiopianism, concludes West African historian Ogbu Kalu, "could be said to have nurtured the roots of modern African Christianity". "The legacies of the Ethiopian movement", he continues, "were, however, numerous: the quests to appropriate the gospel and modernity with dignity; to be both an African and Christian; to express faith from an indigenous world view and spirituality so that Africans could respond and realities and culture in the sphere of liturgy, polity and ethics ; to tap the resources of indigenous knowledge in communicating the kerygma; and to practice local initiatives in evangelism,

39 See figs. 12-13 (Appendix, p. 264).

40 BARNETT, M. (2017), *The Rastafari Movement* (Abingdon); KAMPHAUSEN (2002), "Äthiopien als Symbol" (see FN 5), 293–295. 302ff; WILLIAMS, K.M. (1985), *The Rastafarians* (London); BARRETT, L.E. (1997), *The Rastafarians* (Boston); CHEVANNES, B. (1994), *Rastafari*: Roots and Ideology (Syracuse); LOTH, H. (1991), *Rastafari, Bibel und afrikanische Spiritualität* (Berlin).

41 BONACCI, G. (2015), *Exodus!* Heirs and Pioneers, Rastafari Return to Ethiopia (Mona); MERRITT, A. (2017), "How Can We Sing King Alpha's Song in a Strange Land?: The Sacred Music of the Boboshanti Rastafari", in: *Journal of Africana Religions* 5/2, 282–291; SAVISHINSKY, N.J. (1994), "Rastafari in the Promised Land: The Spread of a Jamaican Socioreligious Movement among the Youth of West Africa", in: *African Studies Review* 37/3, 19–50.

42 See fig. 14 (Appendix, p. 265).

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decision making processes, ecclesial structures and funding"[43]. Multifacetted, as the Ethiopianist movements were, they often gave rise to controversies and debates both among their adherents and critics. But the formation of a transatlantic black Christianity cannot be properly described without taking into account the fascination by Ethiopia as a symbol of religious and political emancipation.

Abstract

In the context of a polycentric approach to the history of World Christianity, Ethiopia plays a significant role. One the one hand, Ethiopia represents a very ancient — "precolonial" — type of African Christianity, with very distinctive marks and specific traditions that differ from those of the Western world. On the other hand, Ethiopian Christianity is far more than a museum relic of a remote medieval past. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Ethiopia served as a symbol of both religious and political independence, thus fueling movements of emancipation among black Christians on both sides of the Atlantic. It was especially after its victory over an Italian invasion army at Adwa in 1896 — at the high point of European colonialism and imperialism — that Ethiopia became a point of reference for modern African and African-American elites striving for social uplift and self-determination.

But the "Ethiopian discourse" – based on biblical texts such as Acts 8 and Ps 68:31 – had already begun in the late 18th century among colored Christians in the Caribbean and North America. It led to the establishment of independent churches under black leadership, inspired early Back-to-Africa movements, influenced the first missionary activities by African Americans in Western and Southern Africa and fueled pan-African sentiments and movements, both religious and political. It played an important role in the making of what Andrew Barnes has labelled as "Christian Black Atlantic".

Transatlantischer Äthiopismus. Äthiopien als Symbol der Erlösung und Unabhängigkeit unter schwarzen Christen auf beiden Seiten des Atlantik

Im Rahmen eines polyzentrischen Zugangs zur Geschichte des Weltchristentums spielt Äthiopien eine wichtige Rolle. Einerseits repräsentiert das Land einen uralten — "vorkolonialen" — Typus des afrikanischen Christentums, mit ausgeprägten Merkmalen und spezifischen Traditionen, die sich von denen der westlichen Welt deutlich unterscheiden. Andererseits ist das äthiopische Christentum weit mehr als nur ein museales Relikt aus einer fernen mittelalterlichen Vergangenheit. Im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert diente Äthiopien als Symbol religiöser wie politischer Unabhängigkeit und beflügelte Emanzipationsbewegungen schwarzer Christen auf *beiden* Seiten des Atlantiks. Vor allem nach seinem Sieg über eine italienische Invasionsarmee bei Adwa 1896 — und damit auf dem Höhepunkt des europäischen Kolonialismus und Imperialismus — wurde Äthiopien so zu einem Bezugspunkt für moderne afrikanische und afroamerikanische Eliten, die nach sozialem Aufstieg und Selbstbestimmung strebten.

Doch der "äthiopische Diskurs", der sich auf biblische Texte wie Apostelgeschichte 8 und Ps 68,31 stützte, hatte bereits im späten 18. Jahrhundert unter farbigen Christen in der Karibik und in Nordamerika eingesetzt. Er führte zur Gründung unabhängiger Kirchen

43 KALU (2005), "Ethiopianism" (see FN 5), 277.

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unter schwarzer Führung, inspirierte die frühen Back-to-Africa-Bewegungen, beeinflusste die ersten Missionsaktivitäten von Afroamerikanern im westlichen und südlichen Afrika im 19. Jh. und schürte panafrikanische Gefühle und Bewegungen, sowohl religiöser wie auch politischer Natur. Er spielte eine wichtige Rolle bei der Entstehung dessen, was Andrew Barnes als "Christian Black Atlantic" bezeichnet hat.

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From India to Brazil: The Pacific Journeys of the Martyr Saint Gonçalo Garcia

ERIN KATHLEEN ROWE

When Gonçalo Garcia (1556–1597) joined the group of Franciscan friars and local Christians martyred by Japanese rulers at Nagasaki in 1597, little note was made of his ethnic and geographic origins in spite of the voluminous material produced about this martyrdom in early modern Europe. Nevertheless, Garcia's biography as a product of a Portuguese father and a South Asian mother were little remarked. His backstory reveals significant Pacific entanglements: He began his adult life as a merchant, leveraging his position as a bridge between two cultural worlds to expand his market, traveling throughout the Pacific, especially Japan. His later life as a Franciscan friar brought him again to Japan to meet his death. As part of the group martyrdom, Garcia's own cult remained obscure until it surfaced dramatically a century and a half later as patron to a confraternity devoted to mixed-race people in Brazil. This essay approaches Gonçalo Garcia's life and afterlife as a global microhistory, illuminating the complex ties between Portuguese colonial territories, trade, and global Catholicism. It provides the entire arc of the saint's journey into and through global Catholicism, a saint who lived at the geographic margins of the Portuguese empire and of imperial racial categories, but whose life and afterlife centered his value — as a merchant, an educated man, and a holy man of color.

Scholars have spent much time considering how to bring the methodology of microhistory to the varying scales of the global, most recently in an important collection of essays in a special issue of *The Journal of Early Modern History*.[1] In her essay, Francesca Trivellato poses a number of trenchant questions, beginning with the most basic and yet the most crucial: "When is the global a lens and when is it a methodology?" Slippage between the two is unexpectedly easy — any account of the life or travel of one person. Trivellato reminds us that the two key features of microhistory as a methodology is to recreate the mental structures of the lives of ordinary people in order to understand their choices.[2] The significance of scholars understanding such structures in some ways is self-evident, but one of its most crucial features is its ability to "test generalizations". Excavation of the lives of ordinary people can have profound effects on our understanding of the overarching narratives that scholars of the macro construct, especially works that span centuries. Another feature of global microhistory is its emphasis on mobility, rather than rootedness

1 Special Issue on Global Microhistory, in: *Journal of Early Modern History*, Issue 1 & 2 (2023). In 2019, *Past & Present* published a special edition on "Global History and Microhistory", Volume 242, Issue Supplement 14 (Nov. 2019).

2 TRIVELLATO, F. (2023), "What Differences Make a Difference? Global History and Microanlaysis Revisited", in: *Journal of Early Modern History* 27/1–2, 7–13.

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— it is an analytic of movement, not merely a discussion of "spaces outside of Europe"; as a result, such microhistories usually involve networks, circuits, or comparatives.[3]

Jan de Vries asks a different set of questions than Trivalleto's; in his 2019 essay, he systematically works through the different approaches that are called microhistories (which may or may not be), case studies, macrohistory, and nanohistory, weighing them all together. Chasenting scholars for occasionally lapsing into fantasy and working without a process (in regards to the 'zooming' metaphor, de Vries decires it as having "no path, no methodology, no theoretical framework in the current repertoire of the microhistorian to make this move possible"). His analysis is sharp — and as such, is invigorating to think with, and his conclusions provide both opportunity and challenge, that in order to connect global history with microhistory it must "address a problem, or challenge a thesis". It is this specific observation that I take up here.[4]

One of the most salient generalizations of global Catholicism is that Christianity was an imposed, colonial religion, traveling among and between non-European spaces, sometimes through diplomacy, though usually through coercion. We know of course that non European Christians could play important local roles — communally, politically, and spiritually — but they did not generally come to positions of prominence in the universal Church. (The Church has its own fluctuating scales of micro and macro.) My choice to analyze both Gonçalo Garcia's life and afterlife for this saint leads to methodological consequences — it has led to a less intensive, archivally-based excavation of his secular life so central to microhistory. But knitting together Garcia's life with his afterlife provides an opportunity to examine global Catholicism on multiple registers — how non Europeans entered into the Catholic pantheon of the saints and how Catholics placed such figures in their devotional landscape. He was an exceptional figure in the way that all saints are exceptional figures. And yet while exceptional, they are not *singular* because of the vast impact their cults can have throughout space and time. Garcia's life as an Indian man in the context of a Portuguese and Spanish Pacific, as someone who moved through linguistic, cultural, and religious spaces with seeming ease.

The moment of connections, transition, transformation between life and afterlife are crucial, since in Catholic devotional culture, the afterlife of a saint was more vivid than biological life. It further permits us the view of an influential saint reverberating throughout the Catholic world. If most devotional cults around holy non-Europeans who died in the odor of sanctity stayed local, because the Church did not permit devotion to non-beatified people outside of narrowly defined spaces, such local figures remain just that: local. Their significance is not diminished by this rootedness, but it tells a different story about global Catholicism.[5] What, in contrast, can we learn from the life and afterlife of a Luso-Indian

3 This feature of global microhistory has drawn its own critics, who remind readers that, in fact, the majority of people stayed fixed/rooted during the early modern period: See BELL, D. (26 October 2013), "This is What Happens when Historians Overuse the Idea of the Network", in: *New Republic*.

4 I developed my line of argumentation before discovering DeVries's work, but have found engagement with it helpful during the final phase: DE VRIES, J. (November 2019), "Playing with Scales: The Global and the Micro, the Macro and the Nano", in: *Past & Present* 242, Issue Supplement 14, 23–36.

5 For an excellent example of an important holy woman of color, see the example of Caterina de San Juan; like Garcia, she was likely born in South Asia, kidnapped and sold into slavery, forced through the Manila galleon trade like thousands of Asians trafficked to the Americas; she ended up in Puebla, Mexico, where she gained a significant following and a failed attempt at canonization. Caterina maintains a crucial cultural legacy in Puebla as the so-called "china poblana". For more on her cult, see especially SEIJAS, T. (2014), *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*: From Chinos to Indians (Cambridge), Ch. 1. There were a number of local devotions to

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Franciscan who traveled the globe? He is one of the only non-white saints officially endorsed by the Church in the seventeenth century, though his individual devotional cult remained quiet until the eighteenth century.

The long afterlife of this saint speaks to the power of the framework of global Catholicism for understanding Catholic devotions by non-white, non-elite people, as well as understanding how a mixed race imperial subject found himself at the center of one of the most important religious events of the early modern period. It tests challenges widely held — and still repeat tropes — that European clergy "own" missionary narratives, that we can overlook local figures, some colonized and some not, who existed at the edge of empire yet remained important actors to its financial and religious success, that the only forms of devotion developed by non-European Christian did not involve normative acceptance by the global Church.[6]

Missions and Martyrs

Gonçalo Garcia was a member of the Franciscan order, which was a major player on the stage of global missionary work, a feature that was baked into its foundation. Like the contemporary order, the Dominicans, the earliest Franciscans, including their founder saint, devoted themselves to preaching and converting heretics.[7] While the Dominicans are often connected to the medieval Inquisition, it bears remembering that Franciscans frequently acted as inquisitors. They were also fiercely proud of their long legacy of overseas missionary work, beginning with their founder St. Francis, who traveled to in 1219 Egypt to preach to the Sultan al-Malik al-Kâmil (to no avail, of course). Christopher MacEvitt points out that early authors often described Francis as a frustrated martyr — that is, as one seeking but failing to achieve martyrdom through his journeys to Islamic territories. At the same time, however, he achieved the gift of stigmata, which permitted him to suffer the excruciating pain of Christ's passion without dying.[8]

While Francis safely returned to Europe, Christian missionary work could be dangerous in the Mediterranean, and the first Franciscans to achieve martyrdom did so very soon after Francis's missionary endeavor. In 1220, a group of five early Franciscans traveled to Morocco in an attempt to convert local Muslims to Christianity. They were expelled, but refused to leave, and were eventually thrown in jail and then executed.[9] While producing

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Indigenous and Black holy people in the Americas. For perhaps the most famous example, see the mixed race Martín de Porres (d. 1634): CUSSEN, C.L. (2014), *Black Saints of the Americas*: The Life and Afterlife of Martín de Porres (Cambridge). Martín remained a local figure in Lima, though he was eventually canonized in 1962.

6 There were four Black saints who achieved large and global devotional cults in the early modern world, though almost exclusively in the Iberian Atlantic and tied closely to the transAtlantic slave trade: ROWE, E.K. (2019), *Black Saints in Early Modern Global Catholicism* (Cambridge).

7 For a few studies of early Franciscans, see: BROOKE, R.B. (2006), *The Image of St Francis*: Responses to Sainthood in the Thirteenth Century (Cambridge, UK); FRANCO, B.R./ MULVANEY, B.A. (2015) (Eds.), *The World of St. Francis of Assisi*: Essays in Honor of William R. Cook (Leiden); SCHUMACHER, L. (2019), *Early Franciscan Theology*: Between Authority and Innovation (Cambridge), and ROBSON, M.J.P. (2012) (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Francis of Assisi* (Cambridge).

8 MACEVITT, C. (2020), *The Martyrdom of the Franciscans*: Islam, the Papacy, and an Order in Conflict (Philadelphia, PA), 52–60.

9 For a thorough account of the Martyrs of Morocco, see MACEVITT (2020), *The Martyrdom of the Franciscans* (see FN 8). See also JOHNSON, T.J. (2018), "Old and New World Martyrdom: Fray Tomás de Barrios' Sermon on the Feast of the Franciscan Protomartyrs", in: Johnson, T.J./ Wrisley Shelby, K./ Young, J.D. (Eds.),

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little interest in the Middle Ages, the cult of the martyrs of Morocco attained a central position in the Franciscan pantheon in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries in Portugal and Spain as the Franciscans loudly touted the long history of their missionary martyrdoms, explicitly linking Morocco to Japan.

In the early modern period, Franciscan celebration of its martyrs coincided with their prominence in the global-colonial mission fields, beginning with their near-monopoly in New Spain and rapidly expanding to the Pacific as well as the Americas.[10] In the Pacific, however, they faced increasing rivalry with the Society of Jesus — like the Franciscans, the Jesuits had been founded to teach, preach, and baptize, and one of their earliest members, Francis Xavier, journeyed throughout the Pacific. Franciscan chroniclers spent much of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries arguing for their primacy — they had gotten to the Pacific first, and their missionaries and martyrs were pre-eminent over all the others, especially the Jesuits.[11]

India

Garcia was the child of a specific religious order — the Franciscans — but he was also the child of a specific space and multi-racial family in a colonized space. In order to understand the man, we must turn our attention to its foundation — India. Just as they had done in the Americas, Franciscans followed Portuguese and Spanish merchants and militaries throughout their explorations in the Pacific. They also quickly developed missionary presence in the Portuguese territories in Goa and the surrounding lands. While Goa is often associated with the Jesuit order, as a core provincial seat of the Society as well as the deathsite of Francis Xavier, Portuguese Franciscans predated Jesuits and moved throughout the regions along the western coast of India, establishing schools for educating local children in Christian doctrine.[12] It is important to keep in mind the vast differences between Portuguese and Spanish efforts in the Americas versus other parts of the globe. As one scholar explains: "The [Portuguese] Estado da Índia was a network (a communications system across various spaces) marked by the heterogeneity of institutions and the imprecision of its territorial and legal limits, that supported agreements, conquests, and

Preaching and New Worlds: Sermons as Mirrors of Realms Near and Far (Boca Raton, FL), 295–312; and BEN-ARYEH DEBBY, N., "Images of Franciscan Missionaries in Italian Art and Sermons", in: Johnson, T.J./ Wrisley Shelby, K./ Young, J.D. (Eds.), *Preaching and New Worlds*: Sermons as Mirrors of Realms Near and Far (Boca Raton, FL), 185–197.

10 The historiography on Franciscan missionaries in the Americas - particularly in New Spain - is vast. As a starting point, see: MCCLURE, J. (2017), *The Franicscan Invention of the New World* (Basingstoke); CREWE, R.D. (2019), *The Mexican Mission*: Indigenous Reconstruction and Mendicant Enterprise in New Spain, 1521–1600 (Cambridge); and TURLEY, S.E. (2014), *Franciscan Spirituality and Mission in New Spain, 1524–1599*: Conflict Beneath the Sycamore Tree (Luke 19:1–10) (Farnham). For a larger study of early modern Catholic missions, see FORRESTAL, A./ SMITH, S.A. (2016) (Eds.), *The Frontiers of Mission*: Perspectives on Early Modern Missionary Catholicism (Leiden); and PO-CHIA HSIA, R. (2018) (Ed.), *A Companion to Early Modern Catholic Global Missions* (Leiden).

11 Liam Matthew Brockey discusses early seventeenth century Franciscan chronicles of the Pacific through the lens of competition with the Jesuits: BROCKEY, L.M. (2016), "Conquests of Memory: Franciscan Chronicles of the East Asian Church in the Early Modern Period", in: *Culture & History Digital Journal* 5/2, 1–15.

12 GUPTA, P./ THOMPSON, A./ MACKENZIE, J. (2016), *The Relic State*: St Francis Xavier and the Politics of Ritual in Portuguese India (Oxford).

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Portuguese sovereignty in East Africa and Asia."[13] As a result, the Portuguese established a mixture of formal empire (consisting of territory directly controlled by Portugal) and informal (communities of Portuguese without direct and exclusive control of territory). The areas of Portuguese formal empire were small — little more than entrepots with some surrounding territory, with larger surrounding zones of influence. Two of the major centers of the Estado da Índia were Goa and Macau.[14] The Spanish, in contrast, only held a toehold in the Philippines. Missionaries tended to follow their nation of origin, although Iberians sometimes went hand in hand especially in the period of the union of crowns (1580–1640) when one was more likely to see joint missions. The entanglement of empire-building, global trade, diplomacy, and missionary work must always be kept in mind, as we will discuss further below.

In 1534, the Portuguese founded the bishopric of Goa, which maintained spiritual jurisdiction over much of Catholic Asia and East Africa; its first bishop was a Portuguese Franciscan, João de Albuquerque (d. 1553).[15] His ascension to the bishopric coincided with a period of intensifying concern over the co-existence of Christian and non-Christians in Goa, and increased intolerance toward non-Christian communities within Goa. Faria points out that the period of Albuquerque's bishopric saw the arrival of the Jesuits and, by 1570, the introduction of the Inquisition, even as provincials of Goa repeatedly forbade the use of coercion or force in baptisms.[16] Ângela Barreto Xavier, in contrast, argues that the period of Albuquerque's bishopric is one that marks a definitive change in Portuguese framing of colonization; their adoption of a "Roman" model, Xavier explains, led to an increased desire to impose cultural and religious hegemony in Goa as the seat of the Estado. The destruction of temples and establishment of parishes, schools, and missionaries quickly developed.[17] While the Portuguese expanded its religious control over its territories throughout the sixteenth century — new bishoprics were established in Macau (1575), Funai, Cochin, Malacca, Beijing, and Mozambique, among other places — Goa retained primacy over all of these, giving special significance to this region in the Lusophone Pacific.

The Bassein of Gonçalo Garcia's youth marked a time of rapid expansion of Portuguese imperial structure, missionary activity, and Christian expansion. The Portuguese church

13 SOUZA DE FARIA, P. (2022), "Catholics and Non Christians in the Archbishopric of Goa", in: Saavedra, M.B. (Ed.), *Norms Beyond Empire*: Law Making and Local Normativities in Iberia Asia (Leiden), 104.

14 For important scholarship on the Estado da India and the Portuguese presence the Pacific, see: BETHENCOURT, F. (1998), "O Estado da Índia", in: Bethencourt, F./ Chaudhuri, K. (Eds.), *História da Expansão Portuguesa*. Vol. II: Do Índico ao Atlântico (1570–1697) (Lisbon), 284–314; SUBRAMANYAM, S. (1990), *Portuguese Empire in Asia* (Hoboken); SUBRAHMANYAM, S. (1990), *Improvising Empire*: Portuguese Trade and Settlement in the Bay of Bengal, 1500-1700 (New York); NOCENTELLI, C. (2013), *Empires of Love*: Europe, Asia, and the Making of Early Modern Identity (Philadelphia); BOYAJIAN, J.C., *Portuguese Trade in Asia Under the Habsburgs, 1580–1640*; and ŽUPANOV, I.G. (2005), *Missionary Tropics*: The Catholic Frontier in India, 16th–17th Centuries (Ann Arbor).

15 PAIVA, J.P. (2021), "The First Catholic Diocese in Asia and the Spread of Catholicism: Juan de Albuquerque, Bishop of Goa, 1538–1553", in: *Church History* 90/4, 776–798.

16 SOUZA DE FARIA, P. (2022), "Catholics and Non-Christians in the Archbishopric of Goa: Provincial Councils, Conversion, and Local Dynamics in the Production of Norms (16th–18th Centuries)", in: SAAVEDRA, M.B. (Ed.), *Norms Beyond Empire*: Law-Making and Local Normativities in Iberian Asia, 1500–1800 (Leiden), 107–114.

17 BARRETO XAVIER, Â. (2022), *Religion and Empire in Portuguese India*: Conversion, Resistance, and the Making of Goa (Albany), Ch 1. For more on Portuguese attitudes toward religious pluralism in India, see ŽUPANOV, I./ FABRE, P.A. (2018) (Eds.), *The Rites Controversies in the Early Modern World* (Leiden), Chs. 6 and 7.

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divided the territories around Goa among the religious orders, to prevent in-fighting and to maintain a diversity of missionary presence between Franciscans, Jesuits, and Dominicans, although such lines were often blurred. The Portuguese also seized the site of present day Mumbai as the result of warfare with the Gujarat sultan, creating the Northern Region of the Estado; the town of Bassein, Garcia's birthplace, took on a place of prominence in this northern region, particularly for missionaries. Antonio do Porto was the first Portuguese missionary there; the Franciscan arrived in 1535, operating alongside a Dominican missionary to establish Christianity through persuasion and force, following the instructions of his bishop Albuquerque, destroying temples and holy objects, and building schools. He organized an orphanage-school in Agashi, Nossa Senhora da Luz or Assunção in 1546.[18] Franciscans opened a school in the fort in 1546, chiefly to evangelize and house of catechumens (children). Then they also built a college for teaching friars philosophy and theology, called St. Anthony's. Yet, Garcia himself was not educated among the Franciscans whom he would eventually join. Instead, he was raised by the Jesuits, who moved quickly into Goa and the northern territories following Francis Xavier's arrival in the middle of the century.

But before Garcia's education, we must consider for a moment his parentage — the child of a Portuguese soldier and a local mother, Garcia joined an ever-increasing community of "mestiços", such male children who played particularly important roles in colonial spaces as cultural brokers. Marriages between Portuguese men and local women resulted from explicit policies from Portuguese authorities. In the case of India, the most influential of these was viceroy Afonso de Albuquerque (d. 1511), who viewed mixed race households as essential for the establishment of Portuguese authority — in the absence of large numbers of Portuguese settlers (including white women), mixed race households anchored the Portuguese presence, spread Portuguese culture, and encouraged conversion to Christianity.[19] Often elite, they had greater opportunities for social and religious advancement, to be admitted into religious orders. We do not know how his Indian mother and larger Indian community shaped Garcia's cultural framework, as the biographical information that has survived come from Portuguese-authored hagiography. At the same time, everything about his life and career was shaped by his Indian birth and parentage.

The most detailed information we have for Garcia's early years comes from fellow Franciscan Marcelo de Ribadeneira, sacred historian and author of *Historia de las Islas*, which provided cultural, political, and geographic study of the Pacific islands; widely read and cited, *Historias de las islas* also presented a crucial account of the 1597 martyrdom,

18 D'SILVA, R.D. (1974), "The Active Missionary Orders in Portuguese Bassein", in: *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 35, 218–223.

19 Portuguese soldiers intermarried wherever they settled in the world, and the resulting communities of mestiços played similar roles as elite power brokers in the regions. On Luso-Africans in Guinea, for example, see: MARK, P. (1999), "The Evolution Of 'Portuguese' Identity: Luso-Africans On The Upper Guinea Coast From The Sixteenth To The Early Nineteenth Century", in: *The Journal of African History* 40/2, 173–91. For India, see: ABREU-FERREIRA, D./ ELBL, I. (2007) (Eds.), *Women in the Lusophone World in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period.* Special issue. *Portuguese Studies Review* 13/1–2; BETHENCOURT, F. (2021) (Ed.), *Gendering the Portuguese-Speaking World* (Leiden), Chs. 3 and 4; SUBRAHMANYAM (1990), *Improvising Empire* (see FN 14); POLÓNIA, A./ CAPELÃO, R. (2017), "Connecting Worlds. Women as Intermediaries in the Portuguese Overseas Empire, 1500–1600", in: Stuchtey, B./ Bührer, T./ Eichmann, F. (Eds.) *Cooperation and Empire*. Local Realities of Global Processes (Oxford), 58–89; and XAVIER (2022), *Religion and Empire* (see FN 17), 219–220.

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including accounts of the martyrs individually.[20] Ribadeneira was a Spanish Franciscan from Galicia, he was ordered to Manila, and from there onto Japan. Eventually, he was ordered to join Gonçalo and a Japanese Christian to found a church and hospital in Osaka.[21] Unlike his ill-fated — or more fortunate, depending on one's perspective — companions, Ribadeneira escaped Japan in 1597, just as the persecution was bearing down on the Christian community and his confreres were crucified in the largest-scale martyrdom seen in the modern period. He fled to Macau and then to Manila, Acapulco, and back to Iberia, where he acted as the procurator for the beatification cause for the Nagasaki martyrs. Possibly because Ribadeneira knew Garcia personally, he dwelled at length on the early career and education of his friend as well as his time in Japan.[22]

Ribadeneira notes both the location of Gonçalo's birth in Bassein and his parentage as a biracial person.[23] He is quick to note that Gonçalo's mother was born of Christian parents, an important quality in a saint-to-be; hagiographies almost always insisted on the incredible virtue and piety of the parents of the saint, as early modern Christians considered virtue as both inherited and learned, nearly impossible without careful cultivation from the adults around them. A common trope, it gained in significance in this case because of omnipresent anxieties about the capacity for non-Europeans to fully embrace Christianity. Garcia's education outside the home built on the foundation of virtues learning at home — surprisingly, given his later entry into the Franciscan order, Garcia was in fact educated by the Jesuits. For eight years, he studied among a group of priests who had traveled to Japan and throughout East Asia. They discovered that their young pupil evinced a talent for languages (possibly aided by being raised in a mutli-lingual environment); they taught him Japanese and he learned the difficult language quickly. Ribadeneiro emphasizes Garcia's language facility as a type of divine gift, one that presaged his glorious death.

Much like his mother, Ribadeneira lingered over the piety and virtue of the Jesuits who taught him, noting specifically that the young man spent a lot of time with Sebastián Gonzalez, a Jesuit renowned — according to the author — for his kindness, charity, zealousness in converting souls. González had additional appearances in Ribadeneiro's work in a chapter on Jesuits who achieved martyrdom in Japan. While normally framed by scholars as locked in tense competition, Franciscans and Jesuits, Spanish and Portuguese, often wrote glowing of each other, worked together, and venerated each other's saints. The connection between Garcia and González is an important, albeit brief, moment in

20 Ribadeneira's work has been the focus of attention for many scholars. Among others see: ALEMANY, A.B. (2017), "Huellas de Japón en las crónicas misioneras del siglo XVII: la historia de Marcelo de Ribadeneira", *Mira. Estudios Japoneses* 1, 169–180; MONTERO DÍAZ, I.C. (2018), "La espiritualidad japonesa a ojos de un franciscano Fray Marcelo Ribadeneyra", in: Peláez del Rosal, M./ Zamora Jambrina, H. (Eds.), *El franciscanismo hacia América y Oriente*: libro homenaje al P. Hermeregildo Zamora Jambrina, OFM (Madrid), 257–276; and Lage Correia, P. (2023), "Los franciscanos en Japón (1593–1597): contextos ibéricos, japonés e identidad misionera", in: *Archivo Ibero-Americano* 82(295), 505–30.

21 Ribadeneira includes a chapter on Garcia's work in founding the hospital in Osaka: Marcelo de Ribadeneira (1601), *Historia de las islas del archipielago y reynos de la gran China, Tartaria, Cuchinchina, Malaca, Sian, Camboxa y Iappon, y de los sucedido en ellos a los religiosos descalços, de la Orden del Seraphico Padre San Franicsco* (Madrid), 450–54. Ribadeneira repeats here that Garcia's skill with the language earned him the respect of those around him, Christian and non-Christian.

22 Ribadeneira (1601), "De la vida del santo martyr Fray Gonçalo Garcia", *Historia de las islas* (see FN 21), 647–655.

23 Most of the accounts of the martyrdoms that include descriptions of the individual martyrs include this detail - Juan de Santa Maria's very short bios includes that he is "layco, natural de Bayzan, en la India Oriental, hijo de padre Portugues, y de madre natural de la misma India".

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Ribandeneira's life, as the author suggests that Garcia was shaped by the example of González during his time with the Jesuits in his youth. His virtue, then, was carefully cultivated by the Jesuits.[24]

Ribadeneira concludes his section on Garcia's eight years among the Jesuits with a brief tidbit, remarking: "because he was not admitted as a brother in the Society of Jesus as he had wished. . ."[25] He attributes this to a simple delay in spite of Jesuit enthusiasm for his entrance. Following these delays, Garcia left Bassein for the life of a merchant in Macau. This moment is tantalizing, because it suggests, just faintly, that Garcia might have faced challenges in entering the order. Notoriously picky and particularly uncertain about the inclusion of non-Europeans as full members (all of whom needed to be consecrated priests), it is entirely possible that his mestiço status prevented his entrance.[26] And Juan de Santa Maria's bio included the descriptor "layco" after his name — this means that while Gonçalo was admitted to the Franicscan order, it was through the lay, or tertiary order, which was a lesser order that prevented the brothers from full inclusion, and disallowed consecration into the priesthood.[27] Long the preserve of less affluent individuals who could not afford entry or did not completely meet the requirements, in the period of early modern global Catholicism, the lay orders became the repository of non Europeans who wished to join religious orders.

There were few people of color who were admitted to orders and almost none who achieved the full rank of monk, friar, or nun, except on their deathbeds. There has long been uncertainty among scholars — and indeed among early modern theologians — about who could be consecrated as priests. While there appear to have been ordained priests in areas like India and Central Africa, the numbers were small, and canon lawyers tended to argue that the relative newness of non Europeans to the Catholic family meant that they had not yet achieved the proper level of spiritual preparedness.[28] We see the same logic in the sixteenth-century Spanish blood purity laws, levied against *conversos* and *moriscos*, which were adopted by all Spanish orders. Theologians argued for spiritual equality on one hand but for that those of certain heritages (ie, white, European, old Christian) were uniquely spiritually suited to religious life. Ines Zupanov argues that Provincial Council of Goa in 1585 stipulated that new converts needed to wait at least 15 years post baptism in order to be consecrated as priests — the Council suggests that that such ordinations were occurring, though in 1606 ecclesiastical officials moved quickly to declare that only members of the

24 Ribadeneira (1601), *Historia de las islas* (see FN 21), 648.

25 Ribadeneira (1601), *Historia de las islas* (see FN 21), 649–50.

26 The early seventeenth-century Jesuits debated about whether or not Chinese Christians could become Jesuit priests - the general of the order, Acquaviva, argued that they were too "new" to the faith: CLOSSY, L. (2008), *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions* (Cambridge), 43.

27 JUAN DE SANTA MARIA (1601), *Relacion del martirio que seys Padres Descalços Franciscanos, tres hermanos de la Compañia de Iesus, y decisiete Iapones Christianos padecieron en Iapon* (Madrid), f.137v. Juan's descriptions of the individual martyrs (Franciscan and Japanese alike) were very short - something about place of origin and/or parentage and their status. Gonçalo and one other Franciscan were distinguished by the term "layco" while the others, like Felipe de Jesús were not.

28 For a more nuanced and complex view of priesthood for non-white Catholics, see PAIVA, J.P. (2023), "Clero secular e cor da pele no império português", in: *Revista Portuguesa de História* LIV, 9–45. Paiva argues that until the middle of the sixteenth century, the Portuguese permitted consecrating priests from India, America, and Africa., See also MARCOCCI, G. (2016), "Blackness and Heathenism. Color, Theology, and Race in the Portuguese World, c. 1450–1600", in: *Annuario Colombiano de Historia Social y de la Cultura* 43/2, 33–57.

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Brahmin class could become priests.[29] Moreover, Zupanov points out that in South Asia, as in the Americas, only *mestiços* — and very few Indians — were admitted into religious orders before the end of the eighteenth century.

Whatever the reason for Garcia's delay, he appears to have left his calling behind in favor of a more worldly interest in trade. His training by the Jesuits provided him with a crucial and highly lucrative skill: his ability to speak Japanese.

Japan

One interesting feature of Ribadeneiro's mini hagiography of Gonçalo in his *Historia de las islas* was the way he jumped over pieces of Gonçalo's life to focus on his conversion to the Franciscan order in Manila and quickly to Japan, likely as a result of the need to keep the narrative as tightly bound as possible for the small space allotted per martyr. Other authors, such as Juan de Santa Maria, who published an early account of the martyrdoms, provided additional details.[30] While omitting any information about Gonçalo's early life, Juan briefly discussed his time in Japan and the Philippines before conversion. He commented: "Gonçalo Garcia had been a merchant and visited Japan for many years in trade, giving them advice; hearing about the discovery of the Philippines, he came to Manila."[31] The Pacific trade between Macau and Japan played a crucial role in the economic world of the early modern Pacific. Because of political tensions between Japan and China, the Portuguese had an opportunity to act as intermediaries by leveraging their presidio in Macau as a way station through which trade could be directed.[32] Garcia's background as cultural intermediary and good fortune to learn Japanese back home made him uniquely suited to slotting into the mercantile opportunities of the Estado de Índia. He launched into the Pacific trade and the sacred historians report that he quickly gained the respect of Japanese traders and political leaders.[33]

Garcia leveraged his mestiço status as an economic broker to enter into the lucrative trading circuits starting in Macau. He traveled widely from Macau to Japan and then to the Philippines, gaining trust and experience, relying on his excellent Japanese to gain a reputation as a valuable partner. Spanish settlements in the Philippines (Spanish presence in Cebu in 1565, Manila founded 1571) and the rapid establishment of the Manila galleon to

29 ŽUPANOV, I.G. (2017), "South Asia", in: Hsia, R.P. (Ed.), *A Companion to Early Modern Catholic Global Missions* (Leiden), 241.

30 DE SANTA MARIA (1601), *Relacion del martirio* (see FN 27). Accounts of the Nagasaki martyrdoms were often folded into larger mission histories. For just a few examples beyond Ribadeneira and Juan de Santa Maria, see FRANCISCO TELLO DE GUZMÁN (1598), *Relacion que Don Francisco Tello, governador de las Philippinas embio a seys Frayles Españoles de la Orden de San Francisco, que crucificaron los del Iapon* (Seville); LUIS DE GUZMÁN (1601), *Historia de las missiones que han hecho los religiosos de la Compañia de Iesus, para predicar el sancto euangelio en la India Oriental, y en los reynos de la China y Iapon* (Alcalá); and MILLARES CARLO, A./ CALO, J. (1954) (Eds.), *Testimonios auténticos acerca de los Protomártires del Japón* (Mexico) (my thanks to Liam Brockey for this reference).

31 DE SANTA MARIA (1601), *Relacion del martirio* (see FN 27), 151v-152r.

32 OKA, M. (2021), *The Namban Trade*: Merchants and Missionaries in 16th and 17th c. Japan (Leiden).

33 On the entanglement of missionary work and trade, see UCERLER, A.J. (2017), "The Christian Missions in Japan in the Early Modern Period", in: Hsia, R.P. (Ed.), *A Companion to Early Modern Catholic Global Missions* (Leiden): 303–43; VU THANH, H. (2016), "The Role of the Franciscans in the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the Philippines and Japan in the 16th–17th Centuries: Transpacific Geopolitics?", in: *Itinerario* 40/2, 239–256; and OKA (2021), *The Namban Trade* (see FN 32). See also WARD, H.N. (2009), *Women Religious Leaders in Japan's Christian Century, 1549–1650* (Farnham).

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take valuable goods and people from Manila to the Americas and thence onto Europe, created another circuit of trade opportunities, binding the lucrative Pacific more closely to markets in the Americas. Economic ambition brought Gonçalo to this Spanish colonial outpost, and it was in the Philippines that his life took another dramatic turn. Juan de Santa Maria described this moment: "He came to Manila, where he returned for business, visiting the Convent of the Discalced of the glorious Father San Francisco. The Lord offered him with this first grace, so that he might take this holy habit: in this he passed so well that he gained the second, which was to die a martyr, and while he had spent so much of his life with earthly profits, this did little to gain him the celestial martyrdom."[34]

Like the Garcia, the Japanese ruler, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, saw new trading opportunities with the advent of the Manila trade. He appears to have understood that the Portuguese Jesuits had the ability to facilitate the trade between Macau and China, but the Spanish Franciscans opened the doors to the Manila galleon and to trading opportunities on the other side of the Pacific. Eager to gain a foothold in Japan, Franciscans in Manila quickly stepped in, offering to facilitate diplomatic relations with the Philippine authorities in return for being in Japan. As valuable as Garcia's Japanese had been in the context of the "Namban trade", he had much to offer his Philippine brothers who did not have the same access, experience, and linguistic ability that their new member did.[35]

The spectacular success of the Christian evangelization of Japan made it a unique example of the success of missions – hundreds of thousands of Japanese converts, some of whom were multigenerational rather than newly baptized, had formed communities by the end of the sixteenth century. This far outpaced conversions anywhere else in the world, with the exception of places that were under colonial dominations, such as the Americas. But in Japan, the conversions were not forced and the European missionaries remained present only at the sufferance of the Japanese rulers. When the tide turned, it turned dramatically, with devastating consequences for Japanese Christians.[36]

As we have seen, Franciscan chronicles all discussed the key role that Gonçalo played in the complex negotiations that brought the Franicscans to Japan and kept the lines of communication open with the emperor. Busquets remarked that the Franciscans were not supposed to be in Japan, and that their insistence that they were present as diplomats

34 De Santa Maria (1601), *Relacion del martirio* (see FN 27), 152r: "Fue seruido el Señor preuenirle con su primera gracia, para que assi se dispusiesse a recibir el santo habito: en el qual aprouò tan bien que alcançò la segunda, que fue morir Martyr, y donde tanto tiempo auia gastado en las temporales ganancias, en muy poco alcancò la celestial del Martyrio." Ribadeneira puts forward a more nuanced account of how Gonçalo came to appreciate the humility of the friars and wished to join them.

35 Oka (2021), *The Namban Trade* (see FN 32); Tremml, B.M. (2012), "The Global and the Local: Problematic Dynamics of the Triangular Trade in Early Modern Manila", in: *Journal of World History* 23/3, 555–586; Lockard, C.A. (2010), "'The Sea Common to All': Maritime Frontiers, Port Cities, and Chinese Traders in the Southeast Asian Age of Commerce, ca. 1400–1750", in: *Journal of World History* 21/2, 219–247; and Zurndorfer, H. (2018), "Encounter and Coexistence: Portugal and Ming China 1511–1610: Rethinking the Dynamics of a Century of Global-Local Relations", in: Pérez García, M./ de Sousa, L. (Eds.), *Global History and New Polycentric Approaches* (Basingstoke), 37–51.

36 On Japan's 'hidden Christians,' see Miyazaki K. (2018), "The Kakure Kirshitan Tradition", in: Mullins, M. (Ed.), *Handbook of Christianity in Japan* (Leiden), 19–34. One important exception to the binary articulated about global Catholicism is the history of the kingdom of the Kongo, where the Manicongo was baptized by Portuguese visitors at the end of the fifteenth century. While historians have debated how far Christianity penetrated beyond elite families, it remained an independent, Christian kingdom for years – neither colonial nor marginalized minorities – Kongolese Christians were a significant force in early modern global Catholicism: Fromont, C. (2014), *The Art of Conversion*: Christian Visual Culture in the Kingdom of Kongo (Chapel Hill).

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derived from the fact that the Church had forbidden them from missionizing there, as it was a sole privilege of the Jesuit Order. Official status aside, Gonçalo was invaluable in Japan as someone who could speak Japanese. Once in Japan, Juan described his interpreter role with the leader of the Franciscan mission, Friar Pedro Baptista as acting as his "tongue", specifically because Taycoama have a "particular affection" for him, having known him for many years when Gonçalo was a merchant. Nearly every reference to Garcia in Ribadeneira's book includes a comment on his ability to speak Japanese, how it earned him respect, how he spoke it better than the other brothers (including himself), how he translated for the group. As a result, Garcia is a frequent figure in accounts of the martyrdom in his capacity as translator; he facilitated nearly every interaction between the friars and Hideyoshi, even though it was more than one man was capable of to hold the alliance between the Francicsans and Japanese rulers together.[37]

One Franciscan author described the friars as being received by a high official (a man referred to in Ribadeneira's text without a name but as "the king") with warmth but, but with a demand for a declaration of obedience. The brothers protested, pointing out that the letter he sent to them in Luzon (Philippines) was about friendship not fealty, while the king explained that changing geopolitical circumstances, including a conflict with the kingdom of Korea, made such a declaration mandatory. As Christians, the Franciscans told them, they could not do this: "they could not swear obedience to any earthly king." The ruler appeared mollified and mentioned that he desired the friendship of the king of Spain.[38] The reference to the king of Spain here underscores the idea that the emperor saw Franciscans as intermediaries who would facilitate the emperor's engagement with the Galleon trade. At the moment Gonçalo's group of Franciscans arrived, only European religious who were acting as trading partners were permitted. As a result, their negotiations with Hideyoshi remained tense and deceptive. The real political-religious dynamics in Japan at this moment are too complex to do justice here, but

Part of the success of the rapid spread — in addition to official disengagement — was the establishment of networks of lay Christians who organized communities of worship in the absence of sufficient priests and European missionaries, at a scale that was not seen in other sites (though we do see similar dynamics in China). What appeared to be a sudden shift in political position regarding Christianity — partially spurred by Japanese leaders becoming alarmed about the effect that the rapid spread of the religion on Japanese cultural and political structures, and possibly alarmed by the ever growing strength of Spanish imperial power in the East Asian Pacific. Edicts against Christianity began to be issued, though it was not officially banned until 1620 — but even before 1597, persecutions began, accelerating into the Nagasaki martyrdoms after a Spanish shipwreck off the coast of Japan included a Spaniard who allegedly boasted of Spanish intentions of colonizing Japan. While the hagiographers tended to focus on those officially martyred, the scale of torture and imprisonment would have been much larger. Christianity went underground, but there is much evidence to suggest that it was secretly practiced for centuries afterwards. But in the first sweep of death, twenty-six men were mutilated (in their ears), marched to

37 For a brief example of Juan de Santa Maria referring to Gonçalo as the "tongue", see *Relacion del martirio*, 15v. In one example from Ribadeneira, the author comments that Gonçalo did the talking as "he spoke the language better than I". Ribadeneira (1601), *Historia de las islas* (see FN 21), 690.

38 Ribadeneira provides a lengthy account of the early negotiations between the Spanish in Manila and the "king" of Japan, Ribadeneira (1601), *Historia de las islas* (see FN 21), 355–366.

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Nagasaki, and executed: Six of the martyrs were Franciscans, three Jesuits, and seven Japanese (including three boys).

Ribadeneira's account of the martyrdom called attention to its global register, not only in the Japanese Christians who died, but also in the geographic origin of the Franciscans — specifically, Gonçalo Garcia and Felipe de Jesús. Felipe had been born in Mexico of Spanish parents, and quickly adopted by Mexicans as an important saint following their beatification in 1627; he eventually was declared the patron saint of Mexico City.[39] Ribadeneira declared:

"Because it seemed that God wished to not only celebrate the Spanish nation, in giving martyrs of Old Castile, Basque country, and Galicia, he also wished to provide the opportunity to the West Indies of Mexico and the East Indies to be the mother of martyrs."[40] This is a crucial moment in the text, as Ribadeneira reminded readers that the global glory of martyrs in Japan was specifically Spanish and imperial (here he elided the Portuguese East Indies into Spanish territories, possibly because the work was printed during the Union of Crowns). Japan's geographic placement in the Pacific middle between India and Mexico, highlighting its centrality — Japan was where East and West collided in a moment of spectacular glory. This geographic collision was only possible through the deaths of Garcia and Felipe.

The large scale martyrdoms in 1597 sent shockwaves through the Catholic world. Although there had been episodic violence against missionaries in North Africa, the Caribbean, and New Spain in the sixteenth century, these by and large had been military skirmishes of local elites fighting back against colonial incursions and/or attempts to destroy their sacred spaces and objects. But missionaries who appeared as visitors, attempting to make themselves useful at court and engage in gentle persuasion to Christianity, must also be seen as particularly vulnerable, as their safety was predicated on the sympathy and protection of a specific ruler. The missions in Ethiopia provide an example alongside that of Japan where a shift in rulership could bring an entire mission crashing down, as missionaries fled or were killed. The other was Japan. The lurch to persecution in Japan created a volatile and violent series of purges of Christians, and the combination of official persecution of a large Christian population and a large scale martyrdom launched the early days of Christian persecution by the Romans into the present, sparking the imagination and activated fantasies of martyrdom to new levels.

Accounts of the Japanese martyrdoms spread immediately – through manuscript, gossip, and printed texts. The Nagasaki martyrdoms were not the first attributed to the various religious upheavals in the sixteenth century, but they were the only ones enshrined liturgically with their beatification in 1627. Their ramping up of celebrating their Japanese martyrdoms was reinforced by a simultaneous sharp rise in their celebration of the Moroccan martyrs, providing them the narrative of a centuries-old historical arch of

39 On devotion to Felipe in Mexico, see CONOVER, C. (2011), "Saintly Biography and the Cult of San Felipe de Jesús in Mexico City, 1597–1697", in: *The Americas* 67/4, 441–466. For an eighteenth-century hagiography of Felipe, see BALTASAR DE MEDINA (1751), *Vida, martyrio, y beatificacion del invicto proto-martyr de el Japon, san Felipe de Jesus, patron de Mexico, su patria, imperial corte de Nueva Espana, en el nuevo mundo* (Madrid).

40 Ribadeneira (1601), *Historia de las islas* (see FN 21), 647: "Porque parece, que no solo quiso illustrar el Señor la nacion Española, dandole dos Martyres de Castilla la Vieja, y otros dos de Vizcaya, y Galicia, pero quiso repartir la honra de ser madre de un martyr, a la India Occidental de Mexico, y que la India Oriental lo fuesse de otro."

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martyrdom from the inception of their order to the present day.[41] The Jesuits, Dominicans, and even Augustinians remained in Japan past 1597 and faced waves of martyrdoms through the first three decades of the seventeenth century. The proliferation of printed texts by all these religious orders created something of a competition for martyrdoms (a practice that Jesuits had escalated through their continuous and elaborate celebrations of their many martyrs).[42]

One of the major features of representations of group martyrdoms in sacred art is that their visual representation and cultic devotions did not separate out individuals. While sometimes they are provided with name plates, the idea is not that these are individuals, but part of a collective, and the greater number, the greater the spiritual power of the event (and the greater spiritual power of the order to whom they belonged). In textual accounts, authors provide names and sometimes short biographical information of each martyr, in sacred art, unique identities disappear even farther into the collection. While orders occasionally pulled out individuals as part of cycles of martyrs, this was relatively rare.[43] Felipe de Jesús was leveraged by his Mexican brothers as a way to elevate the Christian perfection of the "new" world creoles, giving his cult a specific purpose for separation from the collective. Gonçalo Garcia's cult was also peeled away from the collective, for reasons far more baffling.

Brazil

The journey of Garcia's cult from European texts about the martyrdoms of Nagasaki to the foundation of an individual cult to the saint in eighteenth century Brazil is a shadowy story. We don't yet understand all the pieces that made it possible for Gonçalo's cult as an individual to pop up in eighteenth-century Brazil. Severing Garcia from his fellow martyrs, his cult took on new meanings that reflected the specific devotional interest, priorities, and patterns of Brazil, and perhaps Portugal as well. No longer a representative of imperial power, the missionary successes of the Franciscans, or the global reach of Christianity,

41 In fact, in baroque Portuguese churches, one finds the Morocco martyrs much more often than the Nagasaki, which makes one wonder how quickly the excitement about the martyrdoms faded by the end of the century. Even in Porto's Franciscan church, which portrays the two together in the same altarpiece, the star of the show is Morocco, and Nagasaki is much smaller and above.

42 One of the most striking examples of early modern martyrologies is Mathias Tanner's celebration of Jesuit deaths: MATHIAS TANNER (1675), *Societas Jesu usque ad sanguinis et vitae profusionem …* (Prague). This volume is lavishly illustrated with engravings depicting the gruesome deaths of Jesuits brothers from its inception to the end of the seventeenth century throughout the world.

43 For a few examples of the voluminous literature that examines the long and rich textual and visual history of the Nagasaki martyrs and their meaning in early modern devotions, see: BROCKEY (2016), "Books of Martyrs" (see FN 11); PALOMO, F. (2022), "Global Images for Global Worship: Narratives, Paintings, and Engravings of the Martyrs of Japan in Seventeenth-Century Iberian Worlds", in: Capriotti, G./ Fabre, P.-A./ Pavone, S. (Eds.), *Eloquent Imagines*: Evangelisation, Conversion and Propaganda in the Global World of the Early Modern Period (Leuven), 275–298; ROLDÁN-FIGUEROA, R. (2021), *The Martyrs of Japan*: Publication History and Catholic Missions in the Spanish World (Spain, New Spain, and the Philippines, 1597–1700) (Leiden); OMATA RAPPO, H. (2021), "History and Historiography of Martyrdom in Japan", in: Chu, C.Y., Leung, B. (Eds.) *The Palgrave Handbook of the Catholic Church in East Asia* (Singapore); and PADRÓN, R. (2006), "The Blood of the Martyrs Is the Seed of the Monarchy: Empire, Utopia, and the Faith in Lopes' Triunfo de la fee en los reynos de Japón", in: *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 36/3: 517–537. Omata Rappo has written extensively on this topic.

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Garcia became, quite specifically, a patron saint who advocated for mixed-race communities in Brazil.[44]

The first references to Gonçalo Garcia that I have found in Brazil came from Franciscan friar Antonio de Santa Maria Jaboatão (d. 1779) in Recife in 1749, while another printed work appeared for similar celebrations in 1746 Pernambuco by José dos Santos Cosme e Damiao.[45] Unlike many pamphlets recounting feast day celebrations and/or sermons, the text that includes Jaboatão's sermon is over 150 pages long, a hefty and detailed tome. Its main author, Manuel da Madre de Deus, claims that devotion to Gonçalo was brought to Recife from Portugal by a "brown man", Antonio Ferreira, at the beginning of the eighteenth century; when Ferreira returned from Portugal, he brought a small image of the saint with him. *Pardo* men then took up devotion to Gonçalo because he was "of their color".[46] Didier Lahon — an important scholar of Black confraternities in Portugal — demonstrates devotion to Gonçalo around the same time in Portugal — there was a confraternity dedicated to him in Porto in a confraternity for "pardos", where Lahon describes him as the "Patron saint of the Padros of Porto" in 1740.[47] It is interesting to think about this circulation - how and why did Gonçalo appear in 18th century Porto? We know that devotion to Black saints proliferated - among White portuenses — in the eighteenth century, and was brought to many towns in the Minho region of Northern Portugal. But my research into these devotions has revealed that these were brought back to Portugal by merchants who made their wealth in Brazil and there discovered them (even though devotion to Black saints far predated this in other zones of Portugal).[48] It is entirely possible, however, that in the case of Garcia, that his cult began in Porto for the specific reason of ministering to enslaved and free Black communities, as devotion to other Black saints was proliferating during this period.

Jaboatão, as he preached a sermon about the holy man as the main part of the festival celebrating the elevation of his image in the Recife Igreja do Irmandade da Nossa Senhora do Livramento dos Homens pretos. Jaboatão's extraordinary sermon has caught the attention of several scholars because of one of its main themes: whether or not Gonçalo was in fact "pardo", and that this was crucial to the role the friar thought the saint could play in facilitating devotion to Brazil's "*mestiço*" or mixed race population. The doubt seems to have arisen because everyone knew that he was not of African descent, and therefore might

44 On the cult of Gonçalo Garcia in early modern Brazil, see: DOS SANTOS BEZERRA, J./ CORDEIRO ALMEIDA, S. (2011), "'Pompa e circunstância' a um santo pardo: São Gonçalo Garcia e a luta dos pardos por inserção social no XVIII", in: *Revista História Unisinos* 16/1, 118–129; VIANA, L. (2016), "Gonçalo Garcia: identités et relations raciales dans l'histoire d'un saint mulâtre de l'Amérique portugaise", in: Cottias, M./ Mattos, H. (Eds.), *Esclavage et subjectivités*: dans l'Atlantique luso-brésilien et français (XVII^{e}-XX^{e} siècles) (Marseilles); and VALERIO, M. (2022), "Pardos' Triumph: The Use of Festival Material Culture for Socioracial Promotion in Eighteenth-Century Pernambuco", in: *Journal of Festive Studies* 3/1, 47–71.

45 MANUEL DA MADRE DE DEUS (1746), *Summa triunfal da nova, e grande celebridade do glorioso, e invicto martyr s. Goncalo Garcia: dedicada, e offerecida ao senhor capitaõ Joze Rabello de Vasconcellos por seu autor Soterio da Sylva Ribeira: com huma collacaõ de varios folgedos, e dancas, oraca panegirica* , que ricitou o *doutissimo, e reverendissimo padre fr. Antonio de Santa Maria Jaboatam ... na igreja dos pardos da Senhora do Livramento, em Pernambuco no primeiro de mayo do anno de 1745* (Lisbon); and JOSÉ DOS SANTOS COSME E DAMIAO (1746), *Sermam de São Gonçalo Garcia, pregado no terceiro dia do solemnisso triduo que celebrão dos homens pardos* (Lisbon).

46 DA MADRE DE DEUS (1746), *Summa triunfal da nova* (see FN 45)*,* 3–4.

47 LAHON, D. (2003), "Esclavage, confréries noires, sainteté noire et pureté de sang au Portugal (XVIe–XVIIIe siècles)", in: *Lusitana Sacra 2nd série* 15, 146. Larissa Viana made the specific connection to this work by Lahon from S*umma triunfa*l's reference to Porto: "Gonçalo Garcia : identités et relations raciale."

48 ROWE (2019), *Black Saints* (see FN 6), 131–135.

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not have been considered to 'fit' the colonial category of '*pardo/mulato*'.[49] As such, whether or not he belonged into the racial landscape of early modern Brazil was an open question. Manuel clarified for the reader that the people near Bassein, Gonçalo's birthplace, called themselves "negros indios", even though they were not from Africa. (p.5) Manuel's and Jabaotão's collapse of categories suggest not only the strengthening of a *pardo* creole identity in eighteenth century Brazil, but also the ways in which blackness and mestizaje themselves had global resonances.[50] Scholars might be interested to the note that when José de Santos Cosme e Damien discussed Gonçalo's parentage of a Portuguese man (from Guimarães, he noted) and a mother from Bassein, the fruit of this union fit the definition of "hybrid" offered in Bento Pereira's Latin Vocabulary, as he was the product of one native and one foreigner.[51] It is also worth noting that José does not employ any racial or casta terms in this paragraph.

Jaboatão's extravagant celebration of the saint included a discussion of his "brownness" by declaring that such a complexion was "more perfect than white or black".[52] This statement echoes one hagiography of the seventeenth century mixed race (*mulato*) saint, Martín de Porres. Here the Dominican author explains that because he had a white father and a black mother, Martín inhabited the twin virtues and colors of the Dominican order — purity and penance.[53] The author does not declare Martín "more perfect" but the description of exemplarity is certainly present. While this was a passing reference in Martín hagiography, it is a topic that Jabaotão picks up at length, continuing another trope from hagiographies of black saints — that one could be white with a black heart or black with a white (virtuous) heart. He continues: "And who could deny that brown skin, which is the result of black and white, could not aspire to the full perfection resulting from this principle?" Here he claims that the perfect mixture of black and white balanced the potential hypocrisy or hidden virtues instead bringing them into harmony. Here Gonçalo's cult had the power to symbolize pardoness as a distinct social, political, and religious

49 JANAINA SANTOS BEZERRA's 2010 dissertation and 2012 essay unpack the racial complexity of the friar's discourse.

50 We can think here with Seijas, who argues that the colonial category of "chino" in Mexico transitioned into "indio" as Spanish law referred to most non-Mediterranean native people as "indios", including those from the Philippines, East Asia, and India. The connection between Indigeneity and mestizaje involved in this transformation might help explain Garcia's eighteenth-century incarnation in Brazil: SEIJAS (2014), *Asian Slaves* (see FN 14), especially Chapter 5.

51 "O mesmo traz o Padre Bento Pereira no seu Vocabulario Latino em a palavra Hybrida, onde dá o mesmo significado, ou signifcaçaõ ao filho gerado de pays, hum natural, e outro estrangeiro", DOS SANTOS COSME E DAMIAO (1746), *Sermam* (see FN 45), 4. Here we see that the concept of hybridity as applied to colonial objects and people is quite old.)

52 Antonio de Santa Maria Jaboatão (1751), *Discurso histórico, geográfico, genealógico, politico e encomiástico, recitado em a nova celebridade, que dedicaram os pardos de Pernambuco ao santo da sua cor o B. Gonçalo Garcia* (Lisboa), 38. See also Manuel da Madre de Deus (1753), *Summa triunfal da nova, e grande celebridade do glorioso, e invicto martyr s. Goncalo Garcia* (Lisboa).

53 BERNARDO DE MEDINA (1675), *Vida del prodigiosa del Venerable siervo de Dios Fr. Martin de Porras, natural de Lima, de la Tercera Orden de NP Santo Domingo. Bernardo de Medina, natural de la misma Ciudad de los Reyes, orden de Predicadores* (Madrid). Medina writes: "Providencia fue en Dios darle à Fray Martin tan desiguales progenitores, para que advirtiendo la baxeza de la madre, se humillasse, y conociendo la calidad del padre, se mostrasse à Dios agradecido, que todo lo ordena al bien de los que le aman. . .; sino e sque digamos, que e el color blanco, y negro de los padres, quiso Dios pronosticar el habito de Santo Domingo, que via de vestir con el tiempo" (5r..) This passage is discussed in ROWE (2019), *Black Saints* (see FN 6), 229.

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category (following much older colonial categorizations of people) at a moment when they were becoming increasingly important to the landscape of Pernambuco.

A thousand miles away in Minais Gerais, John Marquez argues that devotion to Goncalo did not appear until the third quarter of the 18th century. Such mixed race people were both enslaved and free, a common pattern in confraternities for people of color throughout the Americas. [John C. Marquez, "Afflicted Slaves, Faithful Vassals: Sevícias, Manumissions, and Enslaved Petitioners in Eighteenth-Century Brazil", Slavery & Abolition 43 (1) (2022): 91–119.] In places with large numbers of such confraternities, they often organized themselves around racial lines or even ethnic lines (Confraternities of Black People from Angola, for example). Specific confraternities for mixed race people was a late sixteenth century practice, and they were established in smaller numbers than those specifically designated "for Black people". It is unclear whether mixed race people joined Black brotherhoods when ones for *mulatos* did not exist. What we also see here is the complexity of cultic devotion — its fits and starts, the ways saints could be dropped in one place and picked up in a vastly different context with a completely different meaning ascribed to them, or they could maintain a long (even centuries old) presence and devotion while still changing their spiritual meaning to their devotees.

Gonçalo was appropriated from his South Asian origins and role as a member in the most important (arguably) martyrdom of the early modern period, which was a global phenomenon, to be a representative of the spiritual and social lives of eighteenth-century mixed-race Brazilians during a time when local dynamics of mixed race ("brown") creoles reached significance that was both spiritual-social and political. There is no better story of global Catholicism in action than this one as it threads early modern Catholic priorities and spiritual values — global missions, conversion, martyrdom, competition with religious orders — with the real constraints faced by people of color in the large and terrible arc of Portuguese colonialism and human trafficking and enslavement, both Pacific and Atlantic.

The Pacific context of Garcia's life and education provided him access with greater mobility and opportunities for wealth-accumulation that might have been possible for mixed-race individuals in Brazil and other sites in colonial America. His education and professional experience in Japan made him a welcome member of a religious order with a specific, overwhelming desire to enter the mission field there, and his death brought him to the heights of Catholic glory and polemical significance. The global reach of the Franciscans and their devotion to martyrs brought Garcia to Portugal and Brazil, but the meaning of his life and afterlive in the Atlantic world took on a significantly different valence.

No longer a representation of the triumph of Christianity in the East, Garcia became an advocate for free, mixed race communities seeking to carve out a communal identity distinct from enslaved and Black people. A purely Brazilian view of Garcia's cult might suggest that it was inextricably intertwined with race (and the racist assumptions and limitations that went with it), yet none of the authors of the Japan missions made more than cursory mention of his background and none whatsoever to color or race. Whatever currents might have affected Garcia's life as a biracial man in a colonial world, early seventeenth-century authors did not see this as central to his identity as a saint. This is in stark contrast to the fixing of Garcia's identity with a specific race/social status, and similar uses of Black saints such as Benedict of Palermo, whose blackness was a core feature of cultic devotion. Scholars of the saints are well aware of the ways in which cultic devotion altered the meaning of holy people over time and space, yet the specific case study of

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Garcia tests scholarship that focuses on global missions from a European and/or colonial perspective. While Garcia's story is deeply embedded in colonialization and the familiar entanglement of empire and global Catholicism, it provides an avenue for analysis that centers marginalized figures and their impact on the massive reshaping of Catholicism from 1550–1800.

Abstract

When Gonçalo Garcia joined the group of Franciscan friars martyred by Japanese rulers at Nagasaki in 1597, little note was made of his ethnic and geographic origins. The Japanese Christians martyred generated much interest by historians and hagiographers, while Garcia's backstory as a product of a Portuguese father and a local, South Asian mother were little remarked. Yet his backstory reveals significant Pacific entanglements: He began his adult life as a merchant, leveraging his position as a bridge between two cultural worlds to expand his market, traveling throughout the Pacific, especially Japan. His later life as a Franciscan friar brought him again to Japan to meet his death. As part of the group martyrdom, Garcia's own cult remained obscure until it surfaced dramatically a century and a half later as patron to a confraternity devoted to mixed-race people in Brazil. This paper approaches Gonçalo Garcia's life and afterlife as a global microhistory, illuminating the complex ties between Portuguese colonial territories, trade, and global Catholicism.

Von Indien nach Brasilien: die pazifischen Reisen des Märtyrers St. Gonçalo Garcia

Als sich Gonçalo Garcia der Gruppe der Franziskanermönche anschloss, die 1597 im japanischen Nagasaki das Martyrium erlitt, fand seine ethnische und geografische Herkunft zunächst kaum Beachtung. Die japanischen Christen, die den Märtyrertod erfuhren, erregten das Interesse von Historikern und Hagiographen, während Garcias familiärer Hintergrund — als Kind eines portugiesischen Vaters und einer einheimischen, südasiatischen Mutter — kaum beachtet wurde. Dabei weist sein Werdegang erhebliche pazifische Verflechtungen auf: Er begann sein Erwachsenenleben als Kaufmann, der seine Position als Brücke zwischen zwei kulturellen Welten nutzte, um seinen Markt zu erweitern, und bereiste den gesamten Pazifik, insbesondere Japan. Sein späteres Leben als Franziskanermönch brachte ihn erneut nach Japan, wo er den Tod fand. Als Teil einer Märtyrergruppe blieb Garcias eigener Kult im Dunkeln, bis dieser anderthalb Jahrhunderte später in Brasilien auf dramatische Weise als Patron einer Bruderschaft auftauchte, die sich um gemischt-rassigen Menschen kümmert. In diesem Beitrag wird Gonçalo Garcia‘s Leben und Nachleben als globale Mikrogeschichte gelesen, die die komplexen Verbindungen zwischen portugiesischen Kolonialgebieten, Handel und globalem Katholizismus beleuchtet.

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"More of a Mission Outpost Than a Colony"?[1] – The Philippines as an Intercultural and Geostrategic Contact Zone

CHRISTOPH NEBGEN

Following Klaus Koschorke's suggestions for this conference and its proceedings, the present essay does not contain the conclusions of a clearly defined and coherent research project, but is more of a reflection on different topics related to the Philippines, Mexico, and the Pacific world. My own research priorities usually focus on the history of religious orders, the interconnectedness of global history enforced by members from the Roman Catholic Church in the early modern period, and aspects of the so-called popular piety in that period and beyond. This article will thus present a combination of heterogeneous observations, in order to stimulate further discussion and questions in the readers´ minds.

My observations involve three main fields: first, the geostrategic significance of the Philippines in general (especially for religious communities); secondly, the pastoral exchanges between Mexico and the Philippines; and finally, the intercultural relations involving two or more partners, for this purpose focusing on the case-study of the canonized Lorenzo Ruiz.

Geostrategic Importance of the Philippines

In 1682, an Austrian Jesuit and missionary in the Philippines, Father Andrea Mancker,[2] sent a letter to the Procurator in charge of his province in Vienna, describing the daily living conditions, climate, and economy in these Spanish colonies.[3] He wrote this account on the way to his next destination, China, which was the real goal of his missionary zeal, and where he was finally allowed to go. In this detailed document, he mentions in one sentence the point that, in my opinion, characterizes very well the geostrategic importance of these numerous islands called Philippines by the Spanish:

1 Quoted from BOURNE, E.G. (1907), *Discovery, Conquest and Early History of the Philippine Islands* (Cambridge).

2 The only biographical information on him: HUONDER, A. (1899), *Deutsche Jesuitenmissionäre des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts.* Ein Beitrag zur Missionsgeschichte und zur deutschen Biographie (Freiburg im Breisgau), 170.

3 The whole letter can be found in a comprehensive edition work of the 17th/18th century: *Der Neue Welt=Bott mit allerhand Nachrichten dern Missionarium Soc. Jesu.* Allerhand so Lehr= als Geist=reiche Brieff, Schrifften und Reise=Beschreibungen, welche von denen Missionariis der Gesellschaft JESU aus den Beyden Indien, und anderen über Meer gelegenen Ländern, meistentheils von 1730 bis 1740. in Europa angelangt seyn. Jetzt zum erstenmal theils aus Hand=schrifftlichen Urkunden, theils aus denen Französichen Lettres Edifiantes verteutscht und zusammengetragen von JOSEPH STÖCKLEIN, gedachter Societät Jesu Priester. Bände 1–3 Augsburg und Graz: 1727–1736; Bände 4–5 Wien: 1748–1758. This letter was published in part 1 (1727) as Nr. 12, p. 35–40.

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> "From here a strong trade is carried on with most of the peoples who live on earth and different countries from all ends of the world as from China, Portugal, the land of the Moors, Persia, India, the river Ganges, Malabar, Cochin. Greece, Tartary, Armenia, the West Indies, and many other places, with the desire of the Mexican silver to deliver frequent and precious goods here. The Japanese also live here, but since the persecution of the Christians began again, such trade has been stopped. But there is no lack of other heathens who trade with Japan ... The Dutch, English and Danes, who own various islands in the neighbourhood, are forbidden any access. Because they are irreconcilable enemies in all parts of India, without regard to whether they live at peace in Europe."[4]

In his description, Father Mancker mentions all the political and missionary subjects useful for explaining the extraordinary importance of this region for European political and religious leaders. This area was politically and geostrategically fundamental for the the Spaniards, but also for all the other actors in Europe and Asia, and even — of course — for all the religious orders who worked under the rules of the Spanish *patronate* system, but always had their own agenda.[5] We find here all the elements that Luke Clossey observed in his research about merchants, migrants, missionaries and the globalization in the early-modern Pacific, published some years ago.[6]

But what was so special about the strategies of the religious orders? Following Mariano Delgado, after the conquest of Mexico in 1521 the mercantile interest in the Spice Islands converged with the apocalyptic missionary zeal of the mendicant friars working in Mexico. These monks thought they were living close to the eleventh hour of the world (Matthew 20:6), which would soon be followed by the end of time, and finally the longed-for return of the Lord. After the various peoples of Mexico had been "converted" to Christianity relatively quickly, Asia presented itself as a new challenge for the mendicant orders: according to the reports of Francis Xavier, there were millions of people in China and Japan who had not heard of the Gospel yet. The mendicant monks operating in Mexico then found as their next goal the conversion of Asia. As early as 1532, the first superior of the Franciscans of Mexico, Brother Martin de Valencia OFM, waited in vain with eight companions on the Pacific coast for seven months for an opportunity to sail to China. The fleet that Cortes had personally promised for this purpose never arrived. The Philippines were seen by the religious orders operating in Mexico as a springboard for the further evangelization of the whole of Asia.[7]

Only in 1564 did an expedition from Mexico bring a few religious to Asia: the Augustinian Andrés de Urdaneta, who had a previous experience as a sailor in the Pacific world before joining the Order, was an active part of the so-called Legazpi expedition. In 1565, this group of religious men found a way back to Mexico, which was to serve as a path for the Spanish fleet for centuries to come.[8] Until his death in 1572, the Spanish conquistador Miguel López de Legazpi had conquered the archipelago, with few exceptions in the predominantly Muslim islands in the south. He then moved the centre of the Spanish

4 STÖCKLEIN (1727), *Der Neue Welt=Bott* (see FN 3), 36f.

5 For a broader historical context, cf.: TREMML-WERNER, B. (2015), *Spain, China, and Japan in Manila, 1571–1644*. Local Comparisons and Global Connections (Amsterdam).

6 CLOSSEY, L. (2006), "Merchants, Migrants, and Globalization in the Early Modern Pacific", in: *Journal of Global History* 1, 41–58.

7 Cf. the magnificent account by DELGADO, M. (2008), "Die Kirche auf den Philippinen", in: Delgado, M./ Gutiérrez, L. (Eds.), *Die Konzilien auf den Philippinen* (Paderborn), 1–26; and again DELGADO, M. (2021), "Dossier Philippinen", in: *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft* 105, 132–177; PHELAN, J.L. (1967), *The Hispanization of the Philippines*. Spanish aims and filipino responses 1565–1700 (Madison).

8 DELGADO (2008), "Die Kirche" (see FN 7), 5.

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dominion from Cebu Bay to the new city of Manila, founded on the northern island of Luzon for strategic reasons. The geostrategic position seemed to his comrades and him a perfect spot for further expeditions to China and even Japan, about which conquistadors and missionaries were dreaming. It was always the conquistador Legazpi who rediscovered the famous baby Jesus that Magellan had once given to the first "Christians" in 1521, in this way giving to his political actions a religious role as well. At the same time, this was the foundation stone for a popular veneration of the Child Jesus in the Philippines that continues to this day.[9]

Following the example of the Greater Antilles, the Philippines were seen by the Spaniards "as a springboard to further operations".[10] Shortly before his death in 1572, Legazpi wrote to the king about the strategic location of the Philippines: "In short, it is an excellent place if His Majesty plans further operations in the Orient. We are close to China, Japan, the Moluccas, and Borneo. The harbours are good, there is plenty of timber and material for building ships. The natives are peaceful, affable, and easy to convert."[11] The archipelago of the Philippines was originally conquered for the spice trade, but it then became important mainly as the perfect basis for commerce with China and Japan, and for the later conquest and evangelisation of these highly civilized empires. For the religious who travelled with them, however, what mattered the most was the evangelisation of the local population, soon called "Filipinos" by the Europeans.

Pastoral Exchange Processes Between Mexico and the Philippines

In general, the conquest and evangelization of the Philippines followed a similar pattern to what happened in Latin America. However, the time gap and the experience gained during this period made it possible to improve certain methods. The mistakes made in the Caribbean changed the way of proceeding in the Latin American mainland. The pretty rapid conquest of the Philippines by Legazpi and his few comrades-in-arms was naturally facilitated by the linguistic, cultural, and geographical fragmentation of the archipelago and its low population (estimated 300,000 people). The subjugation of the population was not as brutal as that of the Aztec or Inca empires.[12] Here, it was above all the debates initiated in Spain by men like Bartolomé de las Casas about the legal status of the indigenous population in the territories newly conquered for Spain that should be mentioned. Philip II gave specific instructions to Legazpi (in 1569 and on 13 July 1573) on how to proceed with the "discovery, repopulation, and pacification of the West Indies"[13] clearly suggesting a "peaceful" approach and good treatment of the natives.

9 With regard to the pioneering work of the Augustinians: NEBGEN, C. (2021) „Der Augustinerorden und sein Anteil am Aufbau der Kirche in Übersee", in: MEIER, J. (2021) (Ed.), *Die Zeit der Reformation aus anderem Blickwinkel*. Eine lateinamerikanisch-ökumenische Perspektive (Wiesbaden), 105–122. On the immense importance of image veneration in Philippine Catholicism: BAUTISTA, J.J. (2010), *Figuring Catholicism*. An Ethnohistory of the Santo Niño de Cebu (Manila).

10 This formulation originally comes from a Marxist perspective of history, cf. DELGADO (2008), "Die Kirche" (see FN 7), 5, citing Markov, W./ Kossok, M. (1958/59) (Eds.), "Zur Stellung der Philippinen in der spanischen Chinapolitik", *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Karl-Marx-Universität* 8, Heft 1, 7–21. 9.

11 Quoted from DELGADO (2008), "Die Kirche" (see FN 7), 5.

12 Cf. PHELAN (1967), *The Hispanization* (see FN 7), 10.

13 This can be found in: PADRÓN, F.M. (1979), *Teoría y Leyes de la Conquista* (Madrid), 138–148. 515–518.

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Although some sources defined it a "case of peaceful conquest unprecedented in history", colonial wars and the oppression of the natives were not absent, and excesses of violence certainly took place, as well as the unfair burdening of the indigenous people with excessive tributes and forced labour (in the shape of the *encomienda* system).[14] The Augustinian group travelling with the Legazpi expedition were the first to accuse several cases of misconduct. Martín de Rada (1533-1578), who became known as "the Bartolomé de Las Casas of the Philippines", is worth mentioning here. In a letter of June 1st 1573 to the Viceroy of Mexico, Rada described the missionaries' remorse. They thought they could not accept with a clear conscience even a bowl of rice from the Spaniards, "because everything had been received and taken by bad means".[15] It was always a matter of goods illegally extorted from the natives, and used by the Spaniards. Rada described the oppression of the indigenous people, which consisted, for example, of forced labour in shipbuilding, compulsory military service, and the confiscation of food without any compensation.

Members of the mendicant orders once again warned against these excesses, and pointed out the ethical misconduct of the *conquistadores*. Among others, it was the first bishop of Manila, the Dominican Domingo de Salazar, who condemned the unjust treatment of the natives in various memoranda to the crown. There were no public debates about the legal status of the indigenous people in the conquered territories, as had been conducted, for example in the case of the famous Valladolid Disputation of 1550/51 Nevertheless, the matter was debated at the Synod of Manila (1582), and the ethical consequences could only be mitigated by a new instruction of Philip II in 1597. According to the assessment of the Jesuit church historian John Schumacher, the fact that the missionaries tried to protect the natives from the greed of the conquerors significantly contributed to the acceptance of the Christian faith by the Filipinos.[16]

What can be said about the phenomena of "inculturation"? First of all, developments comparable to those for instance in Mexico did not take place everywhere. No single cult can be named for the Philippines that had a comparable appeal to the masses as the famous apparition of the Indian Virgin of Guadalupe in Mexico. However, the European missionaries also encountered a great "religious potential" here: the Filipinos' belief in miracles was boundless and practically uncontrollable. Only a few of these "miracles", which had a great impact on popular piety, were officially recognized by the Church. Nevertheless, the Filipinos' deep belief in omnipresent and supernatural forces meant a great opportunity to connect with the religious concepts of Tridentine Catholicism. Even today, popular Catholicism in rural Philippines is imbued with the miraculous and supernatural realm.[17]

Even if the missionaries "outwardly" succeeded in abolishing many "pagan" rituals, a whole series of superstitious customs of pre-Hispanic origin remained alive, and slowly melted into Christian structures of understanding. The traditional folk customs were gradually Christianized, even if only superficially. The most important historical source for exploring such processes of Christianisation of ancient Filipino traditions is a "pastoral

14 Cf. DELGADO (2008), "Die Kirche" (see FN 7), 6.

15 Letter can be found in: RODRÍGUEZ, I.R. (1978) (Ed.), *Historia de la provincial agustiniana del Santísimo Nombre de Jesús de Filipinas*. Vol. 14 (Manila), 133, cited by DELGADO (2008), "Die Kirche" (see FN 7), 6.

16 Cf. SCHUMACHER, J. (1978), *Readings in Philippine Church History* (Quezon City), 22–38 (Chapter "The struggle for justice").

17 PHELAN (1967), *The Hispanization* (see FN 7), 79.

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theological manual", the *Práctica del ministerio* by the Augustinian Tómas Ortiz, published in Manila in 1731.[18] The experienced missionary remarks here on the role of certain rites:

> "... the Indians [the Filipinos] very generally believe that the souls of the dead return to their houses the third day after their death in order to visit the people in it, or to be present at the banquet, and consequently, to be present at the ceremony of the *tibao*. They conceal and hide that by saying that they are assembling in the house of the deceased in order to recite the Rosary for him. If they are told to do their praying in the church, they refuse to comply because that is not what they wish to do. . .. They light candles to wait for the soul of the deceased. They spread a mat on which they scatter ashes, so that the tracks or footsteps of the souls may be impressed thereupon; and by that means they are able to ascertain whether the soul came or not. They also put a dish full of water at the door, so that when the soul enters it may wash its feet there."[19]

A peculiar method of identifying a thief is a classic example of the coexistence of t*agalog* and Christian elements, in which sacred and profane are interwoven: "It consists in placing in a *bilao*, sieve or screen some scissors fastened at the point in the shape of the cross of St. Andrew, and they hang their rosary in them. Then they repeat the name of each one of those who are present and assembled for this. If, for example, when the name Pedro is mentioned the *bilao* shakes, they say that Pedro is the thief."[20]

There are many other examples of how the strong spiritual world of the pre-Hispanic Filipino religion was not eliminated by the official conversion to Christianity. It was still customary among Filipino Catholics to ask permission to their spirits before doing certain things. The so-called *nonos* were addressed on many occasions, for instance before harvest or dangerous situations. About that Father Ortiz gives numerous and fascinating examples:

> "There are many abuses (or as they say *ugales*) which the natives practice against our holy faith and good customs, among others of which are the following. First, the above-mentioned idolatry of the *nonos*. In this regard, it must be noted that the word *nono* does not only mean 'grandfather', but it also is used as a respectful term for the ancestors and *genii*. The Indians comprise these under the word *nono*, just as the Chinese do under the word *Espiritus* [i. e., 'spirits'], and the Romans under the word 'Gods', which others called Lares, Penates, etc. With the above-mentioned *genii* or *nonos* the Indians perform frequently many acts of idolatry such as, for example, asking permission, relief, and aid from them, and that they do no harm to them, and that they do not prove hostile to them, etc. They make such requests on many occasions, and among others are the following. When they wish to pluck any flower or fruit from a tree, they ask permission from the *nono* or *genius* to pluck it. When they pass certain fields, rivers, creeks, or streamlets, large trees, sugar-cane plantations and other places, they ask permission and good passage from the *genii* or *nonos*. When they are obliged to cut any tree, or not to observe the things or ceremonies which they imagine to be pleasing to the *genii* or *nonos*, they ask forgiveness to them, and excuse themselves to those beings by saying, among many other things, that the father commanded them to do it, and that they are not willingly lacking in respect to the *genii*, or that they do not deliberately oppose their will, etc. When they are afflicted with the sickness called *pamave*, which they attribute to the *genii* or *nonos*, they ask them for health and offer them food. They do that both on this and many other occasions, in the fields, sugar-cane plantations, streamlets, at the

18 PHELAN (1967), *The Hispanization* (see FN 7), 79; RAFAEL, V.L. (1993), *Contracting Colonialism*. Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society under Early Spanish Rule (Dirham), 98. 111.

19 English translation in: BLAIR, E.H./ ROBERTSON, J.A. (1903–1909) (Eds.), *The Philippine Islands 1493–1803*, 55 Vols. (Cleveland), here: Vol. XLIII, 106.. Some information about the tradition of the text: „The following interesting account is from the Práctica del Ministerio by Tomás Ortiz, O. S. A., and is translated from W. E. Retana's edition of Zúñiga's Estadismo de las islas Filipinas (Madrid, 1893), ii, pp. 14–21. Retana found a copy of this important MS. at the Augustinian convent at Valladolid in the collection of father Fray Eduardo Navarro, where it still exists and where we ourselves examined it not long since. The following selection is from chapter i, section iv, pp. 11–15". In the original: ORTIZ, T. (1731), *Práctica del ministerio, que siguen los religiosos del Orden de N.P.S. Augustin en Philippinas* (Manila), 12f.

20 ORTIZ (1731), *Práctica del ministerio* (see FN 19), 12f.

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> foot of any large tree, more generally some *calunpan*, and in various other places. This sort of idolatry is very deeply rooted and with a long tradition among the Indians. Consequently, it is of the utmost importance for the fathers to be very careful and make great efforts to extirpate it, without sparing any labor or work until it is annihilated."[21]

Ortiz vividly describes how some Filipinos tried to harmonize their older Tagalog behaviour with their Christian faith, and were quite creative in doing so. His observations point to a syncretic element in Filipino Christianity during the early Spanish period. However, it would be simplistic to hypothesise a "mixed religion", and claim that the Filipinos only made an "optical adaptation" out of external pressure to meet the demands of the Christian missionaries. Perhaps, as stated by John Leddy Phelan, the pre-conquest rituals and beliefs that survived the conquest eventually lost their former identity and merged with popular or folk Catholicism. Over time, this process increased in intensity.[22]

The most important medium of cultural contact for the Spanish missionaries in the Philippines was the festivals. With these, the religious could spread their ideas of the true faith, of a civilised way of life and of a God-ordained political order in an instructive and at the same time enjoyable way.[23] This could only succeed if the festivals collected a big crowd, and in order to do so the new ceremonies had to surpass the old pre-colonial rites in terms of colourfulness and expense. Facades and street decorations as well as special festival architectures contributed to this, just as much as fragrant incense, bell ringing, solemn chants or the omnipresent instrumental music, the splendid vestments of the clergy or the procession of lights with images of saints adorned with flowers and jewels. Songs and dances, theatre and opera performances, costume parades, fireworks and cockfights, contests of skill and fairs added further attractiveness to the festivities. Banquets and balls were highlights of social life, and such a festive culture has survived in the Philippines until today.[24]

From a strategic point of view, the religious relied heavily on the power of emotions. In addition, they already practiced such methods; in Latin America, for example, they had tested and improved them through time. In the periphery of the Iberian Peninsula, clergymen and missionaries had already experimented with such methods, which were aimed at the senses: the eyes and ears mostly. On the other hand, they were also able to lead the Filipinos to Christianity because they actively involved them. Even if it is not possible to speak of "self-Christianisation", the active participation in one's own evangelization played an important role. Global and local interactions become visible, because the success of the missionary efforts involved the Filipinos themselves: Catholicism was given a Filipino face, according to Reinhard Wendt.[25]

The secret of the success of the "festivals" was their contextual adaptation to the current cultural trends and fashions, and the targeted involvement of indigenous actors. The

21 ORTIZ (1731), *Práctica del ministerio* (see FN 19), 12f.

22 Cf. PHELAN (1967), *The Hispanization* (see FN 7), 80.

23 Cf. WENDT, R. (2014), "Global-lokale Wechselwirkungen. Von den Feierlichkeiten zum Gedenken an die Japan-Märtyrer in Manila zur national-philippinischen Verehrung von San Lorenzo Ruiz / Global-Local Interchanges. From the Celebrations in Manila Commemorating the Martyrs of Japan to the National Philippine Veneration of San Lorenzo Ruiz", in: Koschorke, K./ Hermann, A. (Eds.), *Polycentric Structures in the History of World Christianity* (Wiesbaden), 173–191; WENDT, R. (1998), "Philippine Fiesta and Colonial Culture" (Philippine Studies Vol. 46, No. 1), 3–23.

24 As a case study: SIR ANRIL PINEDA TIATCO (2016), *Performing Catholicism*. Faith and Theater in a Philippine Province (Quezon City).

25 WENDT (2014), "Global-lokale Wechselwirkungen" (see FN 23), 177.

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ceremonial and emotional aspects of Christianity quickly found wide acceptance, because the Filipinos appreciated the pageantry and colourfulness of the church rituals. The Filipinos also knew how to influence the form of the festivals, filling their old traditions with new contents or using new cultural practices for traditional social behaviour. Pre-colonial songs and dances were integrated into the festivals, at least in their exterior shape, and theatrical performances combined European content with the epic traditions of Southeast and East Asia. Festive decorations and illuminations mixed indigenous and imported elements. The local population also saw in the adoption of Christianity a way of preserving their own cultural traditions and practices through syncretism.[26]

A very good example of this "mixing" and active participating in one's own evangelization is the cult of various "Marias" that came to the Philippine islands mainly through religious from Mexico, especially the cult of Mary de Guadalupe, in her purely Spanish tradition "de Extremadura" and the Mexican version "nuestra senora de Guadalupe". Devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe from Extremadura was first introduced in the Philippines in the Augustinian church of Nuestra Señora de Gracia in San Pedro de Macati (now Makati City) and in the parishes of Loboc and Sevilla on Bohol. The devotion to Guadalupana de Extremadura in Makati began when the Spanish population of the country requested the Virgin's cult under that particular name in 1604.

The devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe found its first shrine in 1687 in Pagsanjan, Laguna, and later spread to other parts of the country, especially Cebu, Makati City, and Zambales. In 1935, Pope Pius XI issued a papal bull declaring the Virgin of Guadalupe from Mexico as the "Heavenly Patroness of the Philippines". On November 13th 2001, the celebration of the Feast of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe was declared a compulsory day of remembrance in the Philippines.[27]

The devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe in Pagsanjan, Laguna, pioneered the Mexican devotion to La Guadalupe, founded in 1687 by the Franciscan missionary Fray Agustin de la Magdalena. The example of this missionary seems exemplary for the form of South/South exports of forms of popular devotion and the actors involved in it, because the Franciscan was first employed in Mexico and then moved to the Philippines, bringing with him in his hand luggage a special form of "inculturated" Marian piety. The original image of the Virgin was donated by Father Agustin when the parish was founded, and was placed at the main altar in 1688.[28]

Transnational Identities: The Case of San Lorenzo Ruiz (ca. 1600 - 1637)

Multiple processes of what can be called "westernization" took place in the Philippine scenario. Luke Clossey has shown that globalization means much more than transpacific exchanges between Europe and the non-European world. There were many autonomous non-western centres, decentralizing processes and transnational identities.[29] An excellent

26 WENDT (2014), "Global-lokale Wechselwirkungen" (see FN 23), 177.

27 As a case study: ERIKSEN, A. (2005), "Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Invented Tradition an Devotional Success", in: *Journal of Folklore Research* 42, No. 3, 295–321; WENDT, R. (1997), *Fiesta Filipina*. Koloniale Kultur zwischen Imperialismus und neuer Identität (Freiburg im Breisgau), 65–72.

28 Cf. PÉREZ, A.A. (1993), "Filólogos y lingüistas castellano-leoneses en Ultramar", in: Sanz, E.L. (Ed.), *Los castellanos y leoneses en la empresa de Indias I*. Archivos, instituciones, cultura e influencia de Castilla y León en el Nuevo Mundo, Junta de Castilla y León (Valladolid), 7–52. 39.

29 CLOSSEY (2006), "Merchants" (see FN 6), 42.

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example of this phenomenon of transnational identities can be found in the biography of San Lorenzo Ruiz, very well analysed by Reinhard Wendt and by the Philippine historian Fidel Villarroel before.[30]

Ruiz was the son of a Tagalog mother and a Chinese father, both Catholic, and was born in Binondo, a suburb of Manila, around the year 1600; he was canonized in 1987. What brought Chinese traders to the Philippines at that time was the American silver brought there by the Spanish across the Pacific Ocean. Asian luxury goods - mainly silk, porcelain and other precious things - came in exchange to Mexico and often over Mexico to Spain and many other parts of Europe.[31]

When the Spaniards reached the Philippines, Chinese traders were already living there: there was a little Chinese colony of about 150 people. The daily economic needs of the newly-arrived Europeans created a tremendous surge in demand for Chinese goods and labor. The growing community of Chinese-t*agalog* people not only organized the shipping trade between the Chinese mainland and the Philippines, but they also supplied food from the area surrounding Manila, and cultivated vegetables and fish for the city's markets. Chinese worked as masons and carpenters, sculptors and silversmiths, as stonemasons, architects, printers, and artists. They built houses and churches, handcrafted sacred images and precious objects of worship, but their main activity was trade — both local and international.[32] At the beginning of the 17th century, in the city of Manila 1,000 Spaniards coexisted with around 20,000 Chinese. The Chinese immigrants were mostly men, so there were often marriages between them and Tagalog women. This encouraged conversion to Christianity, which in a way also corresponded to an assimilation to the Spanish-dominated culture. For the converted Chinese it meant at the same time an effective tool against discrimination and ghettoization in the cultural and political environment of the Spaniards.

Therefore in a few years a very fluid mixture of different cultural and religious influences emerged in the area of Manila and Binondo, the birthplace of Lorenzo Ruiz, became the centre of this Christian-Chinese-Philippine community, which was pastorally cared for by Spanish Dominicans (who immediately learned Chinese for their work).

The example of Ruiz shows in a particularly striking way the transculturality which marks the history of Christianity in the Philippines from its very beginning. Equally fascinating for church historians are the further twists and turns in the life and canonization of the man who has been venerated as a saint since 1987. Not much is known about his time in Binondo: he probably spoke Spanish as well as Tagalog and Chinese, and learned Latin at school. He was involved in various church activities and in confraternities, had three children, and worked as a scribe. In 1636 there is an interruption in his biography: he had to leave his country because he was prosecuted by the law. It can be assumed that he was involved in a murder case, but this cannot be reconstructed exactly. A Dominican presumably organized Ruiz´s escape, bringing him with him on a ship to Japan — a hotspot of massive persecution of Christianity since the end of the 16th century, as the Dominican well knew. Ruiz probably did not know about it, and actually wanted to flee in the direction of Macao, out of the sphere of influence of the Spanish justice, but he had no choice. Together with three European religious and two Japanese Christians, he landed in Okinawa

30 WENDT (2014), "Global-lokale Wechselwirkungen" (see FN 23); VILLARROEL, F. ([3]1988), *Lorenzo de Manila*. The Protomartyr of the Philippines and his Companions (Manila).

31 At a glance: REINHARD, W. ([2]2016), *Die Unterwerfung der Welt*. Globalgeschichte der europäischen Expansion 1415–2015 (München), 146–154.

32 Cf. WENDT (2014), "Global-lokale Wechselwirkungen" (see FN 23), 175.

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in 1637, and was immediately arrested with the whole group, tortured, interrogated, and finally killed in September of the same year.[33]

Just as with many other Japanese martyrs, his biography quickly entered the memory of the Roman Catholic Church in a purely hagiographic way: as early as 1640, his name was first mentioned in the history of the Philippine Dominican Province. The sheer number of the Japanese martyrs prevented an earlier canonization of Ruiz, but as early as 1768 the community of the island of Boho chose him as their patron saint. In the 1980s, Ruiz finally became one of the many men and women canonized by Pope John Paul II. Not only was he the first Filipino saint (canonized in 1987), but he was the first whose beatification took place in a papal ceremony outside of Rome, i.e. in Manila (in 1981).[34] As a result, Ruiz quickly became the most popular saint in his country, and through the consistent Filipino labour diaspora, he became a globally venerated figure.

To go back to the beginning of this paper, the geostrategic and missionary importance of the Philippines persists until today, and its role in the Catholic Church history cannot be underestimated.

Abstract

This paper looks at the historical South-South relations in the Pacific Ocean between Mexico and the Philippines. After shedding some light on the geostrategic importance of the Philippines in general, it reflects on the pastoral exchange processes between Mexico and the Philippines. The religious involved in both environments operated contextually, and integrated pre-Hispanic cultural elements into their pastoral work: in the case of the Philippines, this consisted mainly in integrating baroque Spanish festive culture with Tagalog dance elements. The example of Lorenzo Ruiz, the first canonised saint from the Philippines, well exemplifies the complex intercultural exchanges in the Pacific region involving two or more partners. It also illustrates that the geostrategic importance of the Philippines, which became a melting pot on a global scale for multiple religions and cultures, from the first years of the Spanish conquest during the early modern period.

"Eher ein missionarischer Außenposten als eine Kolonie"? Die Philippinen als interkulturelle und geostrategische Kontaktzone

Dieser Beitrag befasst sich mit den historischen Süd-Süd-Beziehungen zwischen Mexiko und den Philippinen im Pazifischen Ozean. Nach einem Blick auf die geostrategische Bedeutung der Philippinen im Allgemeinen werden die pastoralen Austauschprozesse zwischen Mexiko und den Philippinen erörtert. Die Ordensleute, die in beiden Gebieten tätig waren, arbeiteten kontextabhängig und integrierten vorspanische Kulturelemente in ihre pastorale Tätigkeit. Im Falle der Philippinen bestand dies hauptsächlich in der Verbindung barocker spanischer Festkultur mit Tagalog-Tanzelementen. Das Beispiel von Lorenzo Ruiz, dem ersten heiliggesprochenen Heiligen der Philippinen, ist ein gutes Beispiel für den komplexen interkulturellen Austausch in der Pazifikregion, an dem zwei oder mehr Partner beteiligt waren. Es veranschaulicht auch die geostrategische Bedeutung

33 Cf. WENDT (2014), "Global-lokale Wechselwirkungen" (see FN 23), passim.
34 Cf. WENDT (2014), "Global-lokale Wechselwirkungen" (see FN 23), 189.

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der Philippinen, die seit den ersten Jahren der spanischen Eroberung in der frühen Neuzeit zu einem globalen Schmelztiegel für verschiedene Religionen und Kulturen wurden.

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The Martyrs of Japan in the Andean Highlands: The "Indies" as a Cornerstone of Identity Construction in the Viceroyalty of Peru*

RAPHAÈLE PREISINGER

On February 5, 1597, a group of 26 Christians, composed of six Franciscan missionaries, seventeen of them Asian, mostly Japanese, acolytes and three Japanese Christians affiliated with the Jesuits, was crucified on Nishizaka Hill at Nagasaki for preaching the Christian faith. The news of this martyrdom spread like a wildfire, as only one year later, printing presses throughout Europe and New Spain started issuing books and broadsheets on the topic. On September 14 and 15, 1627, within thirty years of their violent deaths, the 26 victims of the 1597 crucifixion were beatified by the Roman Catholic Church. While the early modern reception of the Nagasaki martyrdom in European visual culture has been studied,[1] little is known about the echoes of this news on the production and collecting of art on the American continent and in South America in particular.[2] If we consider the many poorly-studied works of art representing these martyrs dating back to the 17th century in contemporary Peru and Bolivia, it becomes evident that seeking to remedy this situation is anything but a trivial task.[3]

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1 OMATA RAPPO, H. (2020), *Des Indes lointaines aux scènes des collèges*. Les reflets des martyrs de la mission japonaise en Europe (XVIe–XVIIIe siècle) (Studia Oecumenica Friburgensia 101; Münster), 204–404.

2 I am referring here to the iconographical treatment of the martyrs as a group, and not to works of art representing the figure of San Felipe de Jesús in particular. The murals in the former Franciscan church and present-day Cathedral of Cuernavaca aside, the works of art representing these martyrs have received little scholarly attention. On this pictorial subject in New Spanish hagiographic imagery, see: ESTRADA DE GERLERO, E.I. (2000), "Los protomártires del Japón en la historiografía novohispana", in: Soler Frost, J. (Ed.) *Los pinceles de la Historia*. De la patria criolla a la nación mexicana, 1750–1860 (Mexico City), 72–91.

3 The extant works of art either sent to or created in the Viceroyalty of Peru in the 17th century include: 23 pillars decorated with *azulejos* representing the Franciscan martyrs of 1597 dating to the first half of the 17th century in the main cloister of the Franciscan convent of San Francisco in Lima, which were sent to Peru from Seville in 1638/39; high reliefs decorating the choir stalls, dating to ca. 1674, in the church of that same convent; late-17th century *azulejos* of the three Jesuit martyrs in the sacristy of the church of San Pedro in Lima; an oil painting possibly dating to the late 17th-century in the room adjacent to that sacristy; two oil paintings by Lázaro Pardo de Lago dating to 1630 in the Museum of the Franciscan Recollects in Cuzco and high reliefs decorating the choir stalls dating to 1679 in the church of the Franciscan Recollects in Sucre, as well as the undated painting analyzed in this essay in the convent of the Recollects in Sucre, which is believed by the author to have been created around 1630. I sincerely thank Guido Abasto, OFM, *Guardián del*

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This essay is an attempt to understand the particular interest in the topic of the martyrs of the Japan mission in 17th-century South America. It does so by investigating three 17th-century paintings, created by local artists, which are kept in Andean Franciscan convents today. The three paintings under examination, a pair of canvasses located in the church of the Convento Franciscano de La Recoleta in Cuzco and a practically unstudied painting in the Convento de Santa Ana de la Recoleta in Sucre, are fascinating because they attest to the adaptation of a pictorial scheme devised in East Asia to the local Andean context of the paintings' creation. The targeted modifications introduced in these paintings evidence a local appropriation of the pictorial subject.

Taking a step back, these works of art appear as discrete elements within a larger corpus of evidence attesting to a vivid interest in the martyrs of Japan in the 17th-century Viceroyalty of Peru and South America more broadly.[4] Indeed, in addition to the extant works of art, paintings and sculptures recorded as having been displayed in the convents and churches of some of the most important cities of present-day Peru and Bolivia point to a particularly vivid interest in this subject in the American continent's Southern lands.[5]

Traveling Iconographies

For information from East Asia to reach Europe via the Spanish maritime trade routes, it needed to travel across the two great oceans via the Manila Galleon and the *Carrera de Indias* respectively, and to cross the territory of New Spain from Acapulco to Veracruz in between both ports. News of the 1597 Nagasaki martyrdom spread globally not only through written texts, but through visual media as well. Textual evidence attests to a vivid local production of visual representations of this event in late 16th- and early 17th-century New Spain.

The earliest of these written sources, a memorandum dated February 18, 1598, found in the records of the Mexican Inquisition, documents a request by the Inquisition of Mexico addressed to the Commissary of the Holy Office in Tlaxcala relating to images of this martyrdom only recently produced there. Concern is raised about a motif found in these

Convento de Santa Ana de la Recoleta, Sucre, for his generosity in granting access to the painting, and Pedro Querejazu Leyton, who kindly photographed the painting on my behalf.

4 In the Society's province of Paraguay, a reduction founded in 1620 for missionary work among the Guaraní was dedicated to the Santos Mártires del Japón.

5 The list of works that are either lost, unclear as to the date of their creation, or that the author could not yet examine, is long. According to KOSHI, K. (1974) "Die 26 Märtyrer von Japan in der Kunst: Ein Werkkatalog", in: *Bulletin annuel du Musée national d'art occidental* 8, 16–72, here: 70, cat. nr. 87, a now-lost painting showing the 23 Franciscan martyrs was formerly kept in the guardroom of the convent of San Francisco in Lima. Equally, a painting representing the three Jesuit martyrs created in the mid-17th century, once kept in the church of San Pedro de Lima (ibid., 69, cat. nr. 84), seems to have been lost. VARGAS UGARTE, R., SJ (1959), *Historia de la iglesia en el Perú*. Tomo II (1570–1640) (Lima), 460, in describing the festivities in honor of the martyrs' beatification that took place in Lima in 1629, mentions that *imágenes de bulto* of each of the 26 martyrs were carried in procession. The painting of the three Jesuit martyrs in the Iglesia de San Ignacio (Museo Paramo) in Bogotá (KOSHI (1974), "Die 26 Märtyrer", 65, cat. nr. 71) is of an unknown date, as are the retable paintings showing the three Jesuits in the same church (ibid., 66, cat. nr. 72). According to PEREZ, D. (1997) "Los Franciscanos a través del arte en la Audiencia de Charcas", in: *Archivo Ibero-Americano* 57, 809–860, here: 856, the Museo Franciscano de La Paz holds an oil painting of the martyrs of Japan dating to the 17th century.

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images, which is deemed disturbing enough for the Inquisitor in charge to request its erasure from all locally created images of the martyrdom scene.[6]

To understand precisely what this is about, it is necessary to turn to the earliest known strand of Franciscan iconography of the 1597 martyrdom, several examples of which have survived to this day. It is epitomized by a print that was inserted into the first pages of volume I of Esteban José de Gascueña's 1775 *Año seráfico histórico, ejemplar y bisiesto de la Provincia de San Gregorio Magno de franciscos descalzos de Filipinas* (fig. 1).[7] The inscription beneath the printed martyrdom scene, containing the words "Romae Superior. licentia", reveals that the engraving was printed in Rome. Its dedication to the Order of Friars Minor's Minister General, Bernardino de Sena, discloses that it was commissioned by the procurator of the cause of the martyrs, Pedro Bautista Porres Tamayo, and printed in 1627.[8] This Franciscan father, who had been the Superior of the Franciscans in Japan, was assigned the task of promoting the process of beatification of all 26 victims of the 1597 crucifixion in Nagasaki.[9]

The iconographical components of the 1627 engraving, inscribed "[XXIII] PRIMI MARTYRES IAPONIAE ORD. S. FRANCISCI Prouynciae discalciator. S. Gregorij Philipinarum et Iaponiae. An. 1597" in the cartouche at the top, recur incessantly in images adhering to this iconographical scheme. At the center of the composition, dominating the scene, the six Franciscan missionaries who lost their lives in the 1597 crucifixion are depicted. To both sides of this group, their seventeen Japanese acolytes are seen crucified, represented at a noticeably smaller scale. The omission of the martyrs associated with the Jesuits is typical of this iconography, for reasons that will be explained below. In the background, the contours of Nishizaka Hill appear against the backdrop of another hill, while a large ship is shown in an embayment to the left of the scene. The three Franciscan missionaries who were held captive on this ship observe the crucifixion from its deck, while in the foremost picture plane, to the left, the Jesuit bishop of Japan and two companions watch the martyrdom from the window of the Society's residence. At the center of the scene hovers the panel on which the martyrs' death sentence is inscribed — condemning them to death on the cross for preaching the Christian faith, here rendered in as yet unidentified Japanese characters. A large circular crisscrossed fence encircles the post bearing the panel with this sentence. Among the many spectators, on the lower right side of the print, Japanese soldiers ride on horses; throughout the martyrdom scene, more

6 SCHÜTTE, J.F. (1971), "Dokumente zur japanischen Kirchengeschichte im mexikanischen Inquisitionsarchiv", in: *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 40, 3–66, here: 10–11; PRIETO PRIETO, M./ MUÑOZ MARTIN, A. ([2]2022), *Primeros mártires en Japón, Nagasaki*. Historia e iconografía (Editorial Cuadernos del Laberinto 10; Madrid), 116–117; Archivo General de la Nacion, Colección de la Inquisición mexicana 61, Tomo 223, Memorandum of a letter sent from Mexico to Tlaxcala, dated February 18, 1598, fol. 494r–494v.

7 This compilation of sonnets, filling twelve volumes, was never published. It is held by the Archive of the Franciscan Province of the Immaculate Conception in Madrid, call number AFIO 391/1. On this compilation, see: Sánchez Fuertes, Cayetano, OFM (2014), "Siete poetas franciscanos hispano-filipinos", in *TRANSMODERNITY: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World* 4 (1), 67–99, here: 71–73. The engraving of the 1597 martyrdom discussed here is among the prints that were loosely inserted into this volume.

8 The dedication reads: "Rever[endissi]mo P.N.Fr. Bernardino a Sena tot.s Ordinis Serafici P.n. S.i Francisci digniss.mo Generali. F. Petrus Bap.a Procurator humiliter dicat. A. 1627." The three lines preceeding both the print's licence and dedication contain an antiphon and prayer taken from the Common of Martyrs.

9 Pedro Bautista Porres Tamayo was appointed procurator of the martyrs' cause in 1616. On this friar, see: WILLEKE, BERNWARD H., OFM (1994), "Pedro Baptista Porres Tamayo OFM (1571–1630), ein Missionar im Dienste der japanischen Kirche", in: *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 87 (1–2), 65–128.

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Japanese soldiers, equipped with long lances, bring about the martyrs' death by piercing through their rib cages, quite in tune with Japanese practices of crucifixion in this period. Devout Christians kneel beneath the crosses to collect the martyrs' blood, thus creating the precious relics essential for their posthumous veneration. In the background to the right, mourning women can be discerned.[10]

The memorandum found in the Mexican Inquisition Archive records the text of the letter sent to Tlaxcala by the Inquisition of Mexico. It describes a motif observed in paintings of the Nagasaki martyrdom that were produced in Tlaxcala with sufficient detail to identify their overall pictorial scheme as that of the 1627 engraving created in Rome. Reference is made to "the bishop of that place [Japan] and members of the Society of Jesus depicted observing the martyrdom from a window and looking pleased by the event and by the tyranny of the King of Japan." This motif, depicted in the lower left corner of the 1627 engraving, is judged to potentially do much harm to "our Christian religion" and to be insulting to the Jesuits and the said bishop, who is a legate of the Pope. Therefore, the Tlaxcalan Commissary is asked to gather information on this matter and to collect all the locally created paintings of the Nagasaki martyrdom scene. Once this is accomplished, all the instances of the mentioned motif of the Jesuit bishop and of the other members of the Society are to be deleted. Furthermore, depicting anything beyond the martyrdom scene is to be prohibited.[11]

The request from the Mexican Inquisition is telling, as it reveals a vivid fear on the part of the Roman Catholic Church regarding the strife between the mendicant orders and the Society of Jesus over missionary activities on the archipelago of Japan. During the first decades of missionary activity, which began with St. Francis Xavier's arrival at Kagoshima in 1549, the Japan mission field was a Jesuit monopoly. However, other religious orders were eager to participate in the promising evangelization of Japan. As the Jesuits feared possible complications resulting from the presence of Spanish friars arriving from the Philippines, they tried by all means to keep the mendicants established there from entering the archipelago. Even though a first edict prohibiting Christianity had been pronounced in Japan in 1587, the Jesuits had managed to pursue their proselytizing activities by proceeding with much caution. Despite the Society's efforts to avoid mendicant participation in the Japanese mission field, Franciscan friars from the Philippines reached Japan in 1593. The calamity of the 1597 crucifixion occurred only a few years later,

10 Unfortunately, the engraving in the Archive of the Franciscan Province of the Immaculate Conception in Madrid, call number AFIO 391/1, which is the only known instance of this print, does not contain a legend explaining the letters referring to its many motifs.

11 On this source, see: SCHÜTTE (1971), "Japanische Kirchengeschichte" (see FN 6), 10–11; PRIETO PRIETO/MUÑOZ MARTIN (^{2}2022), *Primeros mártires* (see FN 6), 116–117; Archivo General de la Nacion, Colección de la Inquisición mexicana 61, Tomo 223, Memorandum of a letter sent from Mexico to Tlaxcala, dated February 18, 1598, fol. 494r–494v. In citing this record, I follow the transcription given in Schütte (1971), "Japanische Kirchengeschichte" (see FN 6), 10–11: "Al Comisario de Tlaxcalo. En el Santo Officio, se a tenido relación que, en esta cibdad, se an hecho pinturas de los Religiossos que murieron mártires el el Japón, y, en ellas, puesto al Obispo de allí y Religiossos de la Compañía en una ventana, que están mirando el martirio y mostrando contento dél y de la tiranía que usó el Rey Japón. Y porque desto puede resultar mucho daño a nuestra religión christiana y es en agravio de la Compañía de Jesús y del Obispo que es Legado de Su Santidad, según tenemos relación, mandará V. M. informarse de todo y hazer que le traigan las pincturas que, acerca del dicho martirio, se an pinctado. Y aviendo, en ellas, pinctura del Obispo y Religiossos de la Compañía, en la forma que dicho está, hará que se borre, quedando solamente la del martirio; y con censuras a los pinctores que no pincten más que el dicho martirio. Y de lo que, en esta razón, hiziere, nos dará aviso. [...] México, 18 de Febrero 1598."

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facilitating Jesuit perception of this event as the result of the Franciscans' open violation of the ban on Christianity and of their intemperate zeal. The Franciscans, in turn, would accuse the Jesuits of being responsible for this turn of events. An aggravation of this situation and a spread across continents of this potentially disintegrative element within the global Catholic evangelizing project was, from the standpoint of the Mexican Holy Office, strictly to be avoided.[12]

It has been argued elsewhere that visual representations of such Christian martyrdoms—of which many more occurred after the 1597 crucifixion—were, at their origin, considered 'truthful images' of the events they depicted, and that their iconographies were, due to their testimonial character, generally coined in close geographical and temporal vicinity to the events they show.[13] The early date of the memorandum found in the Mexican Inquisition Archive—18 February, 1598—supports the hypothesis of an origin in East Asia of the Franciscan iconography present in the 1627 engraving, as it suggests the fast reception and multiplication in New Spain of an iconography copied from originals associated with truth claims. It certainly demonstrates that roughly within a year of the Nagasaki crucifixions of 1597, the Franciscan iconography of the martyrdom scene had reached the American continent.

Entries in the diary of Domingo Chimalpáhin, an Indigenous Mexican writing in Nahuatl, attest to the vivid interest in the news of the martyrdom of Christians in Japan by both the Spanish and the Indigenous populations of New Spain. First, he mentions the announcement of the death of six Franciscan missionaries and other Christians, who were Japanese, "in China", "in a place called Japan", in a sermon delivered by the friar Juan de Castillo on December 7, 1597. He then recounts how, almost a year later, on December 6, 1598, the bodily remains of these missionaries were brought to the church of San Diego, in the presence of "the entire clergy present in Mexico" at that time. Upon arrival of the coffins, muskets were fired, and four painted draperies were created and hung up in the church of San José, which were admired by Spaniards and Indigenous Mexicans alike.[14]

Images of the Nagasaki Martyrdom in the Viceroyalty of Peru

Works of art depicting the victims of the persecution of Christians in Japan were created and disseminated across different continents immediately after the 1597 crucifixion of 26 Christians in Nagasaki, reaching a peak after these martyrs' 1627 beatification in Rome. The three paintings at the center of this essay attest to the spread to South America of the Franciscan martyrdom iconography described above. Although the possibility that this

12 On the history of Christian mission in Japan, fundamental studies are BOXER, C.R. (1951), *The Christian Century in Japan* 1549–1650 (Berkeley); FUJITA, N.S. (1991), *Japan's Encounter with Christianity.* The Catholic Mission in Pre-Modern Japan (New York); HESSELINK, R.H. (2016) *The Dream of Christian Nagasaki.* World Trade and the Clash of Cultures 1560–1640 (Jefferson); VU THANH, H. (2016), *Devenir japonais*. La mission jésuite au Japon (1549–1614) (Paris).

13 This hypothesis is at the center of the author's essay on the origins of the most dominant strand of Franciscan martyrdom iconography referring to Japan in: PREISINGER, R. (Forthcoming, 2024), "The Incipient Devotion to the Martyrs of Japan: The 'True Images' of the 'Calvary of Nagasaki'", in: Mochizuki, M. M./ Županov, I. G. (Eds.), *Palimpsests of Religious Encounter in Asia.* 1500–1800 (Intersections series; Leiden).

14 CAÑEQUE, A. (2020), *Un imperio de mártires*. Religión y poder en las fronteras de la Monarquía Hispánica (Madrid), 273–274; the text of the relevant passages of the *diario* is provided in Nahuatl, with a German translation, in: RIESE, B. (2012), *Mexiko und das pazifische Asien in der frühen Kolonialzeit* (Welten Ostasiens Bd. 19; Bern), 115–117.

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pictorial scheme spread to South America via European prints cannot be excluded, it seems much more likely that it was disseminated throughout the Americas after having reached New Spain directly from East Asia.

A beautiful painting of the 1597 martyrdom is found in a convent of the Franciscan Recollects in Sucre, Bolivia today (fig. 2).[15] The painting on canvas was executed by an anonymous artist and measures 2,60 m x 2,45 m. Although the inscription beneath the martyrdom scene mentions the martyrs' 1862 canonization, it is highly unlikely that this painting is a 19th-century creation. Rather, it seems that the line referring to the martyrs' full admittance into the ranks of the saints was added to the original inscription at a later date. The inscription reads:

> These were the first martyrs of the realm of Japan of the Order of Our Father Saint Francis, who were crucified in the city of Nagasaki on the 5th of February of 1597 for preaching the Catholic faith and in 1627 were added to the martyrology of the saints by Pope Urban VIII., who conceded that their feast be celebrated yearly on the said date with a mass. And finally they were solemnly canonized by Our Holy Father Pius IX. on June 8, 1862.[16]

The painting confronts the viewer with innumerable details. It is fascinating, not least because the overall iconographical scheme it adheres to is shared by the 1627 print commissioned by Pedro Bautista Porres Tamayo described above. Spreading across the entire upper section of the painting, the six Franciscan missionaries and their seventeen Japanese—acolytes are depicted on their respective crosses, all wearing Franciscan habits. Instead of placing the six Franciscan missionaries at the center and their followers on either side of this central group, as in the 1627 Roman print—a positioning of the crosses which is attested to by written sources[17]—here, the missionaries spread out across the entire width of

15 The friary known as the Recolección de Santa Ana of the Province of Charcas was founded by Francisco Morales in 1600, as reported in HABIG, M.A./ ESPINOSA, J.M. (1946), "The Franciscan Provinces of South America", in: *The Americas* 2 (3), 335–356, here: 336. The only mention of this artwork in a publication known to the author is: PRIETO PRIETO/ MUÑOZ MARTIN (²2022), *Primeros mártires* (see FN 6), 199–201, fig. 76.

16 The inscription reads: "ESTOS FUERON LOS PRIMEROS MARTIRES DEL REINO DEL JAPON DE LA ORDEN DE N.P.S. FRANCISCO QUE POR LA PREDICACION DE LA FÉ CATOLICA FUERO[N] CRUCIFICADOS EN LA [CIU]DAD DE NANGASAQUI A 5 D[E] FEBRERO D[E] 1597 Y EN 1627 FUERON COLOCADOS EN EL MARTIROLOGIO DE LOS SANTOS POR EL PAPA URBANO VIII., QUIEN CONCEDIDO SE CELEBRASE ANUAL[ME]NT[E] EN DICHO DIA SU FIESTA CON OFICIO ECLESIASTICO. — Y ULTIMAMENTE FUERON CANONISADOS SOLEMNEMENTE POR N. S. P PI[US] [I]X A 8 DE JUNIO DE 1862." The sentence referring to the martyrs' canonization in 1862 appears to have been squeezed into the area beneath the painted scene, as the letters are of smaller size, partially touching those of the other two lines. Another reason to believe that this sentence is a later addition is that the first part of the inscription referring to the "martyrology of the saints", with no explicit mention of beatification (although it was the bull of beatification by which the right to celebrate the martyrs' feast day on February 5 was conceded), blurs the line between beatification and canonization. This points to a creation of the painting in the years immediately following the 1627 beatification of the martyrs, in which splendid festivities in their honor were orchestrated: as formal beatification had only been introduced by Urban VIII in 1625 as a necessary first step preceding canonization, the Franciscans at that time erroneously believed that canonization could be taken for granted, and often referred to their martyrs as 'saints'. However, they would have to wait another two hundred and thirty five years for the official canonization to occur. On the Franciscans' overly optimistic interpretation of the martyrs' beatification, see: CAÑEQUE (2020), *Un imperio* (see FN 14), 236.

17 E.g., RIBADENEIRA, MARCELO DE, OFM (1947), *Historia de las Islas del archipiélago filipino y reynos de la Gran China, Tartaria, Cochinchina, Malaca, Siam, Cambodge y Japón*. Barcelona 1601 (ed. by de Legísima, J.R.) (Madrid), book 5, chapter XX, 481 mentions: "Los portugueses, antes que levantasen las cruces pidieron al juez que pusiesen a los seis frailes en medio de los japones, poniendo diez a una parte e diez a otra."

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the canvas, while the Japanese victims of crucifixion are shown at a notably smaller scale. Overall, this last group of figures is arranged according to a symmetrical pattern, forming pairs. Placed on the central axis of the painting, one of the Japanese martyrs is shown at almost the same scale as the missionaries.

In the background, in complete contradiction with the geographical setting of the actual site of the execution on Nishizaka Hill, which, along with neighboring hills, was at that time surrounded by the sea, a partly snow-covered mountain range is depicted. On the left side of the painting, an embayment harbors the vessel from which onlookers, among them the three Franciscan witnesses who were removed from the execution ground by force, observe the events.[18] The bay in which the ship is anchored is reminiscent of the one depicted in the 1627 Roman engraving.

In the built area depicted in the image's lower register, the Jesuit bishop of Japan, easily identifiable through his crozier and miter, is seen observing the martyrdom scene from a window of the Society's local residence with two further Jesuits (fig. 3).[19] Close observation of these figures' facial expressions reveals their contempt for the martyrs; it seems as though the sight of the martyrs' crucifixion even gives them a sense of satisfaction, quite in accordance with the record found in the Mexican Inquisition Archive mentioned above.

In the center of the painting hovers a large panel inscribed with the martyrs' death sentence, which certifies that the executed Christians were put to death for spreading and adopting the Christian faith, thereby qualifying them for martyrdom. The text on the panel reads as follows (fig. 4):

> Sentence — Because these men came from Luzon with the title of ambassadors and stayed in Miaco preaching the law that His Majesty prohibited rigorously in the past years, he commands that they be crucified together with the Japanese who adopted their law, and that they be lifted upon crosses in the city of Nagasaki. His Majesty further prohibits that there be men of this law in the future, putting this renewed prohibition under the same penalty.[20]

Attentive observation reveals that the writing in this area has been reworked. It is likely that other touch-ups were made elsewhere in this painting, too, while certain motifs, such as the large circular criss-crossed fence surrounding the panel with the sentence, which is a recurring motif in this iconographical scheme and of which only faded traces remain, were left to deteriorate.[21]

In the upper part of the painting Japanese soldiers, characterized as sturdy, almost-bald figures wearing monochromatic belted tunics, are depicted. Some are shown piercing the

18 ZAMORA, JUAN POBRE DE, OFM (1997), *Historia de la pérdida y descubrimiento del galeón 'San Felipe'* (ed. by Pérez, J.M.) (Ávila), chapter 56.15, 370.

19 RIBADENEIRA (1947), *Historia* (see FN 17), book 5, chapter XXIV, 496.

20 In Spanish, the inscription reads: "SENTENCIA — POR CUANTO ESTOS HOMBRES VINIERON DEL L[UZON] CON TITULO DE EMBAJADORES Y QUEDARON EN MIACO PREDICANDO LA LEY QUE SU ALTEZA PROHIBIO RIGUROSAMENTE EN LOS AÑOS PASADOS, MANDA QUE SEAN CRUCIFICADOS JUNTAMENTE CON LOS JAPONES QUE SE HICIERON DE SU LEY, Y QUE SE PONGAN TODOS EN CRUZ EN LA CIUDAD DE NANGASAQUI, Y MANDÓ SU ALTEZA DE NUEVO PROHIBIR QUE NO HAYA EN ADELANTE HOMBRES DE ESTA LEY, BAJO LA MISMA PENA."

21 RIBADENEIRA (1947), *Historia* (see FN 17), book 5, chapter XX, 482. According to Marcelo de Ribadeneira, one of the principal Franciscan authors to report on the martyrdom of the 26, this panel and the fence surrounding it were erected to convince spectators that the chastized Christians were put to death for having preached the Christian faith (which was apparently doubted by some).

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martyrs' sides with lances, while under the crosses, devout, kneeling Christians whose European identity is expressed through their physiognomic features, headdresses, and garments, collect the martyrs' blood with cloths. Groups of women, characterized by their fair skin-tone, black tied-up hair, and facial features as Japanese, surround the panel proclaiming the death sentence. Just like the soldiers, they are shown wearing monochromatic garb quite untypical of the Japanese fashion of the time. Children, both Japanese and European, are shown observing the events taking place around them. To the left side of the picture, the kneeling figure who looks up to the crosses in prayer, his hat humbly placed on the ground, is likely the captain of the galleon San Felipe, general Don Landecho. Below, an Iberian merchant, wearing a pair of *Bombacha* pants, is depicted acquiring a blood-stained Franciscan friar's habit from a Japanese soldier, while even farther below, two clerical figures dressed in black can be seen—the two Jesuits Francisco Pasio and Juan Rodríguez, who joined the martyrs to give them strength in their last moments.[22]

On the right side of the picture, Japanese soldiers escort the martyrs to the place of execution. The detail of the ropes used to tie up their hands folded in prayer, as well as the soldiers' lances and pitchforks, make it abundantly clear that the crowd seen appearing from behind a miniaturized mound, walking barefoot, does not refer to a religious procession of any kind,[23] but to a moment preceding the crucifixion of the martyrs represented above. Underneath the macabre cortege, a group of soldiers, headed by their commander riding on a horse, participate simultaneously in another martyrdom taking place in the foreground, resulting in a conglomeration of motifs unique to this painting: it combines the 1597 martyrdom with that of a woman, identified by the inscription on the panel attached to her stake as "B. LUCIA DE FLETES INDIA MARTIR". She is depicted, in Franciscan garb, succumbing to the fire lit by the two Japanese soldiers standing to either side of her (fig. 5). This female figure's ardent love of Christ crucified is expressed by the wooden crucifix she contemplates, an object she is seen holding obliquely before her in her left hand, and which is stabilized by the rosary fastened to the stake next to her and wound around her right wrist, while her hands are folded over her breast.

The pictorial motif of this female martyr is perhaps the most interesting element of this painting. It is worth examining it thoroughly, as it is key to understanding this picture's function in the temporal and geographical context in which it was created. Lucía de Freitas was a Japanese Franciscan tertiary who died in Nagasaki in the Great Genna martyrdom of 1622, and who was later represented in an engraving by José Camaron and Manuel Peleguer created in 1795 showing the 56 Franciscan martyrs of Japan executed in the first half of the 17th century (fig. 6). Her name, like those of the other martyrs, is preceded by a "B." in this painting, although she was not beatified until 1867. She was baptized at an early age and married a Portuguese man named Felipe de Freitas. Lucía was the *mayordoma* of the brotherhood of the Rosary in Nagasaki and is known to have been a woman of extraordinary religious zeal: her fervid desire for martyrdom kept her dauntless before the perils arising from providing shelter to Christian missionaries. Not only did she house several persecuted missionaries in her home, she also tended to them in many ways until she was arrested along with her confessor, the Franciscan father Ricardo de Santa Ana, in November 1621. Once in the women's jail, she professed as a Franciscan Tertiary

22 RIBADENEIRA (1947), *Historia* (see FN 17), book 5, chapter XX, 481.
23 This is erroneously indicated in PRIETO PRIETO/ MUÑOZ MARTIN (²2022), *Primeros mártires* (see FN 6), 201.

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before the Franciscan father Diego de San Francisco, who conferred that order's habit on her. On the way to her trial, Lucía preached to all those around her with great fervor, brandishing a crucifix before her. She was sentenced to death and burned at the stake on September 10, 1622. Among the 55 victims of the Great Genna martyrdom of 1622, only 25 were condemned to death by fire, considered a more severe punishment than decapitation. Lucía de Freitas was the only woman among the 25 persons who died on the pyre.[24]

Attentive observation of the rendering of this figure in the Sucre painting reveals a characterization entirely distinct from that of the mourning Japanese women depicted right above her. Not only is Lucía's skin tone darker, also her facial features are rendered quite differently—Lucía has large almond-shaped eyes—, while her long black hair is not tied up in any way but falls loosely over her shoulders. Yet Lucía de Freitas was a Japanese woman from Nagasaki, just like the anonymous figures of devout women witnessing the 1597 crucifixion. But why, then, does the inscription on the panel hovering above her explicitly spell out her origin as "[de] INDIA"?

Close attention to the characterization of the Japanese martyrs crucified in the upper part of the painting adds yet another layer of mystery (fig. 7, 8). For indeed, while the six Franciscan missionaries—among whom four were from Europe, while one was a Mexican *criollo* and one a *mestizo* from India—are characterized as Europeans, the Japanese martyrs shown behind and next to them are depicted quite differently. While it is not surprising that their dark skin tone and chin-length black hair with bangs do not resemble the skin color and hairstyles of the missionaries (most of whom are shown tonsured), it seems all the more puzzling that they do not share the visual characterization of the Japanese soldiers scattered throughout the painting either.

To solve this riddle, it is necessary to juxtapose the Sucre canvas with the two paintings of the same subject found in the church of the Franciscan Recollects in Cuzco, Peru (fig. 9, 10). These paintings, measuring 427 cm x 305 cm each, were created by the Peruvian artist Lázaro Pardo de Lago in time for the local Franciscan communities' festivities held in 1630 in honor of the martyrs' beatification.[25] Although no documents relating to the painting in the convent of the Recollects in Sucre have been found to date, the reference to the "martyrology of the saints" in the inscription at the bottom of the painting suggests that it, too, was created for the festivities celebrating the martyrs' elevation to the rank of the saints.[26]

The pair of paintings in Cuzco and the canvas in Sucre share the exclusive depiction of the 23 Franciscan martyrs, combined with an emphasis on their rewards in the afterlife, expressed through the motifs of the crowns of laurel leaves and the martyrs' palms brought

24 On Lucía de Freitas, see: RUIZ DE MEDINA, J. (1999) *El martirologio del Japón, 1558–1873* (Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu; Rome), 445 and 848; PRIETO PRIETO, M./ MUÑOZ MARTIN, A. (2017), *Testigos de fe en el país del sol naciente.* Bio-iconografías (Editorial Cuadernos del Laberinto 8; Madrid), 165–170.

25 On the Cuzco paintings, see: WUFFARDEN, L.E. (2006), "Lázaro Pardo de Lago, Franciscan Martyrs of Japan (Cat. Nr. VI-71)", in: Rishel, Joseph J., (Ed.), *The Arts in Latin America, 1492–1820* (New Haven), 419; MESA, J. DE/ GISBERT, T. (1982), *Historia de la pintura cuzqueña*. Vol. I (Lima), 72, pl. 4; MESA, J. DE/ GISBERT, T. (1982), *Historia de la pintura cuzqueña*. Vol. II (Lima), fig. 34; SEBASTIAN, S. (1990), *El barroco iberoamericano.* Mensaje iconográfico (Madrid), 307–308, figs. 189–190; PASTOR DE LA TORRE, C./ TORD, L.E. (1999), *Perú*. Fe y arte en el virreynato (Córdoba), 55–56; MUJICA PINILLA, R. (2002), "Arte e identidad: las raíces culturales del barroco peruano", in: Mujica Pinilla, R. (Ed.), *El barroco peruano.* Vol. I (Arte y Tesoros del Perú; Lima), 1–57, here: 10–13, figs. 6-7.

26 On the painting's date of creation, see the discussion of the inscription beneath the painted scene in note 16.

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to them by angels. While all three images place a certain emphasis on the six Franciscan missionaries among the martyrs, their modes of presentation of the martyrs differ. In Sucre, the perspectival arrangement of the scene lets the majority of the Japanese martyrs' figures appear behind the missionaries, relegating them to a pictorial space below the line formed by the horizontal beams of the missionaries' crosses. In contrast, the Cuzco paintings show the missionaries' Japanese acolytes as if looming above them; these Japanese martyrs are placed much closer to the viewer than in Sucre and their scale is, with a few exceptions, practically equal to that of the missionaries.

Two standing martyrs holding their crosses and the lances that pierced them frame both of the Cuzco paintings' compositions, while a young boy, dressed in a red monochromatic garment, collects the blood dripping from one of the child martyrs' wounds in one of them (fig. 9). This same painting includes, on the outer left side, the figure of St. Joseph presenting the martyrs to the Christ Child, who is dressed as a Franciscan friar and holds an orb in his left hand while blessing the viewer with his right hand. On the opposite side, one sees the figure of St. Pedro de Alcántara, the founder of the Discalced Friars Minor—the reformed branch of the Franciscan order to which the missionaries crucified in 1597 had belonged—who had been beatified in 1622. An unidentifiable mountainous landscape reminiscent of Flemish paintings provides the background for the martyrdom scene.

Close observation of the hairstyles and physiognomies of the Japanese victims of crucifixion reveals that a local appropriation of the pictorial subject is present in all three paintings. Indeed, the characterization of the seventeen Japanese martyrs follows the artistic conventions of the day for the depiction of *mestizos* and Indigenous people converted to Christianity, as found in the pictorial representation of the local population in the drawings of Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala.[27]

The framed inscriptions in one of the two Cuzco paintings (fig. 10) provide further evidence for a local appropriation of the pictorial subject. While the inscription on the left reproduces the death sentence pronounced against the martyrs in Spanish, the one on the right refers to two posthumous miracles, narrated in Marcelo de Ribadeneira's *Historia de las Islas del archipiélago filipino y reynos de la Gran China, Tartaria, Cochinchina, Malaca, Siam, Cambodge y Japón*.[28] This inscription reads:

> In addition to other great prodigies and miracles that preceded and took place after the martyrdom of these 23 saints, here are two that the painting was able to declare. Over each one of the holy martyrs there appeared on Fridays a column of fire and over the commissary Brother Pedro Bautista there appeared two. From there they went in procession to the Hospital of San Lazaro, a house where the saints had dwelt, and from there to the hermitage of Our Lady where they stopped. Over this chapel on Friday, March 14, many stars of different colors appeared so that such a variety of shades was never seen. It lasted more than 4 hours as seen by many Spaniards and Indians.[29]

27 On this aspect of the Cuzco paintings, see: WUFFARDEN (2006), "Lázaro" (see FN 25), 419. The choir stalls sculpted in 1679 by Don Juan Ximénez de Villareal from cedar wood for the convent of Saint Francis in Sucre that are now in the Museum of the Recollects seem to follow a similar combination of types referencing both Europeans and Andeans in their visual rendering of the martyrs. In 1875, parts of the choir stalls were brought to and reworked for the Church of the Recollects, while the remaining parts were destroyed. On the choir stalls, see: PÈREZ Y PÈREZ, D., OFM/ GIMÉNEZ CARRAZANA, M. (1976), *Catalogo del Museo de la Recoleta* (Sucre).

28 Ribadeneira (1947), *Historia* (see FN 17), book 5, chapter XXV, 498–501.

29 The Spanish text reads: "Demas de otros grandes prodigios, y milagros, q[ue] precedieron, y sucedieron al martirio destos. 23. s[antos] se ponen aqui dos q[ue] pudo declarar la pintura. Sobre cada uno de los. s[antos] martires aparecia los viernes una como coluna de fuego y sobre El. s[anto] comiss[ari]o fr[ay] p[edro] bautista

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This inscription closes with a statement in Latin indicating the artist's name and the year of the painting's execution, 1630; the date on which the crucifixion of the martyrs occurred is also mentioned.[30] The first miracle reported by the inscription revolves around luminous phenomena reported slightly differently by Ribadeneira—"columns of fire" appearing on Fridays over each of the crucified martyrs—adding that over the Franciscan commissary Pedro Bautista, there appeared two such columns. The second one relates to the appearance of many stars of different colors and shades over the mentioned hermitage, a spectacle reported to have lasted for several hours, which was "seen by many Spaniards and Indians" (*a vista de muchos españoles y indios*). While the inscription claims the painting's ability to "declare" these miracles—alluding to the multiplicity of colorful stars illuminating the sky and the two pairs of ignited columns to either side of the group of martyrs—what is most striking here is the terminology used to refer to those witnessing this last miracle, "españoles y indios". In his *Historia*, Marcelo de Ribadeneira speaks much more adequately of Portuguese and Japanese people reporting this miracle instead.

The use of the term "indio" to refer to Japanese people resonates with the designation, in the Sucre painting, of Lucia de Fletes' origin as "de India", while the characterization of the Japanese victims of the 1597 crucifixion in Nagasaki as members of the local Andean population in all three paintings is congruent with the peculiar pictorial rendering of this Japanese woman as a local Andean person. It appears that a transposition of the pictorial subject of the 1597 crucifixion to the Andean highlands occurred, as confirmed by the geographical setting of the martyrdom in the Sucre painting. What remains to be explained is this transfer to South America of a pictorial subject inextricably tied to the early modern Christian missionary enterprise in Japan.

Andean Adaptations and Appropriations of the Martyrs of Japan

To understand the local Andean resonance of the martyrdom of Christians in Japan, two avenues of interpretation present themselves. The first consists of trying to make sense of a perspective in which local populations in geographical areas as remote as Japan and Peru shared an identity as 'inhabitants of the Indies', or, more simply, *indios*. The second amounts to examining the context surrounding the creation of pictures of the martyrs of Japan in the Andes, which includes investigating the functions of such images, whom they were commissioned by and to whom they were primarily addressed. All these considerations are still at a tentative stage.

Before engaging in an analysis of the term 'Indies' as it might have been used in the Andean paintings examined here, a few general remarks are in order. The term 'India' has been associated with the notion of frontier and limit of the known world ever since Antiquity.[31] In its early modern use, the term alludes to the ineffable, and is

aparecian dos. de alli partian en processio[n] al Hospital de s[an] lazaro, casa donde los s[antos] avian morado, y de alli a una ermita de N[uest]ra S[eñor]a donde paravan. sobre esta ermita un viernes. 14. de março aparecieron muchas estrellas de diversas colores. de suerte q[ue] tal variedad de matices nunca se vieron. duraron mas de. 4. horas a vista de muchos españoles y indios."

30 The year in which the depicted events took place, 1597, is erroneously noted as 1697. The "6" appears slightly smudged, pointing to a later modification of the inscription.

31 Virgil used the term to designate the limits of the territory dominated by Emperor Augustus. On this meaning of the term, see: CURTIUS, E.R. ([4]1963), *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* (Bern/ München), 169.

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correspondingly employed to designate unknown territories in far-away regions of the world. Or, to cite the succinct formulation provided by Nicolás Wey Gómez: "India's extension to the east of the Nile and to the south of the horizontal mountain range that included the Himalayas had remained, so to speak, anybody's guess. Ptolemy and Marco Polo—the two sources that most immediately served to rehaul the iconography of Asia's confines before Columbus—had expressed India's geographical indeterminacy in ways that could equally have invited the Discoverer to dream of an Atlantic crossing."[32]

As Elizabeth Horodowich and Alexander Nagel have argued, for at least a century after 1492, Asia and the Americas were imagined to exist on a continuum by European artists, mapmakers, and writers.[33] A theatrical play revolving around a Dominican friar's martyrdom in Japan attests to the geographical approximation of Peru and Japan by a Spanish author. *Los primeros mártires del Japón* has been attributed to Lope de Vega and was written around 1621. It evidences a conflation of local attributes reminiscent of the geographical commixture observed in the Sucre painting. Plays of this kind were ideal vehicles for the dissemination of martyrological ideals among a wide and diverse audience. Even though the story is set in Japan, one of its local male protagonists is characterized as an "old Indian" (*indio viejo*), while the main female protagonist, a Japanese woman named Quildora (a name entirely untypical for Japan), appears on the scene carrying a bow and arrows.[34] What is more, there is constant mention of the Spanish, *españoles*, and no mention of the Jesuits, creating the impression in the uninformed viewer that the Catholic mission in Japan was entirely an enterprise of the Spanish and the mendicant orders.[35] Overall, the play's lack of geographical and factual precision in recounting a Dominican friar's martyrdom in Japan appears to reflect a choice rather than mere ignorance.

The specific reason for the conflation of geographical markers in promoting Dominican missionary activity in Japan must be sought in the mendicant orders' discourses relating to this territory, which their chroniclers insisted on locating in 'the New World and the West Indies' (*el Nuevo Mundo e Indias occidentales*)—the Americas—as pointed out by Alejandro Cañeque. Such an attribution would let the inhabitants of the archipelago of Japan appear as *indios*. The confusion was further promoted by the fact that the Spanish would usually designate natives of the Philippines as *indios*, while this term was not generally used in relation to the Japanese, whom they typically called *japones*.[36]

The geographical attribution of Japan to a territory mostly under Spanish rule aided by mendicant friars is evidently related to the mendicant orders' dispute with the Jesuits revolving around the missionary enterprise in Japan.[37] The latter, who had entered the Japan mission field under the Portuguese *padroado*, had obtained the exclusive right of pursuing missionary activities in Japan through the brief *Ex Pastoralis Officio* promulgated by Pope Gregory XIII on January 23, 1585. Even though King Felipe II of Spain and Portugal responded to a related request by the Jesuits by giving similar orders to the secular

32 WEY GÓMEZ, N. (2008), *The Tropics of Empire.* Why Columbus Sailed South to the Indies (Transformations: Studies in the History of Science and Technology Series; Cambridge, MA), 167. For an analysis of the term's early modern connotations, see also: HORODOWICH, E./ NAGEL, A. (2023), *Amerasia* (New York), 247–269.

33 HORODOWICH/ NAGEL (2023), *Amerasia* (see FN 32).

34 VEGA, LOPE DE (2022), *Los primeros mártires de Japón* (Madrid), 16 and 47.

35 On this play, see: CAÑEQUE (2020), *Un imperio* (see FN 14), 246–249.

36 CAÑEQUE (2020), *Un imperio* (see FN 14), 249.

37 For literature on the Japan mission, see: FN 12.

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authorities in Portuguese India, friars subject to the Spanish *patronato* entered Japan just a few years later.

The Spanish secular authorities in Manila, driven by political and commercial jealousy, were eager to crush the monopoly of the Macau-based Portuguese over the highly lucrative China-Japan trade. These Spanish ambitions were paralleled by the aspirations of the local mendicant friars. The Franciscans in the Philippines declared that they would ignore the papal brief and advanced as justification the brief *Dum ad uberes fructus*, which had been promulgated by Sixtus V on October 15, 1586. It conceded to the Franciscan province of Saint Gregory the Great in the Philippines diverse exclusive privileges related to India and China, without any mention of Japan. Even though the Jesuits recognized the validity of this second document, they considered it abusive and illegitimate to extend the privileges regarding India and China to Japan. An assembly of theologians and canonists, among whom there weren't any members of the Society of Jesus, held in Manila on May 28, 1593, decided that the Franciscans were allowed to freely go to Japan and even to carry out missionary activities there.

The mendicants' conflation of geographies referred to above goes well beyond a general attribution of the term 'Indies' to territories in both Asia and the Americas. There is no doubt that the inclusion of Japan in the 'West Indies' by the mendicant orders was based in the conflict between them and the Jesuits over the Japan mission. The strategic choice of locating Japan in a territory ruled predominantly by Spain opens up an avenue for understanding how in mendicant plays and pictures, figures from Japan could be portrayed as hailing from the Americas. What remains yet to be seen is what motivated such an interchangeability of origins in relation to Christian martyrs for inhabitants of the Viceroyalty of Peru. In other words: why did the Franciscan Recollects commission paintings portraying not just any Christianized Japanese people, but specifically Japanese martyrs, as Andean locals?

Obviously, inhabitants of the Andes did not share European audiences' occasional geographical confusions about Asia and the Americas, but they could make use of the conflation of both continents as an argument. Indeed, the beatification of the 26 crucified martyrs of Nagasaki in 1627 had marked a turning point. For the first time, inhabitants of the territories encountered by European polities in the early modern period were acknowledged in the Roman hierarchy of saints—as explained before, the vast majority of the beatified martyrs were Japanese.[38] These new martyrs weren't canonized until the nineteenth century and would remain the only victims of the Japan mission to be beatified in the early modern period. Could it be that the Japanese origins of most of these 26 martyrs were considered to open up a door to sainthood for newly Christianized populations in other areas of the world?

In order to answer this question, some light needs to be shed on the paintings' concrete functions. The pair of paintings executed by Lázaro Pardo de Lago was commissioned by

38 On the beatification of the 26 martyrs of Nagasaki, see: OMATA RAPPO (2020), *Indes lointaines* (see FN 1), 149–169; on their unique status, ibid., 170–171; on the question of Indigenous martyrs in particular, ibid., 217–222. On the veneration of the martyrs of Japan throughout the Spanish Empire, see: ROLDÁN-FIGUEROA, R. (2021), *The Martyrs of Japan.* Publication History and Catholic Missions in the Spanish World (Spain, New Spain, and the Philippines, 1597–1700) (Studies in the History of Christian Traditions 195; Leiden); on their veneration on a global scale, see: STEINER, N. (2012), "Globales Bewusstsein und Heiligenverehrung – Spuren eines weltweiten Kults der japanischen Märtyrer von 1597", in: Koschorke, K. (Ed.), *Etappen der Globalisierung in christentumsgeschichtlicher Perspektive* (Wiesbaden), 135–156.

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the Franciscan convent of La Recoleta in Cuzco for the festivities in honor of the martyrs' beatification organized in 1630.[39] Given the large dimensions of the canvases, it seems likely that these paintings were publicly displayed during the processions that must have been part of these festivities. It is possible that the painting in Sucre served a similar purpose, although its relatively smaller size and its multiplicity of motifs make it less suited to being publicly shown to large crowds from afar. But whatever these paintings' concrete functions in the context of festivities, the size of the inscriptions in all three paintings suggests that they were also meant to be viewed from up-close by an audience capable of reading the Spanish texts.

If participation was at the center of these paintings' messages, the local relevance of a discourse on martyrdom in the Andes needs to be addressed. In his recent book on martyrdom in the Spanish Empire, Cañeque states that no martyrs were produced by the missionary enterprise in the Americas before the mid-seventeenth century.[40] Setting aside the spectacular case of the Augustinian friar Diego Ortiz, who died in 1571 after the inca Túpac Amaru had ordered his execution,[41] and despite the scarcity of information on the early victims of the Christian missionary enterprise in South America, there is, however, evidence for missionaries dying at the hands of Indigenous tribes, e.g. the Mojo in northeastern Bolivia, from as early as the second half of the 16th century. Just to name a few: the first missionary in the said region, the Carmelite father Pedro Vaez de Urrea, is known to have evangelized the Chunchos in 1560, suffering death as a consequence; the Jesuit father Miguel Urrea, who reached the Aguachiles in 1597, too, was killed by native people. In the Franciscan Province of San Antonio de los Charcas, the three Franciscan friars Gregorio Bolívar, Juan Sánchez and Luís de Jesús died as a result of their missionary efforts, killed with bows and arrows in 1631, possibly by Chiriguanos.[42] On December 8, 1637, the Franciscan friar Jerónimo Jiménez died with five Spaniards and some boys on the Perené River, shot with arrows and clubbed to death with oars. A few days later, the friar Cristóbal Larrios was likewise killed by some Indigenous people. In 1641, the Franciscan friar Matías Illescas was murdered with two more friars, probably by Shibipos, and in 1645, two more Franciscans were killed.[43] In sum, Franciscan friars participated in proselytizing activities in South America early on, venturing into unknown territories and exposing themselves to much danger. The above accounts do not include those who went out to evangelize and were never heard of again.

While the early deaths of missionaries in the South American evangelizing field are one part of the story, the Indigenous local victims of the often-complex processes of missionary advance and retreat are another. In fact, quite a few Christianized Indigenous people seem to have fallen victim to the raids by non-Christianized groups who wished to drive the friars and their beliefs out of territories that they viewed as their zones of influence. The local population thus suffered from the violence accompanying the Christian missionary enterprise as native people were baptized, villages Christianized and then friars and their companions driven out again, at times exposing the Christianized natives to much danger from other native groups.[44]

39 WUFFARDEN (2006), "Lázaro", 419 (see FN 25).
40 CAÑEQUE (2020), *Un imperio* (see FN 14), 275.
41 On Diego Ortiz, see: CAÑEQUE (2020), *Un imperio* (see FN 14), 716–717.
42 HABIG/ ESPINOSA (1946), "Franciscan Provinces", 335–356 (see FN 15), 338–342.
43 HABIG, M.A. (1945), "The Franciscan Provinces of South America", in: *The Americas* 2 (1), 72–92, here: 81.
44 An example for such an event is provided in HABIG (1945), "Franciscan Provinces", 72–92 (see FN 43), 80.

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Even though Christians had died on mission abroad before them, the 26 Christians crucified in Nagasaki in 1597 were the first martyrs produced by the early modern missionary enterprise to be considered 'true martyrs' in Europe.[45] The thin line separating these 26 from Christians dying at the hands of local inhabitants in Central and South America or in sub-Saharan Africa was a matter of perception. In Catholic Europe, based on St. Augustine, the cause, not the chastisement, was considered constitutive for martyrdom. For martyrdom to be recognized, death had to occur verifiably as the result of *odium fidei*, hatred of the Christian faith. As a consequence, entire regions of the world were excluded from producing martyrs, due to the impossibility of certifying the natives' intention of assailing Christians for their faith.[46]

Did the paintings analyzed in this essay, then, aim at including both the Catholic missionaries active in the Andes and the local native populations in a discourse that they were to a certain degree excluded from, by equating the dangers and violence they faced with the fate suffered by the Nagasaki martyrs? The martyrdom of *indios* in faraway Japan, could, in this sense, be seen as opening up a positive outlook on the risks that both missionaries active in South America and Christianized natives were exposed to.

Even though the request for inclusion formulated in the Cuzco and Sucre paintings was likely formulated by the missionaries primarily on their own behalf, the beatification of the first natives from the "Indies" could potentially also fuel the hope for participation in the ranks of the saints for the native inhabitants of the Andes. As the spiritual perfection of the newly Christianized Andean population was long questioned, recognition of a saintly status was particularly difficult for Indigenous people to reach.[47] The inclusion of a female saintly figure "[de] INDIA" in the Sucre painting points to the desire to open up avenues to sanctity not only for pious lay men, but also for women—despite the unusual path to female perfection represented by physical martyrdom at that time.[48]

Conclusion

The paintings analyzed in this essay are fascinating in terms of the interpretative avenues that they open. They visually express the request of missionaries active in Peru to be included in a discourse on martyrdom that largely excluded them. By depicting the recently beatified victims of the 1597 crucifixion in Nagasaki as Andean locals, Franciscan

45 OMATA RAPPO (2020), *Indes lointaines* (see FN 1), 81–82.

46 OMATA RAPPO (2020), *Indes lointaines* (see FN 1), 79–81. As explained by CAÑEQUE (2020), *Un imperio* (see FN 14), 275, in the Americas, the populations considered by European missionaries to be the most 'advanced' had, at least in theory, been converted to Christianity early on. The missionary activities of the religious orders had thus been reduced to proselytizing in regions whose inhabitants were considered to have 'no faith, no law, no king'. Their capacity to grasp the complexities of the Christian dogmas was considered non-existent, meaning that they were considered incapable of producing martyrs. On this, see also: FABRE, P.-A. (2010), "Missions chrétiennes modernes. Notions, terrains, problèmes", in: Büttgen, P./ Duhamelle, C. (Eds.), *Religion ou confession.* Un bilan franco-allemand sur l'époque moderne (XVI^{e}–XVIII^{e} siècles) (Colloquium 7; Paris), 559–576, here: 562.

47 ESTENSSORO FUCHS, J.C. (2003), *Del paganismo a la santidad*. La incorporación de los indios del Perú al catolicismo, 1532–1750 (Travaux de l'IFEA 156; Lima), 311, relates how the discovery of 'idolatrous' practices among Indigenous Christians in the Archbishopric of Lima led to the creation of an institution aiming at the extirpation thereof among the Indigenous people in 1610.

48 CAÑEQUE (2020), *Un imperio* (see FN 14), 53, explains that, in contrast with Antiquity, in the early modern period, only few female martyrs were produced, as women were generally excluded from proselytizing activities. Instead, virginity was presented as a form of martyrdom particularly apt for women.

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missionaries asserted the interchangeability of Amerindians and Japanese people regarding their ability both to produce and to become martyrs, an equation made possible by the semantic continuum established through the very notion of the "Indies".

What remains to be seen is whether the appropriation of the Japanese martyrs of which these paintings speak was actively adopted by the local population in the Andean highlands or not. In either case, the Japanese among the 1597 Nagasaki martyrs seem to have, in the Andes, acquired supple identities, rather than being "eclipsed"—a term proposed by Rady Roldán-Figueroa to characterize the Japanese martyrs' presentation in the written accounts commemorating these martyrs, which he contrasts with to the praise for the mostly European missionaries.[49] While the paintings examined in this chapter celebrate the missionaries as heroes of the faith, they do not exclude the Asian victims of the 1597 crucifixion from commemoration. Rather, they bestow upon the Japanese martyrs a transcontinental, transoceanic identity defined by the political landscape of Iberian imperialism.

Abstract

This essay examines the 17th-century Andean reception of the topic of the victims of the early modern missionary enterprise in Japan. It focuses on three paintings created by local artists in Cuzco and Sucre, which depict the crucifixion of six Franciscan missionaries and their 17 Japanese acolytes in Nagasaki in 1597. These three paintings, a pair of canvasses located in the church of the Convento Franciscano de La Recoleta in Cuzco and a painting in the Convento de Santa Ana de la Recoleta in Sucre, attest to the adaptation of a pictorial scheme devised in East Asia to the local Andean context of the paintings' creation. The local appropriation of the pictorial subject which they evidence opens up new avenues of interpretation linked to the accessibility of sainthood both to missionaries and local believers in different areas of the world.

Die japanischen Märtyrer im Hochland der Anden: Die „indischen Länder" als Eckpfeiler der Identitätskonstruktion im Vizekönigreich Peru

Dieser Aufsatz untersucht die andine Rezeption des Themas der Opfer der frühneuzeitlichen Japanmission im 17. Jahrhundert. Er konzentriert sich auf drei Gemälde, die von lokalen Künstlern in Cuzco und Sucre geschaffen wurden und die Kreuzigung von sechs franziskanischen Missionaren und ihren 17 japanischen Gehilfen in Nagasaki im Jahr 1597 darstellen. Diese drei Gemälde, zwei als Paar konzipierte Bilder in der Kirche des Convento Franciscano de La Recoleta in Cuzco und ein Gemälde im Convento de Santa Ana de la Recoleta in Sucre, zeugen von der Anpassung eines in Ostasien entwickelten Bildschemas an den andinen Kontext, in dem sie entstanden sind. Die lokale Aneignung des Bildthemas, die sich in ihnen zeigt, eröffnet neue Interpretationsmöglichkeiten—so die Übertragung einer transkontinentalen transozeanischen Identität an die japanischen Märtyrer, welche die lokalen Gläubigen in den Anden einschloss.

49 Roldán-Figueroa (2021), *The Martyrs of Japan* (see FN 38), 257–264.

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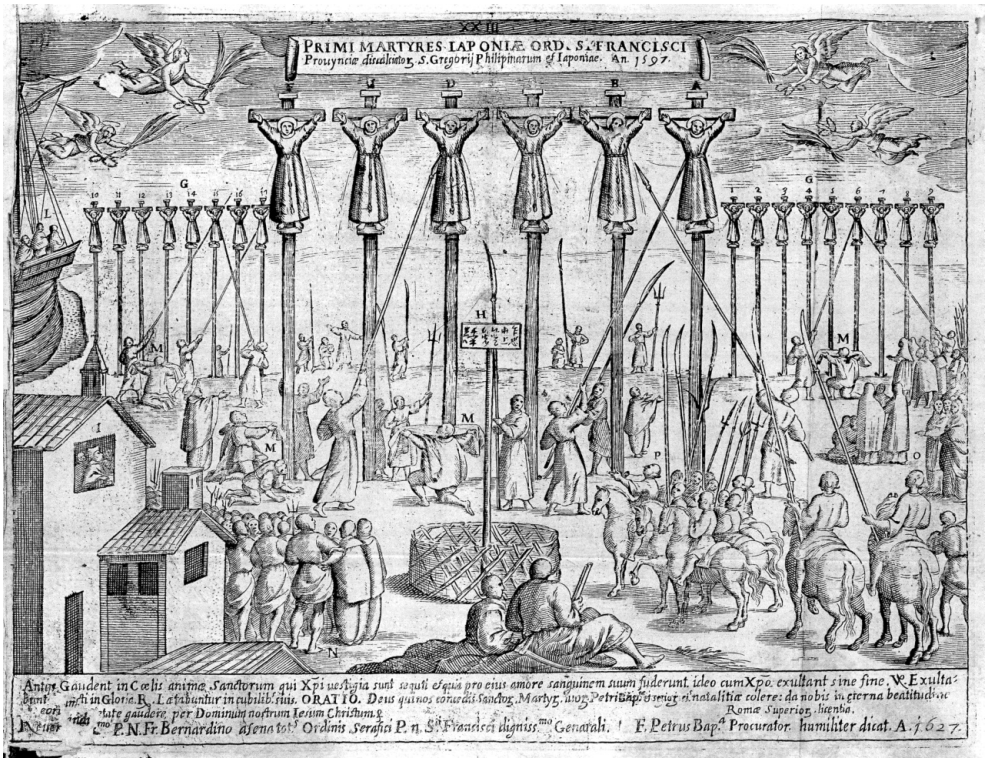

Fig. 1: Unknown artist, The Crucifixion of the Twenty-Three Franciscan Martyrs of 1597 in Japan. Engraving, 23,57 × 17,84 cm. From: Gascueña Esteban José de, O.F.M., *Año seráfico histórico, ejemplar y bisiesto de la Provincia de San Gregorio Magno de franciscos descalzos de Filipinas*, volume I (1775), inserted at the beginning of volume I. Madrid, Archivo de la Provincia Franciscana de la Inmaculada Concepción, call no. AFIO 391/1. Courtesy of Madrid, Archivo de la Provincia Franciscana de la Inmaculada Concepción.

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Fig. 2: Unknown artist, The Crucifixion of the Twenty-Three Franciscan Martyrs of 1597 in Japan, ca. 1630. Oil on canvas, 260 x 245 cm. Sucre, Convento de Santa Ana de la Recoleta. Image © Pedro Querejazu Leyton.

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Fig. 3: Unknown artist, The Crucifixion of the Twenty-Three Franciscan Martyrs of 1597 in Japan (Detail), ca. 1630. Oil on canvas, 260 x 245 cm. Sucre, Convento de Santa Ana de la Recoleta. Image © Pedro Querejazu Leyton.

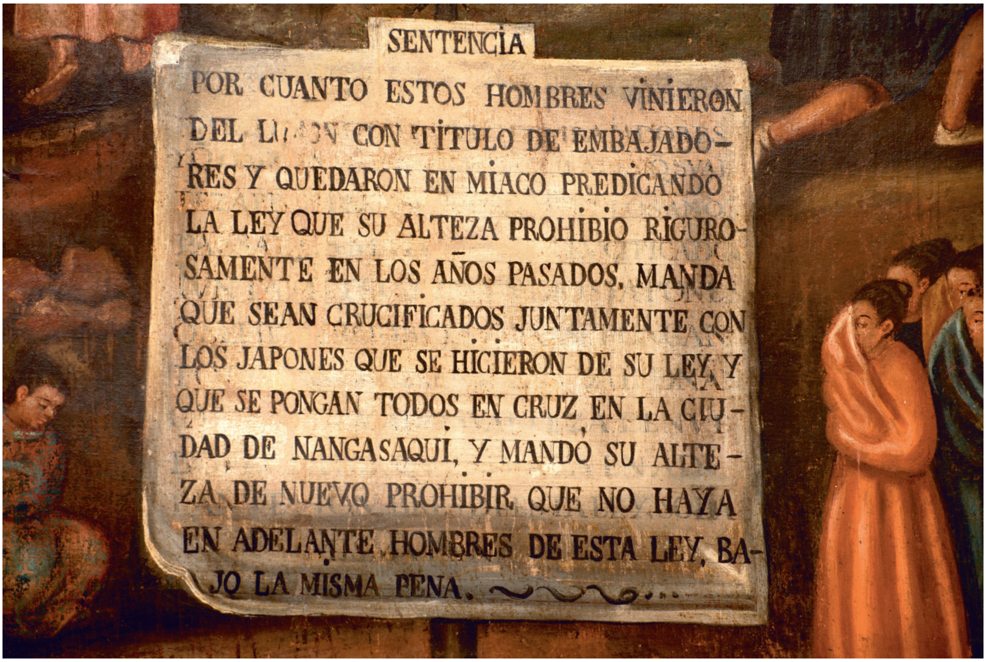

Fig. 4: Unknown artist, The Crucifixion of the Twenty-Three Franciscan Martyrs of 1597 in Japan (Detail), ca. 1630. Oil on canvas, 260 x 245 cm. Sucre, Convento de Santa Ana de la Recoleta. Image © Pedro Querejazu Leyton.

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Fig. 5: Unknown artist, The Crucifixion of the Twenty-Three Franciscan Martyrs of 1597 in Japan (Detail), ca. 1630. Oil on canvas, 260 x 245 cm. Sucre, Convento de Santa Ana de la Recoleta. Image © Pedro Querejazu Leyton.

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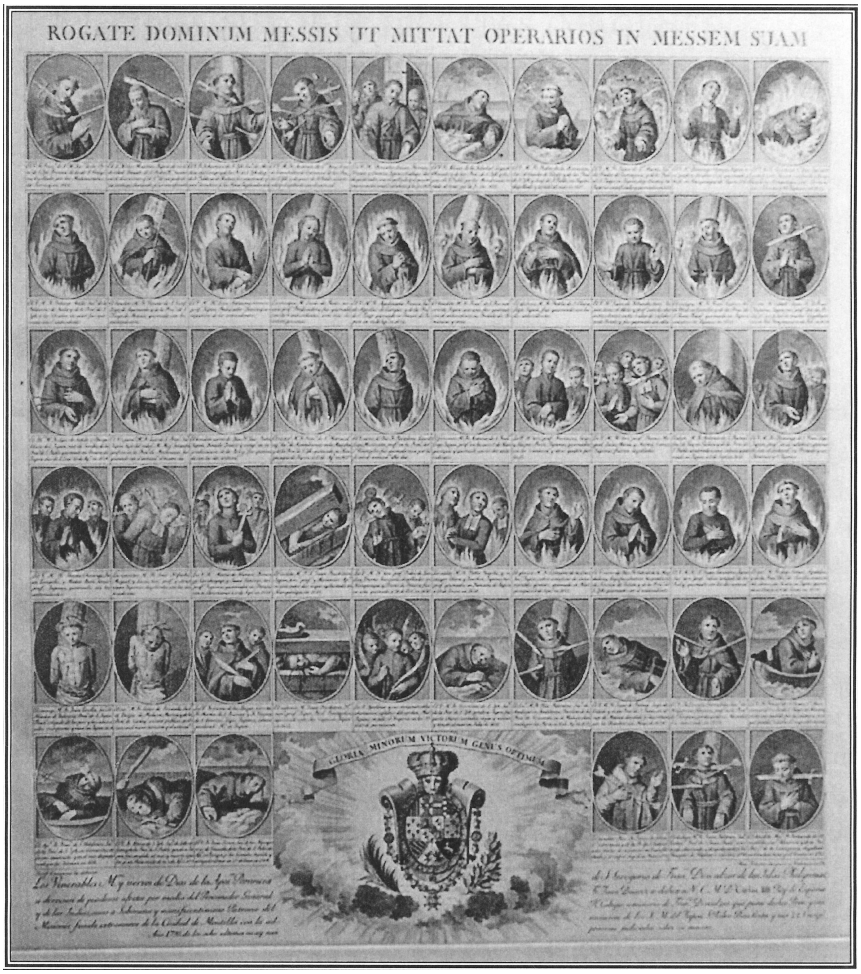

Fig. 6: José Camaron y Boronat (designer) and Manuel Peleguer y Tossar (engraver), The 56 Franciscan martyrs of Japan, 1795. Engraving, 52 × 55,5 cm. Image from Prieto Prieto/ Muñoz Martin (2017), *Testigos de fe* (see FN 24), 17.

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Fig. 7: Unknown artist, The Crucifixion of the Twenty-Three Franciscan Martyrs of 1597 in Japan (Detail), ca. 1630. Oil on canvas, 260 x 245 cm. Sucre, Convento de Santa Ana de la Recoleta. Image © Pedro Querejazu Leyton.

Fig. 8: Unknown artist, The Crucifixion of the Twenty-Three Franciscan Martyrs of 1597 in Japan (Detail), ca. 1630. Oil on canvas, 260 x 245 cm. Sucre, Convento de Santa Ana de la Recoleta. Image © Pedro Querejazu Leyton.

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Fig. 9: Lázaro Pardo de Lago, The Franciscan Martyrs of Japan of 1597 I, 1630. Oil on canvas, 427 cm x 305 cm. Cuzco, Convento Franciscano de La Recoleta. Image from WUFFARDEN (2006), "Lázaro" (see FN 25), 419.

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Fig. 10: Lázaro Pardo de Lago, The Franciscan Martyrs of Japan of 1597 II, 1630. Oil on canvas, 427 cm x 305 cm. Cuzco, Convento Franciscano de La Recoleta. Photo by the author.

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St. Thomas Christians and the Indian Ocean Trade, 800–1800

PIUS MALEKANDATHIL

St Thomas Christians who trace back their origin to the apostolic preaching of St. Thomas in Kerala, form an important entrepreneurial Indian community involved in the economic pursuits of spice production and trade. Because of their specialized skill in spice cultivation along with their closeness to the ruling figures of Kerala and their linkages with the major ecclesiastical and mercantile centres of Afro-Asia, they played a decisive role in the Indian Ocean trade of medieval and early modern periods. The success of various international merchants to conduct Indian Ocean trade in pepper and other spices depended on their ability to incorporate the spice-producing community of St. Thomas Christians and their expertise in local and inter-regional trade within the orbits of their larger system of commerce. By the 9th century AD, the mercantile segment among them had already organized themselves into a trade guild known as *manigramam,* and with the arrival of Mar Sapor and Mar Prodh in 823 their trade began to revolve around their church known as *Tharisappally* of Quilon and its port. With the market mechanism of *angadis* around their churches, the St. Thomas Christians mobilized pepper and other spices from the distant hinterland, from where it was further taken to Quilon and other ports for trans-oceanic trade.

The local rulers used to happily permit the Christian traders to establish the local market mechanism of *angadis* in their habitational enclaves, and the latter were bestowed with several social and commercial privileges by the kings in order to get their support for making available foreign cargo in the territory of local rulers and also to accentuate their multiple projects linked with power processes. Consequently, the St. Thomas Christians got a great amount of acceptability before local rulers, who favoured their efforts of commodity movements to the ports of Persian Gulf and Red Sea regions. The terminal points of their trade comprised principally the Asian markets together with the Byzantine markets on the one hand and European monastic centres as well as evolving urban markets on the other hand. Equally significant was the commercial strand that merged into African, very often the Ethiopian, commercial system.

Many St. Thomas Christian traders started bolstering their commercial and social position by way of their collaboration with the Europeans and by making themselves acceptable before the local rulers and commodity producers in the hinterland. Many St. Thomas Christian traders including Thachil Mathu Tharakan with high capital potential made able use of this opportunity to establish their mercantile base and to enhance their social position and clout.

The paper looks at the meanings and nature of the trade of St. Thomas Christians of India to see whether trade impacted their socio-religious and cultural practices to the extent of developing a Kerala-specific version of Christianity in India. Attempts are also made to

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examine the way how the exigencies and requirements of the multicultural society, within which these Christians lived and conducted trade, kept on transforming and modifying the universal Christianity into a region-specific version of Christianity and see whether they can be studied within the frames of polycentricity in global Christianity.

Historical Background

Networks of trade and faith evolved very significantly between Persian Gulf region and coastal western India including Kerala at least since third century AD. The St. Thomas Christians who were the descendants of those converted by St. Thomas, due to the reasons of their involvement in spice production and accessibility to pepper producing hinterland were considered to be intensively linked with this mercantile network as suppliers of cargo. Syriac documents from the fourth century onwards refer to the emergence of certain "islands of commerce" on the Indian coast in general and Kerala shores in particular which were connected with the stimulated markets of Sassanid Persia and Byzantine empire. Several ports that King Ardashir founded or re-founded in the Persian Gulf region after his accession to the throne in 224 AD and the chain of Christian monasteries including the one in Kharg island and others on the coast served as the commercial base for the trade of Christian merchants of Sassanid Persia with coastal western India.[1] The material remnants of Sassanid pottery obtained from the sites of Pattanam excavations in Kerala attest to the hectic Persian trade that happened in the fourth-fifth centuries with this maritime nodal centre, which had a considerable presence of St. Thomas Christians in its neighbourhood.

The eleventh century chronicle of Seert mentions that the Sassanid ruler Yazdigird I (399-421) had sent Mar Ahai, the Nestorian Catholicos, to Fars to investigate the piracy of ships returning from India and Ceylon.[2] The Catholicos was deputed for this task most probably because of the fact that the merchant groups involved in the maritime trade between India-Ceylon and Persian Gulf were predominantly Christian and in that way he would be in a far better position to gather more direct and immediate information about the piratical attacks on them. B.E. Colles refers to the account of Abraham Kashkar, a sixth century monk, who made his voyage to India as a merchant. He also mentions about Bar Sahde, who made several journeys to India before entering a monastery following the attack of his ship by the pirates.[3] Cosmas Indicopleustes (545AD.) refers to the important trading centers in South Asia frequented by the Christian traders from Sassanid Persia. They were: 'Sindhu (Sind),[4] Orrhotha (Saurashtra),[5] Sibor (Sindabor or Chandrapura,

1 WHITEHOUSE, D./ WILLIAMSON, A. (1973), "Sassanian Maritime Trade", in: *Iran* 11, 29–32; see also WOLTERS, O.W. (1967), *Early Indonesian Commerce.* A Study of the Origins of Srivijaya (Ithaca), 129–158. The recent excavations on the coastal enclaves of Persian Gulf region have unearthed the remnants of many such Christian churches and monasteries.

2 ADDAI SCHER (1969), *La Chronique de Seert,* in: *Patrologia Orientalis*. Vol. V (Paris), 324–326; COLLES, B.E. (1969), "Persian Merchants and Missionaries in Medieval Malaya", in: *Journal of the Malayasian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*. Vol. XLII/2, 10–47.

3 COLLES (1969), "Persian Merchants and Missionaries" (see FN 2); MINGANA, A. (1926), "The Early Spread of Christianity in India", in: *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* X, 455.

4 Cosmas Indicopleustes considers Sindhu, which got its name after Indus, as the frontier of India and as the boundary between Persia and India. MCCRINDLE, J.W. (1897) (Ed.), *The Christian Topography of Cosmas, an Egyptian Monk* (London), 366.

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which is an abbreviation of present day Chandor).[6] He also refers to the five pepper marts of Male (Malabar or Kerala)[7] which then used to export pepper to Sassanid Persia: Parti(?), Mangarouth (Mangalore)[8] ; Salopatana (Chaliyampattanam)[9]; Nalopatana (Dahbatan or Dharmapttanam)[10] and Poudopatana (Puthupattanam or present day Pattanam?).[11] Cosmas Indicopleustes (literally meaning Indian Voyager), also hints at the economic importance of the geographies that made Christian merchants settle down in these places. He says that Male (Malabar) is the place 'where pepper grows'[12] and Calliana (Kalyan) is the place 'which exports copper , sesame-logs and cloth for making dresses, and which ultimately made it 'a great place of business'.[13] He also gives detailed botanical descriptions of pepper for the first time.[14]

Pahlavi-inscribed crosses of pre-seventh century period were obtained from the vicinity or core centres of these trading places of Persian Christians mentioned by Cosmas Indicopleustes, which as material remnants of their links indicate the emergence of an intricate network of faith and commerce among these Christian settlements in the Indian Ocean, whose integration and cohesion was ensured by faith and trade related travels and

5 It refers to Saurashtra. Pliny refers to an Indian race by name *Horatae*, who lived in the Gulf of Cambay. This was a corrupt form of Sorath, probably derived from Saurashtra or Gujarat. McCRINDLE (1897), *Christian Topography* (see FN 4)*,* 367, no.1.

6 Sibor is identified with Sindabor or Chandrapura, which is equated with present day Chandor. Sindabor had been a major centre of trade for the Jews from 9th / 10th centuries onwards. See GOITEIN, S.D. (1987), "Portrait of a Medieval India Trader. Three Letters from the Cairo Geniza", in: *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* XLVIII, 457–460. In the original Catalan Map prepared by the Majorcan Jew called Abraham Cresques in 1375 for the king Charles V of France, the place is indicated as Chintabor. This map is now kept in the Mazarine Gallery of the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris (Spanish Mss. No. 30). See also CORDIER, H. (1894), *L'Extreme-Orient dans l'Atlas Catalan de Charles V, roi de France* (Paris). See MALEKANDATHIL, P. (1999), *The Germans, the Portuguese and India* (Münster), 15.

7 It is quite clear that 'Male' here stands for the larger geography of Malabar comprising the present-day Kerala. In Geniza papers we find reference to Malibarat. GOITEEN, S.D. (1972), *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders* (Princeton), 63–64. Even in the document from the Rasulids of Yemen Malibarat is mentioned. See LAMBOURN, E. (2008), "India from Aden. Khutba and Muslim Urban Networks in Late Thirteenth Century India", in: Hall, K.R. (Ed.), *Secondary Cities and Urban Networking in the Indian Ocean Realm, c. 1400–1800* (New York), 72. 89–90. For the identification of these place names see also MALEKANDATHIL (1999), *The Germans, the Portuguese and India* (see FN 6), 3–4.

8 GOITEEN (1972), *Medieval Jewish Traders* (see FN 7), 63–4. The Jewish merchant Abraham Yiju had a bronze factory at Manjruth (Mangalore). Ibid., 192–4.

9 The identification of this place is done with the help of a document obtained from the Rasulids of Yemen, who used to give stipends in 1290s to the *qadis* and *khatibs* of various port towns on the west coast of India. Al-Shaliyat in this document is identified with Chaliyam. Moreover, Chaliyam has been a major centre for pepper trade all through history, which further strengthens my argument for its identification. See LAMBOURN (2008), "India from Aden" (see FN 7), 70–2. 87–90.

10 It could have been what the Jews and the Rasulids used to call *Dahfatan*, which is identified as *Dharamapattanam* or Dharmadam located about 4 kms from the town of Thalasserry. For reference in Rasulid document see LAMBOURN (2008), "India from Aden" (see FN 7), 70–72; 87–88. Dharmadam is surrounded by the Anjarakandy river on three sides and the region of Anjarakandy has been a major production centre of pepper in north Malabar till recently.

11 *Poudopatana* meaning new port town was a common nomenclature given to many newly emerging port-towns along coastal Kerala at different time periods. The Rasulid documents refer to *Bud,* which is identified with *Buddfattan* or *Pudupattanam* in north Malabar. It could also be Pattanam, from where Persian artefacts of Sassanid period were recently unearthed on a considerable scale. This makes me identify Poudopatana as present-day Pattanam.

12 McCRINDLE (1897), *Christian Topography* (see FN 4), 366.

13 McCRINDLE (1897), *Christian Topography* (see FN 4), 366.

14 McCRINDLE (1897), *Christian Topography* (see FN 4), 366.

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circuits. So far nine crosses with Pahlavi inscriptions were found in the entire Indian Ocean region: One in Anuradhapura in Sri Lanka, which was associated with the commercially oriented Christian community migrated from Persia.[15] Cosmas writes: "The island (of Sri Lanka) has also a church of Persian Christians who have settled there, and a Presbyter who is appointed from Persia, and a Deacon and a complete ecclesiastical ritual."[16] Also were found eight Pahlavi-inscribed crosses in India viz., Mylapore(1) in Tamilnadu, Kottayam(2), Muttuchira(1), Kadamattam(1), Alengad(1), Kothanalloor (1) in Kerala and Agassaim in Goa(1).[17] Gerd Gropp translates the Pahlavi-inscription of Mylapore in the following words: "Our Lord Messiah may show mercy on Gabriel, the son of Chaharbokht(literally meaning having four sons), the grandson of Durzad (literally meaning born in distant land), who made this (cross)".[18] The migrant Christian segments slowly seem to have merged into the spice-producing St. Thomas Christian community in their common efforts to transship cargo to the ports of Persian Gulf region. The commercial partnership that evolved among them led to the cementing of Persian Gulf-oriented mercantile activities and ecclesiastical linkages, followed by the evolution of shared liturgy, ritual practices and cultural traditions.

St. Thomas Christians and the Trade of the Cheras of Mahodayapuram

St. Thomas Christians began to involve in the Indian Ocean trade significantly with the accession of the Cheras of Mahodayapuram in 800 AD. The Cheras encouraged the traders, particularly Christian traders having linkages with the foreign mercantile world, for the purpose of attracting more wealth to set up instruments of power and to contain the attacks of the Pandyan ruler. The mid-ninth century Tharisapally copper plate clearly states the way how the Christian community involved in maritime trade was attracted to the port of Quilon with the conferring of several mercantile privileges on their church by the local ruler of Ay kingdom, against the background of intensified convergence in Quilon of long-distance trade between Abbassid Persia and T'ang China (618–907).[19] In 849 AD the local

15 PERERA, B.J. (1951), "The Foreign Trade and Commerce of Ancient Ceylon", in: *Ceylon Historical Journal*. Vol. I, 110–113; RAGHAVAN, M.D. (1964), *India in the Ceylonese History, Society and Culture* (London), 18. The cross of Anuradhapuram was discovered in 1912. For details see also MIHINDUKULASURIYA, P. (2011), "Persian Christians of Anuradha Period", in: Id. (Ed.), *A Cultured Faith.* Essays in Honour of Prof. G.P.V. Somratna on His Seventieth Birthday (Colombo).

16 MCCRINDLE (1897), *Christian Topography* (see FN 4), 365.

17 MALEKANDATHIL, P. (2010), *Maritime India. Trade, Religion and Polity in the Indian Ocean* (New Delhi), 5–6.

18 GROPP, G. (1970), "Die Pahlavi-Inschrift auf dem Thomaskreuz in Madras", in: *Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran.* Neue Folge Band 3, 267–271. The English translation is made by the author. C.P.T. Winckworth has translated the inscription as: "My Lord Christ, have mercy upon Afras son of Chaharbukht, The Syrian, who cut this." For details see WINCKWORTH, C.P.T. (1928), "A New Interpretation of the Pahlavi Cross-Inscription of Southern India", in: Joseph, T.K. (Ed.), *Kerala Society Papers.* Vol I/II (Thiruvananthapuram), 161–164. Winckworth has later revised his reading and interpretation as follows: "My Lord Christ, have mercy upon Afras, son of Chaharbukht, the Syrian, who preserved this (cross)." For details see "Revised Interpretation of the Pahlavi Cross Inscription of Southern India", in Joseph, T.K. (Ed.), *Kerala Society Papers*. Vol. I & II, 267–269; MALEKANDATHIL, P. (2002), "Discovery of a Pahlavi-Cross from Goa. A New Evidence for Pre-Portuguese Christian Settlement in Konkan, in: *Christian Orient*, 140–142.

19 HOURANI, G.F. (1951)*, Arab Seafaring in the Indian Ocean in Ancient and Early Medieval Times* (Princeton) 61–62. 64. 70–74; MALEKANDATHIL (1999)*, The Germans, the Portuguese and India* (see FN 6), 4.

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ruler Ayyanadikal Thiruvadikal made a gift of four Ezhava[20], four Vellala families[21], one *thachan*[22] and one Vannan(mannan)[23] to the church of Tharisa built by Mar Saphor and he handed over to it the right to collect a wide variety of taxes from Quilon. Mar Saphor and Mar Prodh, who were linked with the church of Tharisa of Quilon, reached Kerala in 823 and they were believed to have been sent to Kerala by Patriarch Timothy I of Seleucia-Ctesiphon(780-823),probably as a part of his project to expand missionary activities.[24] Ayyanadikal Thiruvadikal ,the feudatory of the Chera ruler Sthanu Ravi Varma, conferred upon the church of Tharisa several privileges including the right to keep *parakkol,*[25] *panchakandy,*[26] and *kappan*[27] (different types of weights and measures) of the city of Kollam under its safe custody[28], which the Christians of Quilon enviously held till 1503, when these were finally taken away from them following the malpractices done with them by some of its trading members.[29]

The Tharisa church of the Christians of Quilon was also given the right to collect the following taxes as well, which Ayyanadikal had used to collect earlier, like *thalakkanam*, *enikkanam* (professional taxes from toddy tapers and tree-climbers), *mania meypan kollum ira* (housing tax), *chantan mattu meni ponnu* (tax for using the title *chantan* (Channan or Shanar evidently to show his high social status), *polipponnum(*tax given on special occasions), *iravuchorum* (*balikaram* or tax collected to feed the Brahmins, refugees and destitutes*) ,* and *Kudanazhiyum*(collection of a *nazhi* --a type of liquid-measurement--- of toddy as tax from each pot tapped).[30] The church was also given the right to collect eight *kasu* from each cart that used to take merchandise by land into the market of Quilon(*vayinam*) and four *kasu* from each boat that was used to carry cargo to the port (*vediyilum*).[31] Apparently these details would give the impression that the local ruler was giving up much of his income for the sake of the church; but in fact, it was a small loss for

20 As mentioned in the first plate of Tharisapally Copper plate. Four families of Ezhavas and eight *Ezhakkaiyyar:* GOPINATHA RAO, T. A. (1916), *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Vol. II (Madras), 67.

21 As mentioned in the second plate of Tharisapally Copper plate. GOPINATHA RAO (1916), *Travancore Archaeological Series* (see FN 20), 68.

22 As mentioned in the second plate of Tharisapally Copper plate. GOPINATHA RAO (1916), *Travancore Archaeological Series* (see FN 20), 67.

23 As mentioned in the first plate of Tharisapally Copper plate. GOPINATHA RAO (1916), *Travancore Archaeological Series* (see FN 20), 68.

24 BERTI, V. (2010), *Vita e studi di Timoteo I, patriarca cristiano di Baghdad.* Studi sull'epistolario e sulle fonti contigue (Cahier de Studia Iranica 41. Chrétiens en terre d'Iran III) (Paris).

25 *Parakkol* seems to have derived from *Bhara-kol* or the balance by which commodities and solid materials were weighed. The literal meaning must have been balance to weigh *Bharam*-units. Each *bharam* corresponds to twenty *thulams* or 200 kilograms. Probably it must have been the crude form of *vellikol* that existed till recently as a weighing mechanism in Kerala.

26 This also seems to be a device for measuring solid articles of trade like *para*, which was in use till recently. Probably it must have been used for bulk-measurements of rice and pepper. Commodity measured by one *panchakandy* must have been equivalent to five *kandis*, another type of weight prevalent in Kerala till recently. Or it could also refer to a type of weights generally spaced out into five (*panchakandy* as a device with *pancha-khandas* or five measuring segments.

27 *Kappan* seems to have been a device to measure liquid items. It must have been the crude form of *thudam* device with a handle, with the help of which oil was measured till recently. The word *kappan* must have been derived from "*thappu pathram*".

28 GOPINATHA RAO (1916), *Travancore Archaeological Series* (see FN 20), 68.

29 DE GRAY BIRCH, W. (1875) (Ed.), *The Commentaries of the Great Afonso Dalboquerque. Second Viceroy of India* (New York), 15.

30 GOPINATHA RAO (1916), *Travancore Archaeological Series* (see FN 20), 63–7.

31 GOPINATHA RAO (1916), *Travancore Archaeological Series* (see FN 20), 68–71.

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the sake of accruing larger gains by extending an attractive atmosphere for overseas Christian merchants in the port of Quilon. The entire development was a part of the political move to strengthen and empower the Christian mercantile community and probably many others involved in long distance maritime trade that in turn was expected to facilitate the easy flow of wealth to Quilon for the purpose of empowering the hands of the ruler, particularly at a time when the Cheras were in conflict with the Pandyas in their deep southern ports.[32]

The alliance between the local ruler and the mercantile community of Christians of Kerala became necessary because of the increasing dependence of the local ruler on the foreign Christian traders for the purpose of mobilizing wealth for instituting and strengthening the institutions and devices of power to counter and defend the attack of the Pandyas. The Christian merchant guild of Kerala known as *Manigramam* along with the Jewish merchant guild *Anjuvannam*,[33] and *Arunnoottuvar* were entrusted with the right to protect the church and its property, obviously because of their economic importance and significant role in mobilizing commerce.[34]

With the revival of long-distance trade in the waters of Indian Ocean between the ports of Persian Gulf and the ports of Southern China in the ninth century and the consequent incorporation of Quilon (Koulam Mali) into this circulatory processes, different mechanisms to mobilize trade in the coast as well as in the commodity hinterland started happening due to which port-hinterland connectivity slowly started improving. In the accounts of Persian sailors and navigators of this period , including that of Suleiman (840) we find Koulam Mali (Kollam) being mentioned as a major trade centre in Kerala. It was principally a Christian trading centre. When the Pandyas had managed to capture Vizhinjam along with the ruler and his relatives as well as treasures, the Cheras turned towards Quilon, which the latter eventually developed as the provincial headquarters of their kingdom. [35] The encouragement to foreign Christian merchants to settle down in Quilon by conferring concessions and privileges upon them and their church of worship was concomitantly followed by the efforts of the rulers to permit indigenous St. Thomas Christians to operate as part of *Manigramam* merchant guild to set up *angadis* (markets) in the interior for mobilizing cargo needed for the maritime trade of the port of Quilon. Most of these *angadis*[36], which were developed as trading establishments with accommodation facilities for the Christian merchants, had space for conducting trade in the front part of the edifice facing towards the street, while the hindmost part of it was used for their lodging as in any normal house. They were usually located around the churches of Christians and formed the nuclei out of which many vibrant urban centers developed in later period in

32 The rulers collected only *Kopathavaram* (i.e. share of the king - Sthanu Ravi Varma) and *Pathipathavaram* (i.e. share of the local ruler - Ayyanadikal). GOPINATHA RAO, *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Vol. II, 68.

33 NARAYANA, M.G.S. (1996), *Perumals of Kerala* (Calicut), 155; For a discussion on the different types and cultural composition of Manigramam guild see GURUKKAL, R. (1992), *The Kerala Temple and the Early Medieval Agrarian System (S*ukapuram), 92; VARIER, R./ GURUKKAL, R. (1991), *Kerala Charithram* (Sukapuram), 135–136.

34 As mentioned in the first plate of Tharisapally Copper plate. GOPINATHA RAO (1916), *Travancore Archaeological Series.* (see FN 20), 67. 71.

35 NARAYANAN, M.G.S. (1972), *Cultural Symbiosis in Kerala* (Trivandrum), 31–33.

36 For a detailed discussion on these *angadis* as markets see MALEKANDATHIL, P. (2001), *Portuguese Cochin and the Maritime Trade of India. 1500–1663* (South Asian Study Series; Delhi), 50–80. For details on the churches having *angadis* see MALEKANDATHIL, P. (2003) (Ed.), *Jornada of Dom Alexis de Menezes*. A Portuguese Account of the Sixteenth Century Malabar (Kochi), 126–462.

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central Kerala. The spice-producers of St. Thomas Christians used to sell their cargo in these *angadis* located near their churches and commodity movement from hinterland to the port of Quilon meant networking of different *angadis* of diverse size and commercial significance through the transportation means of bullock carts on land routes and boats through riverine channels.[37] Some of these indigenous St. Thomas Christian inland traders (who used to feed the maritime trade of Quilon) were conferred privileges by the local rulers, as is evidenced by the Thazhekkadu inscription(1024 AD) obtained from the premises of Thazhekadu church(near Irinjalakuda). This inscription speaks of king Rajasimhann conferring privileges on Christian traders like Chathan Vadukan and Iravi Chathan, who were members of the *Manigramam* merchant guild, to set up *angadi* in their locality.[38]

The practice of political rulers to bank upon merchant groups , particularly the foreign ones, who brought more wealth and cargo that the kingdom required, to tide over crisis situations continued to create a ruler-bourgeoisie nexus in the coastal political scenario. This rapport between the ruler and the mercantile community for consolidating political power and establishing political assets was seen even in the fourteenth century. The chief of the *Perumpadappu swarupam*, who was on the move from his homeland in Vanneri (near Ponnani) and reached Cranganore against the background of the attacks of the expansionist Zamorin of Calicut also is seen banking upon Iravi Kortan, the head of St. Thomas Christian *manigramam* merchant guild, obviously for asserting and establishing his political authority in Cranganore(obviously before moving to Cochin). The copper plate given by *Perumpadappu* chief Veera Raghava Chakravarti to Iravi Kortan in 1320 AD at Cranganore clearly speaks of several social and commercial privileges granted to this merchant in return for his assistance. All other merchants of Cranganore, besides five artisanal groups including carpenter, blacksmith, etc were kept subordinate to him. Iravi Kortan was given brokerage on all types of cargo and also customs duty. The king permitted his descendants to enjoy these privileges and rights as hereditary grants. [39]

Wheels of Indo-European Commerce of the Medieval Period

What was the nature of transoceanic trade in whose networks the St. Thomas Christians used to get involved in at different time phases before 1500? Even at a time when trade in European markets got stagnated because of feudalization processes, commodities from the east, particularly pepper and other spices from Malabar used to enter Europe and northern Africa through the trading networks of the Arabs and of the mercantile allies of the Ummayyads of Cordoba (756–929), which facilitated the movement of pepper and other spices through the Mediterranean and the Islamic pockets of South Europe and North

37 MALEKANDATHIL (2010), *Maritime India* (see FN 17), 43–44.

38 SREEDHARA MENON, A. (1973), *Kerala Charitram* (published in Malayalam) (Kottayam), 135. The grant made to these two Christian merchants was recorded in the form of a *vattezhuthu* inscription on a granite slab, 74 inches by 51 inches, lying at the foot of the open air cross in front of the Catholic church at Thazhekkadu near Irinjalakuda.

39 MATHEW, K.S. (2003), "St. Thomas Christians in Malabar from the 9th to the 16th Centuries", in: Puthur, B. (Ed.), *St. Thomas Christians and Nambudiris, Jews and Sangam Literature*. A Historical Appraisal (Kochi).

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Africa. [40] Pepper coming from Kerala was one of the important commodities thus traded in the ports of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic.

We find in 'Bald's Leechbook', which was written for Anglo-Saxon physicians, pepper being mentioned as an important ingredient for more than thirty types of medications used during king Alfred's reign in England in the ninth-century. [41] Even in the personal possession of Venerable Bede pepper was found at the time of his death in 735, which he must have been using as medication. [42] The annual requirement of the monastery of Corbie in northern France during this period was 120 pounds of pepper. The demand for pepper in the monastery was relatively high when compared to the other spices like ginger (70 pounds), cinnamon (15 pounds) and cloves (10 pounds) required in the monastery.[43] With the intensification of demand for pepper, the Germans had to even pay a pepper tax in several of their cities including Speyer, Köln and Zürich. Very often this pepper-tax was imposed on the consumers during this period.[44] As early as AD 973 pepper was found in the markets of Mainz in Germany along with ginger, cloves and spikenard, as is testified by Tartusi, a member of a Moorish legati that went to see Otto the great.[45] The pepper mentioned here actually flowed from Malabar.

During this period Kerala happened to be the only geography in the world that supplied pepper in the world and St. Thomas Christians were the principal pepper producers, as gleaned from the account of John Maringoli who while visiting Kerala in 1346 refers to the Christians Quilon as "rich people" and as "owners of pepper plantations". [46] The increasing role of St. Thomas Christians in the production of spices is also attested to by the Portuguese documents of 1529 which say that 'all the pepper was in the hands of the St. Thomas Christians and that majority of the pepper that went to Portugal was sold by them'.[47] The overwhelming participation of St. Thomas Christians in pepper production and trade seems to have caused the travel of information about their Christian origin from St. Thomas and his tomb in India along with commodity movement in Europe and this is inferred from the ninth-century work known as *Old English Martyrology*, which says that St. Thomas was martyred in India and his feast day is celebrated on 21st December.[48] Even

40 GLICK, T.F. (2005), *Islamic and Christian Spain in the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden); PIRENNE, H. (2007), *Mohammed and Charlemagne* (London).

41 CAMERON, M. L. (1990), "Bald's Leechbook and Cultural Interactions in Anglo-Saxon England", in: *Anglo-Saxon England* 19, 8.

42 MCCLURE, J./ COLLINS, R. (1994) (Ed./ Tr.), *Epistola de Obitu Bede,* (Oxford), 302.

43 GUÉRARD, B. (1844), *Le polytyque de lábbé Irmninon.* Vol. II (Paris), 336; SCHULTE, A. (1900), *Geschichte des mittelalterichen Handels und Verkehrs zwischen Westdeutschland und Italien mit Ausschluß von Venedig*. Vol. I (Leipzig), 73.

44 HILGARD, A. (1885), *Urkunden zur Geschichte der Stadt Speyer* (Strassburg), 19; LAU, F. (1898), *Entwicklung der kommunalen Verfassung und Verwaltung der Stadt Köln* (Bonn), 67–68; HÜLLMANN, K.D., (1826), *Städtewesen des Mittelalters,* Vol. I (Bonn), 29–35; HEYD, W. (1879), *Geschichte des Levantehandels im Mittelalter*. Vol. I (Stuttgart), 639; MALEKANDATHIL, P. (1999), *The Germans, the Portuguese and India* (see FN 6), 12–18.

45 JACOB, G. ([2]1891), *Ein arabischer Berichterstatter aus dem 10. oder 11. Jahrhundert über Fulda* (Berlin), 13.

46 YULE, H. (1967) (Ed.), *Cathay and Way Thither*. Vol. III, (Nendeln/Liechtenstein), 216–218. 248–257.

47 DA SILVA REGO, A. (1948) (Ed.), *Documentação para a Historia das Missões do Padroado Portugues do Oriente.* Vol. II (Lisboa), 175–176.

48 RAUER, C. (2013) (Ed./Tr.), *The Old English Martyrology* (Cambridge), 167. 227. It says: "On the twenty-first day of the month [December] is the feast of the apostle St Thomas, who in Greek was called Didymus... And after Christ's ascension, he instructed many nations in Christ's faith...[including] two Indian nations... he travelled through the lands of pagan people and the eastern parts of the world, and in India he built their king's hall in heaven, whose name was Gundaphorus... In another Indian country... one of the pagan bishops then

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the knowledgde about the tomb of St. Thomas in India also seems to have reached Europe through these circuits of information movements. Thus we find Alfred the Great of Wessex sending two envoys, Sigehelm and Aethelstan, with offerings to be taken to the tomb-shrines of 'St Thomas in *India/Indea* and to St Bartholomew', in thanksgiving for having rescued London from the attacks of the Vikings, as per the information from *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* of 883.[49]

Mercantile Connectivities of the St. Thomas Christians With the African Marts

The earliest hints towards the mercantile linkages of the St. Thomas Christians with African ports stem from the writings of St. Jerome(347-420), who states that "Demetrius the bishop of Alexandria sent Pantaenus to India at the request of legates of that nation".[50] The recent discovery of a large number of inscriptions and Indian scripts of about 193 in number with the names of about 117 Buddhist Indian sailors and visitors (belonging mostly to the period from 1st century AD till 5th century AD) from the Hoq cave of Socotora island, [51] shows that Indians going to the ports of Red Sea for trade was rather frequent. The sending of Indian embassies by various rulers to Rome,[52] the discovery of the Tamil-Brahmi inscribed potsherds with personal names like Korpuman, Kanan and Chatan from the Red sea ports like Bernice and Qusier al-Qadim[53], and the minute details on Muziris-Alexandria trade obtained from Vienna Papyrus (180 AD)[54] clearly indicate that Kerala and

killed the servant of Christ, and the texts sometimes say that he was stabbed with a sword, sometimes they say he was stabbed with spears. He suffered in the city of Calamina in India"; see: HERZFELD, G. (1900) (Ed.), *An Old English Martyrology* (London), 241–243.

49 The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle of 883 says: "*Her for se here up on Scald to Cundoð. and þær sæt an gear. and Marinus papa sende pa lignum dni Ælfrede cynge. and þy ilcan geare lædde Sighelm . and Æðelstan þa ælmessan to Rome be Ælfred cing ge het þider. and eac on Indea to sče Thome , and to sče Bartholomee. þa hi sæton wið þone here at Lundene. and hi þær Godes þances swyde bentigde wæron æfter pam ge hatum.*". See EARLE, J. (1865), *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel. With Supplementary Extracts from the Others* (London), 83; SWANTON, M.J. (1996) (Ed./Tr.), *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (London), 79; KEYNES, S. (1998), "King Alfred and the Mercians", in: Blackburn, M.A.S./ Dumville, D.N. (Eds.), *Kings, Currency, and Alliances.* History and Coinage of Southern England in the Ninth Century (Woodbridge), 21–4. See also GILES, J.A. (1914), *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (London), 55: "883. This year the army went up the Scheldt to Conde, and sat there one year. And Marinus the pope then sent 'lignum Domini' to king Alfred ; and that same year Sighelm and Athelstan carried to Rome the alms which the king had vowed to send thither, and also to Lidia, to St. Thomas and to St. Bartholomew, when they sat down against the army at London ; and there, thanks be to God, they largely obtained the object of their prayer after the vow."

50 St. Jerome, quoted by MUNDADAN, M. (1972), *History of Christianity in India*, Vol. I (Bangalore), 65. See PERUMALIL, A.C. (1971), *The Apostles in India* (Patna), 108–132; RAMELLI, I.L.E. (2011), "Early Christian Missions from Alexandria to 'India'. Institutional Transformations and Geographical Identifications", in*: Augustinianum* 51/1, 221–231, see particularly 221.

51 STRAUCH, I./ BUKHARIN, M.D. (2004), "Indian Inscriptions from the cave Hoq on suqufrä (Yemen)", in: *Annali.* Vol. 64 (Universita degli studi di Napoli), 121–138.

52 WARMINGTON, E.H. (1928), *The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India* (Cambridge), 30ff.

53 RAJAN, K. (2000), "Mucuri-Alexandria Trade Contract. An Archaeological Approach", in: *Pondicherry University Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (PUSH*). Vol. 1, No. 1/2, 98.

54 The Vienna papyrus belonging to the period of 180 AD refers to the hectic trade between Kerala's pepper port of Muziris and the Egyptian port of Alexandria, and highlights the case of a trader of Muziris taking loan from his fellow-trader for carrying out trade from Muziris with Alexandria, where the final loan repayment was to be made. HARRAUER, H./ SIJPESTEIJN, P. (1985) (Eds.), "Ein neues Dokument zu Roms Indienhandel, P.Vindob.G.40822", in: *Anzeiger der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*. Phil. hist. Kl. 122, 124–

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the Roman commercial world remained closely interconnected in the first centuries of Christian era. These are also pieces of evidence that speak of the closeness and intimacy with which Malabar ports, Socotora, Alexandria and the other enclaves of Roman trade interacted and thrived as parts of a larger world of commerce and they point also towards the possibility of travel of Christian scholars from Alexandria to Kerala. It is against this background of highly stimulated Kerala-Roman trade, that one should locate the words of St. Jerome (347–420) that the legates of Indian Christians went all the way to Alexandria to meet its bishop Demetrius requesting him to send Alexandria's greatest theologian, Pantaenus, to India. St. Jerome also reports about the travel of Pantaenus to India, where he found the gospel of St. Mathew in Hebrew language, which he brought with him to Alexandria on his return.[55] We do not know yet how long this connectivity continued; however scholars like Ilaria Ramelli says that in the fourth century, Bishop Athanasius organized in Alexandria another mission to dispatch missionaries to India.[56]

Meanwhile the attempts of the eastern Roman emperors Justin (518–27) and Justinian (527–65) to seek the help of Ethiopian Christians from the Abyssinian kingdom of Axum to procure pepper and other commodities from the markets of Kerala and other parts of coastal western India through Red Sea to Constantinople,[57] made the Ethiopians penetrate into the markets of India including Malabar[58] and probably to have a mercantile rapport with the St. Thomas Christians of Kerala. This eventually led to the evolution of a partnership between the pepper-cultivating St. Thomas Christians and the commercially oriented Ethiopian Christians. The reference to the Ethiopian Christian merchants whom Cosmas Indicopleustes met on his travels obviously point fingers to the mercantile partnership that they had developed with the Christians of Sri Lanka and southern India. [59] The discovery of coins of Aksumite kingdom belonging to the fifth and sixth centuries from Karur in South India[60] and from Tissamaharama in Sri Lanka [61] attests to the extension of the commercial links of the Ethiopian Christian traders in South India and Sri Lanka, which is suggestive of

155; CASSON, L. (1986), "P. Vinod G. 40822 and the Shipping of Goods from India", in: *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 23, 73-79. See also THÜR, G. (1987), "Hypotheken-Urkunde eines Seedarlehens für eine Reise nach Muziris und Apographe für die Tetarte in Alexandria (zu P. Vindob)", in: Tyche 2, 241–246; CASSON, L. (1990), "New Light on Maritime Loans. P. Vindob G. 40822", in: *Zeitschrift für Papyriologie und Epigraphik*. Vol. 84, 195–206.

55 JEROME, "Lives of Illustrious Men", in: Schaff, P./ Wace, H. (1892) (Eds.), A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church. Vol. III (Michigan), 370; Martyrologium Hieronyminum, in: *Patrologia Latina*. Vol. 30, 436; The Greek "Menology" 2, in: *Patrologia Graeca*. Vol. 117, 317; PERUMALIL, A.C. (1971), *The Apostles in India (*Patna), 106–131.

56 RAMELLI (2011), "Early Christian Missions" (see FN 50), 221–231, see particularly 222.

57 PROCOPIUS, *Wars*, I, 20; IBN JARIR TABARI, M., *Annales*, 965; PANKHURST, R. (1961), *An Introduction to the Economic History of Ethiopia from early times to 1800* (London), 33–37. The Ethiopians (the Aksumite kingdom) who embraced Christianity around 300 AD was considered as an integral part of the eastern Christian world. The St. Thomas Christians of Malabar and the Coptic (referring to Koptos, the old generic term for Egypt) Christians of Ethiopia had good commercial relations in the medieval period. These diversified channels of commerce led to the flow of Sassanid silver *dirham* and the Byzantine gold *nomisma* to the marts of Kerala.

58 WHITEHOUSE/ WILLIAMSON (1973), "Sassanian Maritime Trade" (see FN 1), 29–47; IBN MUHAMMAD AL-MARGHANI THAA'LIBI (1900), *Histoire des Rois de Perse* (ed./ translated by H. Zotenberg*)* (Paris), 615–619; BURY, J.B. (1889), *History of the Later Roman Empire, AD 395–800*. Vol. II (London), 322–327.

59 MIHINDUKULASURIYA (2011), "Persian Christians of the Anuradhapura Period" (see FN 15), 4; MIHINDUKULASURIYA, P. (2005), "Another Ancient Christian Presence in Sri Lanka. The Ethiopians of Aksum", *Journal of the Colombo Theological Seminary* 3, 1–20.

60 KRISHNAMAURTHY, R. (2000), *Non-Roman Ancient Foreign Coins from Karur in India* (Chennai), 80–84.

61 MIHINDUKULASURIYA (2005), "Another Ancient Christian Presence" (see FN 59), 7.

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their larger commercial partnerships that evolved with the St. Thomas Christians over years.

Though the Ethiopian Christian traders and economic actors from the Aksumite kingdom used to visit Kerala shores either independently or as commercial partners of the Byzantines and operate probably in alliance with the St. Thomas Christians of Kerala, we do not have enough evidence to substantiate the long thread of continuity among them in pursuing their commercial ventures for long. However, this commercial rapport seems to have helped the St. Thomas Christians to get accessibility to the eastern African marts, with which the Ethiopian traders used to conduct trade. This is evident from the hectic trade of the St. Thomas Christians of Cranganore with four of their ships being conducted with the east African ports particularly that of Melinde at a time when Vasco da Gama reached these ports in 1498.[62] *Diario* gives the impression that some of these Indian Christians knew a bit of Arabic,[63] which was then an essential requirement for trading with coastal eastern Africa. This is suggestive of the nature of linguistic skills that this community acquired over years for carrying out their commercial endeavours.

The high profit in spice trade in the Indian Ocean must have prompted the St. Thomas Christians to move towards the risky transoceanic trade and the profit level of trade at different centres of trade in the Indian Ocean can be inferred from the price difference that prevailed along the major routes and centres of trade. While the price of pepper at Calicut was 4.64 ducats,[64] it was sold at Mamluk Alexandria at 25 ducats[65] which would mean five times higher than the actual price at the source. The Venetians, who managed to grab a major share of spice trade with Mamluk Egypt, also got a considerable share of profit as they used to sell it at 56 ducats in their market of Venice,[66] while its price was 80 ducats in Lisbon.[67] These price-profit differences which moved progressively from the marts of the Indian Ocean to those of the Mediterranean, attracted the St. Thomas Christians to venture into different levels of economic activities linked with pepper trade, including active participation not only in pepper cultivation, but also in local marketing and despatch of cargo to coastal and overseas marts.

Their trade was facilitated by the money institutions and mini banking institutions that they had. The decrees of the Synod of Diamper (1599) clearly indicate that there were several Syrian Christian financiers and money lenders in most of the *angadis*, which made available liquid wealth for their business endeavours.[68] Very often the dowry brought by

62 BAIÃO, A./ PERES, D./ DE MAGALHÃES BASTO, A. (1945) (Eds.), *Diario da Viagem de Vasco da Gama*. Vol. I (Porto), 54–56; LOPES DE CASTANHEDA, F. (1924), *Historia do Descobrimento e Conquista da India pelos Portugueses*. Vol. I. (Coimbra), 29–31. Only Castanheda refers to Cranganore as the place of origin of these Christians. Ibid., 30.

63 BAIÃO/ PERES/ DE MAGALHÃES BASTO (1945), *Diario da Viagem* (see FN 62), 55.

64 GIERTZ, G. (1980), *Vasco da Gama, die Entdeckung des Seewegs nach Indien.* Ein Augenzeugenbericht, 1497–99 (Tübingen), 143. The document prepared during the first voyage of Vasco da Gama says that one *faraçola* (8.31 kilograms) of pepper was 14 *panams*.

65 GIERTZ (1980), *Vasco da Gama* (see FN 64), 150. For price details of pepper of these places see MAGALHÃES GODINHO, V. (1969), *L'Economie de L'empire Portugais aux XVe et XVIe Siécles* (Paris), 720–725. The price that Godinho gives for Cairo in 1498 is 78 ducats. I have not yet found any reason for the enormous rise in pepper price in Cairo while it was relatively cheaper at Alexandria and Venice. I wonder whether it actually was a mistake.

66 See PRIULI, G. (1921) (Ed.)*, I Diarii di Girolamo Priuli 1494-1512.* Vol. I (Citta di Castello), 75.

67 LACH, D.F. (1965), *Asia in the Making of Europe*. Vol. I: The Central Discovery (Chicago), 143.

68 ZACHARIA, S. (1998) (Ed.), *Udayamperoor Sunahadosinte Kanonakal* (*The Decrees of the Synod of Diamper*) (Edamattom), 236. Later this money lending and financing business got diversified and by second half of the

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the Syrian Christian brides was made to merge with the ancestral wealth of their husbands to run the money-lending business. Many of these money lending business units of the Syrians Christians used to charge 12% interest rate and above, which practice the Synod of Diamper condemned vehemently in 1599 under the pain of excommunication.[69]

The Changing Contours of the Trade of the St. Thomas Christians Under the Early Colonial European Powers

The nature of the trade of the St. Thomas Christains started changing considerably with the arrival of the Europeans. Tome Pires who wrote *Suma Oriental* in the first decade of the sixteenth century estimates that the total number of St. Thomas Christians of Kerala varied between 60,000 and 75,000.[70] In 1564[71] and in 1568[72] the total number of the St. Thomas Christians was estimated to be 1,00,000. Out of them, about 25,000 were Christian fighting force serving different native rulers of Kerala, as per the information given by Mar Jacob Abuna.[73] The Portuguese documents of the sixteenth century say that most of the Christian settlements had their own *kalaris*(schools for training in martial arts, fencing, and fighting) run mostly by Syrian Christian *panikkars* and in places where there was no Christian *kalari*

eighteenth century a considerable chunk of the wealth from the agrarian villages of Syrian Christians was channelized under the aegis of local parish churches for further productive ventures like *chitty* and *kuries* without letting it to be spent in these villages. In many places banks of different character and nature evolved out of the economic institutions of *chitty* and *kuries* of Syrian Christians. Thiruvalla and Trichur became the heartland of banking business for the Syrian Christians. The Kandathil family of Thiruvalla (Manorama group), belonging to Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church had about 15 banks and the among the 42 scheduled banks, only Central Bank of India and Bank of India exceeded the Travancore National and Quilon Bank of Kandathil family in the volume of business in entire India in 1937. The Ambalapuzha Christian Bank founded by Chandy Vaidyan of Edathua was another leading bank of the St. Thomas Christians in the south. The Lourdes Catholic church in Trichur was the pioneer to introduce the church sponsored *kuri* in the kingdom of Cochin. The Chaldean Christians of Trichur started the first bank called the Chaldean Syrian Bank in 1918. The Catholic Syrian Christians of Trichur under the Chakolas started the Catholic Syrian Bank in 1920 and later South Indian Bank (1929), which are even now the leading small-scale banks of India. Catholic Orient Bank (1922), Catholic Bank (1929) Malabar Bank (1929), Indian Insurance Banking Corporation (1933) and Kshemavilasom Bank were the other leading banks started by Chakola group and other Catholic Syrian Christians of Trichur. Pala Central Bank (1927), Forward Bank (1929), Federal Bank (1931), Orient Central Bank, Cochin Bank, Travancore Midland Bank (1944) formed the other leading banks of central Kerala, which were founded or sustained by Catholic Syrian Christians for a long period of time. See for details OOMMEN, M.A. (1976), "Rise and Growth of Banking in Kerala", *Social Scientist* 5, 24–46.

69 ZACHARIA (Ed.), *Udayamperoor Sunahadosinte Kanonakal*, 236.

70 PIRES, T. (1978), *A Suma Oriental de Tome Pires e o Livro de Francisco Rodrigues* (ed.by Armando Cortesão) (Coimbra), 180. In this connection the recent research works of the Portuguese scholars like João Teles e Cunha, João Paulo Oliveira e Costa and Luis Filipe F.R. Thomaz deserve special mention because of the objective painstaking research. See TELES E CUNHA, J. (2004), "De Diamper a Mattancherry. Caminhos e Encruzilhadas da Igreja Malabar e Catolica na India. Os Primeiros Tempos (1599–1624)" in: *Anais de Historia de Alem-Mar* 5, 283–368; OLIVEIRA E COSTA, J.P. (1994), "Os Portugueses e a Cristandade Siro-Malabar (1498–1530), in: *Studia* 52, (Lisboa); THOMAZ, L.P. (2001), "Were Saint Thomas Christians Looked upon as Heretics?", in: *The Portuguese and the Socio-Cultural Changes in India, 1500–1800*, in: Mathew, K.S./ de Souza, T.R./ Malekandathil (Eds.) (Lisboa), 27–92.

71 WICKI, J. (1948) (Ed.), *Documenta Indica.* Vol. VI (Roma), 180.

72 WICKI (1948) (Ed.), *Documenta Indica* (see FN 71), Vol. VII, 475.

73 DA SILVA REGO, A. (Ed.), *Documentação para a Historia das Missões do Padroado Português*. Vol. II (Lisbon), 352–356.

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they used to join the *kalaris* run by Nairs.[74] *Jornada* also says that some Christian Panikkars had eight to nine thousand disciples, both Christians and Nairs, getting trained as fighting force for the local rulers.[75] One of the most famous Christian Panikkars of this period was Vallikkada Panikkar who had his *kalari* at Peringuzha on the banks of river Muvattupuzha, supplying fighting force for the kingdom of Vadakkenkur.[76] The Syrian Christians formed an important segment of the fighting force of king of Vadakkenkur, who had his political base at Kaduthuruthy, and also of the ruler of Cochin. In 1546 the king of Vadakkenkur offered the Portuguese about 2000 Syrian Christian soldiers for the purpose of helping them to lift the Ottoman siege on Diu.[77]

There were cases when St. Thomas Christians were appointed as ministers by the *Kartha* (ruler) of Poonjar,[78] the ruler of Thekkenkur kingdom,[79] and the Mangattu Kaimals of Alengadu.[80] However, a considerable portion of this community were involved in the trading sector cooperating mostly with the Lisbon-bound trade of the Portuguese.

At the time of the arrival of the Portuguese by the end of fifteenth century most of the *angadis* of the St. Thomas Christians in central Kerala were linked with the leading maritime centres of exchange like Cranganore, Cochin, Quilon and Kayamkulam, where the commercially-oriented Christians began to concentrate in large numbers for trading purposes. However, by the end of the fifteenth century, the Zamorin after the capture of Cochin put forward a condition that the trading community of the St. Thomas Christians should be expelled from the port of Cochin and that its commerce be handed over to the Muslims, if Cochin had to be returned to the chief of *Perumpadappu Swarupam*.[81] It did not have a lasting impact on the trade of this community from Cochin. This is inferred from the fact that in this port the St. Thomas Christians were said to have organized trade even in 1503 under a Christian merchant guild called *Korran*(may be *Kuṟṟan* in Tamil), from which Francisco de Albuquerque bought 4,000 *bahars* of well-dried pepper in 1503.[82] Genevieve Bouchon and Jean Aubin identify Korran with a native Christian guild.[83]

74 See GOUVEA, A. (1604), *Jornada do Arcebispo* (Coimbra). It is translated into English with critical notes by MALEKANDATHIL (2003), *Jornada of Dom Alexis Menezes* (see FN 36), 116–118. 252–253. In fact Panikkar meant a fencing master.

75 MALEKANDATHIL (2003), *Jornada of Dom Alexis Menezes* (see FN 36), 117.

76 The *Vallikada Panikkar* family that had its residence at Vallikada near Peringuzha (Muvattupuzha) was known for their martial traditions and specialization in fencing and *kalaripayattu*. Mar Ivanios, one of the later descendants of this Panikkar family got reunited with Catholic Church in 1930, laying foundation for the Syro-Malankara Church in India. For details see VARGHESE OLICKAL, O.M. (1985), *Vazhakulam.* A Charithra Veekshanam (Muvattupuzha), 15–16.

77 ARQUIVO NACIONAL DA TORRE DO TOMBO, *Cartas de Dio a D. João de Castro*, fol. 93, Letter of Damião Vaz to Dom Alvares de Castro, dated August 6, 1547 ; SCHURHAMMER, G. (1962), *Die Zeitgenössischen Quellen zur Geschichte Portugiesisch-Asiens und seiner Nachbarländer zur Zeit des hl. Franz Xavier (1538–1552)* (Rome), 212 [No. 3224]:

78 MALEKANDATHIL (2003), *Jornada of Dom Alexis Menezes* (see FN 36), 330.

79 THOMAKATHANAR, P. (1977), *Varthamanapusthakam* (published in Malayalam; edited by Thomas Moothedan) (Ernakulam), 61 (An English translation of the book was brought out by Placid Podipara as a publication from Oriental Institute, Rome, 1971).

80 NEDUMKUNNAM, M.O.J. (1962), *Thachil Matthoo Tharakan* (Kottayam).

81 For details see NAMBIAR, O.K. (1963), *The Kunjalis* (Delhi), 40; MENON, K.P.P. (1982), *History of Kerala*. Vol. I (New Delhi), 167.

82 Travel account of the Franciscus Dalbuquerque from December 27, 1503, in: Greiff, B. (1861), *Tagebuch des Lucas Rem aus den Jahren 1494–1541.* Ein Beitrag zur Handelsgeschichte der Stadt Augsburg (Augsburg), 146.

83 See AUBIN, J. (1987), "L'apprentissage de l'Inde. Cochin 1503–1504", in: *Moyen Orient et Ocean Indien, XVIe-XIXe.* Vol. IV (Paris), 1–20; BOUCHON, G. (1991), "Calicut at the Turn of the Sixteenth Century", in:

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The economic importance of the merchant group of the St. Thomas Christians for Quilon is also evident from the fact that the leading members of this community were chosen as the commercial emissaries in 1502 by the queen of Quilon for the purpose of inviting Vasco da Gama from Cochin for conducting trade with her port[84] The prominent Christian merchant in Quilon was Mathias,[85] and in Kayamkulam was Tarqe Tome (Tarakan Thomas),[86] from whom the Portuguese used to purchase pepper regularly since in 1503. The level of collaboration between the two eventually got bolstered over years and under the influence of the Dominican priest Fr. João Caro that Mar Jacob persuaded the St. Thomas Christians to sell pepper only to the Portuguese in Cochin by 1524.[87]

However, from mid 1550s onwards the Portuguese resorted to the strategy of deporting the East Syrian bishops coming to Kerala from West Asia for the purpose of reducing the linkage of the St. Thomas Christians with the ecclesiastical and economic centres of West Asia and for ensuring the speedy integration this native Christian community with the Portuguese *Padroado* system. With the death of Mar Abraham in 1597 and the consequent absence of any other bishop from West Asia, the Portuguese *Padroado* authorities took up the governance of the church matters of the St. Thomas Christians and launched an agenda of cultural erasure of the traditions and practices of the indigenous St. Thomas Christians. This was followed by the chain of programmes for the introduction of Latin liturgical rite and Lusitanian practices, which were legitimized by the controversial Synod of Diamper held in 1599 under the leadership of Dom Alexis de Menezes, the Archbishop of Goa.[88] Through the instrumentality of the synod of Diamper, every cultural element that appeared to be non-European and not conforming to the Portuguese practice was changed. The synod also suppressed the ecclesiastical linkages of Indian Christians with the Chaldean church of West Asia and it legitimized the Portuguese attempts to keep the spice-producing Christians under the *Padroado* system, in a way that would ensure integration and cohesion required for the mercantilist ventures of the Lusitanians.[89]

What ensued was intensified conflicts between the spice-producing-cum trading group of St. Thomas Christians and the commercially-oriented Portuguese, which led to an unprecedented diversion of pepper from predominantly spice-producing Christian centres to Tamil ports.. From the Christian belt of Kanjirappally alone about 32,20, 000 kilograms (9000 *bhars*) of pepper were taken through ghat route to Coromandel ports, while from Erattupetta another St. Thomas Christian pocket, about 1, 66, 830 kilograms (1000 *bhars*) of pepper moved over to Tamil country through ghat routes. About 5,00, 490 kilograms (3000 *bhars*) were taken from another Christian enclave of Erumely to Coromandel ports via ghat. From the St. Thomas Christian pocket of Thodupuzha about 8,34,150 kilograms (5000 *bhars*) of pepper were taken to Coromandel ports for overseas trade and for domestic

Instituto Cultural de Macau (Ed.), *The Asian Seas 1500–1800.* Local Societies, European Expansions and the Portuguese, Revista da Cultura. Vol. I (Macao), 44.

84 Nationalbibliothek in Wien, Nr. 6948; VON ROHR, C. (1939), *Neue Quellen zur zweiten Indienfahrt Vasco da Gamas* (Leipzig), 51.

85 BULHÃO PATO, R.A. (1884) (Ed.), *Cartas de Affonso de Albuquerque seguidas de documentos que as elucidam*. Vol. II (Lisboa), 30. 258–259. 268.

86 BULHÃO PATO (1884) (Ed.), *Cartas de Affonso* (see FN 85). Vol. VI, 114. 398–399.

87 PAULO E COSTA, J. (1994), *Os Portugueses e a cristandade siro-malabar (1498–1530)* (Lisbon), 176–177; SILVA REGO, ANTONIO DA (1947) (Ed.), *Documentação para a Historia das Missões do Padroado Português*. Vol. II (Lisbon), 175.

88 THALIATH, J. (1958), *The Synod of Diamper* (Rome).

89 THALIATH (1958), *The Synod of Diamper* (see FN 88), XXVI–LXIV.

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consumption. From the Christian settlement of Koratty about 5,00,490 kilograms (3000 *bhars*) of pepper and from Palghat another 5,00,490 kilograms (3000 *bhars*) of pepper were diverted to the routes terminating in the Coromandel ports, from where the Dutch started purchasing the diverted pepper for their European tyrade.[90] Consequent to the pepper diversion to Tamil coast through ghat routes by the St. Thomas Christians with the help of Muslim and Pattar traders following the translation of the anger and resistance of the St. Thomas Christians into the economic realm, the supply of pepper in Cochin for the trade of the Portuguese with Europe also dwindled significantly. Only very little pepper (4190 quintals) could be collectively procured by the Portuguese for their Lisbon-bound vessels during the long nine years between 1602 and 1610.[91] Against this background of estrangement of the pepper-producing community of the St. Thomas Christians and dwindling phase in spice-trade, the Portuguese *carreira* vessels also stopped visiting Cochin from 1611 onwards.[92] Thus a project that was initially carried out with the help of cultural devices for the purpose of keeping the spice-producing Christians within their trajectories of mercantile integration, bounced back affecting drastically the very core of the economic activities of the Portuguese.

Meanwhile, the Portuguese tried to purchase the cooperation of the estranged St. Thomas Christians by placating the leaders of the St. Thomas community and their prominent merchants with gifts and monetary offers. As a part of this strategy, gifts of sandalwood and knives were given by the Portuguese to win the co-operation of Tharakan of Kanjur and Alexander Kathanar (a priest of this community), with which mechanism pepper worth the value of 1000 xerafins and 1250 xerafins respectively was bought from them by the Portuguese in 1610. [93] However, the appeasing policies of the Portuguese did not work at all in the way the Portuguese expected and the tensions between the Portuguese and the St. Thomas Christians on the question of implementation of the decisions of the Diamper Synod backfired the Portuguese projects of trade. Along with these tensions, the various instruments of trade control(viz., *cartaz*-fortress and *armada*) that the Portuguese deployed for maintaining their commercial monopoly devastated the St. Thomas Christians as a significant mercantile group, destroying their private initiatives, depriving their trading potentials and draining their ability to pursue any capital-intensive pursuit for long.

The Dutch who occupied the major maritime trading centres of Kerala by 1660s tried generally not to intervene in the religious matters of the St. Thomas Christians so as to ensure regular supply of cargo for their Amsterdam-oriented trade. The St. Thomas Christians from the kingdoms of Vadakkenkur and Thekkenkur were the prominent trading group in 1747 and 1748 to supply pepper to the VOC factory in Cochin.[94] However, the Dutch had a soft corner for the *Puthenkur* faction of the St. Thomas Christian community, who broke away from the Catholic fold after the Coonan Cross Oath of 1653.[95] The Dutch help towards *Puthenkur* faction of the St. Thomas Christians was very much visible in their extension of various types of help including the transportation facilities to Mar Ivanios, the

90 The report of DA COSTA, F. (1972), "Relatorio sobre o Trato da Pimenta", in: da Silva Rego, A., *Documentação Ultramarina Portuguesa.* Vol. III (Lisboa), 315.

91 Archivo Historico Ultramarino (Lisbon), *Caixas da India*, Caixa 1, doc. 101, dated February 25, 1611.

92 MALEKANDATHIL (2001), *Portuguese Cochin* (see FN 36), 254.

93 Archivo Historico Ultramarino (Lisbon), *Caixas da India*, Caixa 2, doc. 89, dated January 27, 1613, fol. 12.

94 DAS GUPTA, A. (1967), *Malabar in Asian Trade. 1740–1800* (Cambridge), 41.

95 For details on Coonan Cross Oath see KOLLAPARAMBIL, J. (1981), *The St. Thomas Christians' Revolution in 1653* (Kottayam); KOLLAPARAMBIL, J. (1972), *The Archdeacon of All India* (Kottayam); THEKKEDATH, J. (1972), *The Troubled Days of Francis Garcia S.J., Archbishop of Cranganore (1641–59)* (Rome).

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West Syriac bishop, in 1748 for his trip from Basra to Cochin. Ezekkiel Rabbi,the chief merchant of the Dutch company brought him in his vessel to Cochin.[96] On reaching Kerala, the Dutch used to give seven bodyguards to attend to Mar Ivanios and also to look after his safety.[97] These were obviously to keep the *Puthenkur* faction as a supportive social base for ensuring the regular flow of spices to the trading centres of the Dutch on the coast and thus for the smooth conduct of their commerce.

St. Thomas Christians' Move Towards Capital-Intensive Pursuits

The Dutch commerce and their political power along the shores of Kerala began to wane considerably[98] with the expansion of Travancorean power under Marthanda Varma into the major pepper hinterland in Kerala during the period between 1742 and 1752. Most of the pepper growing pockets fell into the evolving Travancore state, reducing severely the flow of pepper to the Dutch controlled port of Cochin.[99] Alleppey, which the Travancoreans developed in 1763 as the major port for the trade in spices coming from their newly occupied pepper pockets in their northern parts soon became the principal economic centre in Kerala , into which the St. Thomas Christians began to flow in large numbers to make maximum use of its commercial opportunities. One of the leading traders among them was Thachil Mathu Tharakan (1741-1814), who shifted sides to Travancore from Alengadu, which was a small principality before its merger into Travancore.[100] He represents a particular genre of merchants, often known as merchant capitalists, who straddled the worlds of commerce and power in India. They were 'social agents' who used whole or part of their 'accumulated wealth' for the generation not of 'use values' but of 'exchange values.'[101] These large-scale entrepreneurs who could leverage not only their own capital but also that of smaller-scale operators were viewed by Sanjay Subrahmanyam and Chris Bayly as "Portfolio Capitalists".[102] Keeping Alleppey as the base of operations, Thachil Mathu Tharakan emerged as the leading supplier of goods to the English in Travancore for their trade by the last quarter of the eighteenth century.[103] He emerged as a prominent trader with immense capital at his disposal and used to control the monopoly trade in salt and tobacco in Travancore.[104]

96 For details on Ezekkiel Rabbi, see DAS GUPTA (1967), *Malabar in Asian Trade* (see FN 94*)*, 104–105; S' JACOB, H. (1976), *De Nederlanders in Kerala, 1663–1701* ('s-Gravenhage), XXX.

97 PERUMTHOTTAM, J. (1994), *A Period of Decline of Marthoma Christians (1712–52)* (Vadavathoor), 196–197.

98 The trade in pepper was declared a state monopoly in Travancore in 1743, which severely reduced the amount of pepper available to the Dutch. See SOBHANAN, B. (1981), "Trade Monopoly of Travancore", in: *Journal of Kerala Studies* 8, 30–31; SHANGOONNY MENON, P. (1878), *History of Travancore from the Earliest Times* (New Delhi), 166.

99 MALEKANDATHIL, P. (2007), "Winds of Change and Links of Continuity. A Study on the Merchant Groups of Kerala and the Channels of their Trade, 1000-1800 AD", in: *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 50/2–3, 281; NAGAM AIYA, V. (1906), *The Travancore State Manual*. Vol. I (Trivandrum), 343–51; MENON (1878), *History of Travancore* (see FN 98), 135–155; MENON, A.S. (1962) (Ed.), *District Gazetteer of Trivandrum* (Trivandrum), 11.

100 NEDUMKUNNAM, M.O.J. (1962), *Thachil Mathu Tharakan* (Kottayam), 73.

101 MALEKANDATHIL, P. (2023) (Ed.), *Indian Ocean World and the Meanings of "Indian Merchant Capitalism", 1500–1800* (Delhi) (forthcoming).

102 SUBRAHMANYAM, S./ BAYLY, C.A. (1988), "Portfolio Capitalists and the Political Economy of Early Modern India", in: *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 25/4, 401–424.

103 NEDUMKUNNAM, M.O.J. (1962), *Thachil Mathu Tharakan* (Kottayam).

104 Kerala State Archives, Trivandrum, Showcase Records, Vol. 3, Record No. 197.

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Thachil Mathu Tharakan, who invested his profits for further productive ventures, soon rose up as a principal trader in the port of Alleppey, to which he ably integrated the vast pepper-growing hinterland with the help of his co-religionists and supportive traders. The immense possibilities offered by the new commercial structure of the state and the trade-promoting policies of the *dalawa* Raja Kesavadas and the Travancorean ruler Dharmaraja favoured the rise of Mathu Tharakan as the leading merchant in Alleppey in timber, cardamom, pepper and multiple forest products.[105] Fr. Paulinus says that the forests are let upon lease by the king. The principal lessee of the timber , during his stay, was Mathu Tharakan, a native Christian, who had great amount of property.[106] At a time when the English East India Company needed a large quantity of timber for making ships during the period between 1780 and 1800 to counter the naval attacks of the French, particulary during the time of Napoleanic wars, it was Thachil Mathu Tharakan who supplied the required number of teak and other varieties of timber to the English and Fr. Bernard speaks in 1916 of teak trees along the banks of Periyar still bearing the mark of Mathu Tharakan.[107]

M.O. Joseph says that when the Travancore state was in severe financial crisis, Thachil Mathu Tharakan donated a large amount of Rs. 15 lakhs to the state and about an amount of Rs.14 lakhs continued to remain as a state debt to Mathu Tharakan even at the time of his death in 1814.[108] He combined in himself the roles of a banker to the state, the organizer of large and capital-intensive trade and mobilizer of cargo from different nodal points of the hinterland with the help of his trade partners and co-religionists. His networking ability with the state, production centres and the English company and his entrepreneurial ability to invest in further productive ventures against the background of booming trade of the times made him stand tall in the commercial scenario of coastal Kerala by the second half of the eighteenth century.

A variety of his community-oriented/strengthening activities like his role in securing due permission from the state to transfer the residence of the Vicar Apostolic Francis Sales from Verapoly to Alengadu,[109] his substantial contribution to the Rome and Lisbon -bound journey of Fr. Joseph Kariyattil (later bishop Mar Joseph Kariyattil) and Fr. Thomas Paremakkel,[110] his efforts to bring back Fr. Thomas Paremakkel to Kerala after the death of bishop Kariyattil in Goa and to install him as the Governor of the diocese of Cranganore with a church and residential palace at Vadayar built with his own money,[111] his liberal support and financial help to repair many of the churches destroyed by the attacks of Tipu Sultan,[112] made him to emerge and remain acceptable and receptive before the large pepper growing-cum -trading community of St. Thomas Christians. This he utilized not only to expand his mercantile base into the hinterland and intensify his trading activities with the English (either directly or indirectly through the medium of the state) but also to bolster his position in the ladders of status and power hierarchy both in the state and church domains.

105 See for details Kerala State Archives, Trivandrum, Neettu Records, Vol. 3, 209; Showcase Records, Vol. 3, Record No. 197; Showcase Records, Vol. 2, Record No. 143.
106 BARTHOLOMAEO, P.A.S. (1880), *A Voyage to the East Indies* (trans. by William Johnston) (London), 164.
107 BERNARD OF ST. THOMA (1992), *Marthoma Kristhianikal* (Ernakulam), 695.
108 NEDUMKUNNAM, M.O.J. (1992), "Thachil Mathu Tharakan" in: *Sabharatnangal,* (Kottayam), 55–57.
109 PAREMAKKEL, T. (1977), *Varthamanapusthakam* (edited by Thomas Moothedan) (Ernakulam), 55–56.
110 PAREMAKKEL (1977), *Varthamanapusthakam* (see FN 109), 18–19; MALEKANDATHIL, P. (2012), *The Mughals, the Portuguese and the Indian Ocean. Changing Imageries of Maritime India* (New Delhi), 164.
111 NEDUMKUNNAM (1998), "Thachil Mathu Tharakan" (see FN 100), 55–56.
112 THOMAS, B. (1916), *Marthoma Kristhianikal* (Pala), 690–701; THONIPPARA, F. (1999), *Saint Thomas Christians of India.* A Period of Struggle for Unity and Self-rule (1775–1787) (Bangalore), 59–64.

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The evolving merchant-friendly situation in Travancore made many St. Thomas Christians of differing trading abilities and potentials to take up trans-regional trade or related economic activities in different parts of Travancore. Mention is made in a *neettu* document of 1759 about the St. Thomas Christian trader Itticheriya Tharakan of Chathannoor, who worked in the commercial department. He used to report to the king about the grievances of the merchants regarding their payments.[113]

Meanwhile an atmosphere for capital-intensive beginnings started appearing among the St. Thomas Christians in the kingdom of Cochin. It was facilitated by the political assertions being made by Raja Rama Varma (1790–1805), alias Saktan Thampuran, of Cochin kingdom, against the background of economic turmoil and political devastation caused by the attacks of Tipu Sultan.[114] Saktan Thampuran tried to reconstruct his kingdom by reorganizing the trade, which he wanted to get focused on in Trichur with the St. Thomas Christian centre Aranattukara as his port. His strained relationship with the Dutch and his attempts to strike hard at the merchant groups of Konkanis and the Toepassen as a part of the strategy to weaken these pillars of Dutch commerce in Cochin, made him move away from the traditional base of Cochin to Trichur.[115]

In the efforts to reorganize his international trade from Trichur, he developed markets in and around Trichur particularly in Trichur, Koratty, Kunnamkulam, Chalakudy and Irinjalakuda and made the enterprising merchant community of the St. Thomas Christians settle down in these places with a view to sending cargo to the ports of Red Sea and Persian gulf regions. The gains accrued from this trade were ably translated by Saktan Thampuran into setting up various tools and instruments of power for strengthening his state.[116] By getting themselves closer to Saktan Thampuran for the purpose of resource mobilization and by keeping themselves linked with his state building ventures, the St. Thomas Christians of the Trichur region managed to do well in commerce and to emerge as the leading entrepreneurial segment of Kerala.[117] Most of the internationally reputed traders, entrepreneurs and bankers of the St. Thomas Christian community of Trichur for the later period evolved out of these mercantile groups once attached to these markets.[118]

113 Neettu Records, Vol. 76, C. 1, 47.

114 DAS GUPTA (1967), *Malabar in Asian Trade* (see FN 94), 113; GALLETTI, A. (1912), *The Dutch in Malabar* (Madras), 161. *Niranam Grandhavari* refers to the destruction of Nediyakotta by Tipu Sultan in 1790 and the capturing of the fortresses of Cranganore, Kuriappilly and Pallipuram. It says that many *illams,* temples churches and *angadis* located on his way were burnt down and looted (see KURIAN, T. [2000], *Niranam Grandhavari* [Kottayam], 95). Same view is also found in MENON, A.S. (1965), *Kerala district Gazetteers-Ernakulam* (Trivandrum), 183. John Stewart says that Tipu Sultan destroyed 27 of the most ancient churches (see STEWART, J. [1928], *Nestorian Missionary Enterprise* [Madras], 312). However, it should also be mentioned that he did not destroy all the temples and churches on his route, as he spared the temples of Trichur and Guruvayur.

115 ACHYUTA MENON, C. (1996), *The Cochin State Manual* (Trivandrum), 174–178.

116 MENON, K.P.P. (1989), *Kochi Rajyacharitram* (Kozhikode).

117 MALEKANDATHIL (2007), "Winds of Change" (see FN 99), 282–283.

118 The most prominent among them are the Alukkas, the Chakkolas, the Chemmannur group and the Josco group.

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Impact of Trade on the Socio-Economic and Cultural Life of St. Thomas Christians and the Evolution of an Ecclesiastical and Spiritual "Hub" in the Polycentric Christian World

Christianity got a Kerala- specific transformation and version over years, because of the redefinition with which the St. Thomas Christians formulated themselves against the background of their trade-oriented lifestyle. This led to the eventual evolution of a local version of Christianity in Kerala functioning almost as a hub among the polycentric form of 'global Christianity'.[119] It started with the Brahmins who reached Kerala by 8th century and who restructured the socio-economic order, with Brahmins being at the dominant hegemonic position, while the various professional and artisan groups were incorporated into the evolving social hierarchy as diverse castes with *sudras* and the *pulayas* at the bottom level and others at different intermediary levels.[120] Though the Brahmins swallowed all the existing religious groups including Buddhism and Jainism to become a part of their religion, they spared Christians and created a trading caste equivalent to the Vaisyas out of the Christians of Kerala involved in the trade at different levels.[121] The Brahminical attempts to empower the Kerala Christians was an alternative device to weaken the trade of the Buddhists and the Jains, as it was the surplus from their trade that helped to uphold the ideology of both these rival religions in hegemonic position and to raise serious challenges to Brahminism.[122]

In this process the commercially-oriented Christians were treated as a trading caste, almost like the Vaisyas and were given a specific social function in the evolving socio-cultural and religious world, where they were used for touching and purifying the oil and utensils to be used in the temples and palaces, but being 'polluted' by the touch of the artisans.[123] Concomitantly certain Christian families were specially invited offering them land and were made to settle down near the temples and palaces for the purpose of touching and purifying the oil (*enna thottu kodukkan*) and for purifying the vessels being 'polluted' by the touch or use of lower caste people.[124] In the new developments following the establishment of Brahminical hegemony and dissemination of notions of 'pollution' that would help the Brahmins to maintain their dominant position with Nairs subordinate to them, Christians were made to become an inevitable social ingredient in central Kerala who were in turn made to evolve as a bridging social group between the polluting artisan groups and the dominant castes. However, it should be noted that this was not mere touching alone, but a ritual act, which not every St. Thomas Christian, but members from only

119 KOSCHORKE, K./ HERMANN, A. (2014) (Eds.), *Polycentric Structures in the History of World Christianity* (Wiesbaden), 15–27.

120 CHAMBAKALAKSHMI, R./ VELUTHAT, K./ VENUGOPALAN, T.R. (2002) (Eds.), *State and Society in Pre-Modern South India* (Trichur). See in particular the article by K.N. Ganesh.

121 MALEKANDATHIL (2010), *Maritime India. (*see FN 17*),* 47.

122 The intensity of this conflict between the evolving Hindu religion and heterodox sects like Buddhism and Jainism, is very much evident in the Bhakti literature of this period. See CHAMBAKALAKSHMI, R. (2001), "From Devotion and Dissent to Dominance. The Bhakti of the Tamil Alvars and Nayanars" in: Chambakalakshmi, R./ Gopalan, S. (Eds.), *Tradition, Dissent and Ideology.* Essays in Honour of Romila Thapar, 143. For more details see MALEKANDATHIL (2010)*, Maritime India* (FN 17), 38–62.

123 The common saying was "*Paulose thottal athu sudhamayidum*". It will get purified if it is touched by a Christian (Paulose). See Rajendran, P.G. (2000), *Kshetra Vijnanakosam,* (Kottayam).

124 Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, *Reservados Cod*. No. 536. *Noticias do reino do Malabar anteriores a chegada dos Portugueses e ate ao sec. XVIII. Geografia, Clima, Etnais, Linguas, Costumes, Politica, Religões, confronte entre Carmelitas, e Jesuitas e a Cristandade de São Tome*, fol. 6.

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certain selected Christian families were invited to do. Why only selected families of the St. Thomas Christians? Why Nambuthiri Brahmins, the source of ritual authority in Kerala since 8th century AD, allowed this practice to continue and considered the 'objects thus touched by these Christians' to be 'pure and clean'? Is it probably because of their Brahminical linkage with their origin or the superior social status being given to them as an exceptionally different trading caste.

In this process the caste practices and norms which the Brahmins fabricated and foisted on the St. Thomas Christians as on other artisans, social groups and communities were followed by these Christians for years. When they were asked by Alexis de Menezes to do away with the caste observations, they confessed that they were incapable of it, as the Nairs and Brahmins would not interact with them and would not conduct trade with them and the Christians would lose honours from kings if they happened to get polluted because of their touch of low castes.[125] Because of this trade-related social exigency, they imbibed a lot of elements from the neighbouring cultural space of the higher castes and followed such high-caste practices as wearing of sacred thread (*puunuul*),[126] *kudumi* (tuft- with a silver or golden cross inserted into it),[127] observance of birth-related pollution as well as *pula* (perception of the family as being under pollution after the death of a member), *pulakuli* (the feast usually held on 10th day after funeral) and *sradham* (feast held one year after the funeral, when the souls were believed to come back).[128]

The practice of St. Thomas Christians wearing sacred thread was later quoted by Robert de Nobili for justifying his wearing of sacred thread as a part of his missionary method of inculturation experimented in Madurai in the first part of the seventeenth century.[129] *Jornada* says that by end of the sixteenth century almost all the churches of the St. Thomas Christians were constructed on the models of temples(but with a granite cross in its front), [130] probably because of the fact that the same mason and carpenter built the sacred structures of both religions according to the principles of *Vastuvidya.* When the Brahmins formulated the caste -based society out of the various social groups and artisan-cum-professional groups then existing in Kerala, why sacred thread and other practices connected with upper caste status or Brahmin-related position was allowed to be used/retained only by the St. Thomas Christians. Probably it was mainly because of the fact that it was a marker of high status and respect.

With the increasing demand from the stimulated spice trade from 8th century onwards, we find Christians specialized in spice-production moving to the hinterland part of Kerala in their attempts to extend spice cultivation into the interior. The increasing inland-movement of the St. Thomas Christians is evident from the establishment of churches in places like Kayamkulam (824), Athirampuzha (853), Kottayam (9th cent.), Nagapuzha (900), Manjapra (943), Mavelikara (943), Pazhuvil (960), Arakuzha (999), Nediasala (999), Kottekad (1000), Kadamattom (10thcent.), Kanjur (1001), Kaduthuruthy Cheriapally (10thcent.) Kunnamkulam (10th cent.), Pala (1002), Muttam (1023), Cherpunkal (1096),

125 MALEKANDATHIL (2003), *Jornada of Dom Alexis de Menezes* (see FN 36), 258.
126 BROWN, L. (1956), *Indian Christians of St. Thomas* (Cambridge), 177.
127 MALEKANDATHIL (2003), *Jornada of Dom Alexis de Menezes* (see FN 36), 251.
128 MALEKANDATHIL (2003), *Jornada of Dom Alexis de Menezes* (see FN 36), 251. 257; BROWN (1956), *Indian Christians of St. Thomas* see FN 126), 205–206.
129 ZUPANOV, I.G. (2001), *Disputed Mission* (New Delhi), 58. 93-98; FERROLI, D. (1939), *The Jesuits in Malabar*. Vol. I (Bangalore), 300–360.
130 MALEKANDATHIL (2003), *Jornada of Dom Alexis de Menezes* (see FN 36), 29. 244.

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Vadakara (11th cent.), Bharananganam (1100), Changanacherry (1117), Thripunithara (1175), Cheppadu (12th cent.), Chengannoor (12th cent.), Kudamaloor (12th cent.), Ernakulam (12th cent.), Kothanalloor (1220), Mulanthuruthy (1225), Kothamangalam Valiapally (1240), Karthikapally (13th cent.), Kuruppumpady (13th cent.), Alengad (1300), Muthalakodam (1312), Njarackal (1341), Koratty (1381), Poonjar (14th cent.), Alleppey (1400), Kanjirappilly (1450), Kothamangalam Cheriapally (1455), Kudavechur (1463) etc[131]. All theses churches of the St. Thomas Christians were established during the period between the eighth and the fifteenth centuries along the fertile riverbeds of central Kerala as a development that took place following the expansion of spice-cultivation from the coastal areas into the interior parts of Kerala.

It is within this expanding economic and socio-cultural world of Kerala and the regions with which they conducted their business that the St. Thomas Christians slowly emerged as a significant trading segment of Kerala. All the wide varieties of customs, rituals and shared cultural practices, together with their theological and spiritual notions (borrowed from West Asia), that were developed among these Christians over centuries were collectively called *Thomayude Margam* or the Law of Thomas, which they did not want to get changed at any cost. [132] The bitter and long-standing conflicts between the St. Thomas Christians and the Portuguese in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were actually on the question of the Portuguese changing these cultural practices from the former.[133]

The foregoing discussions on the one hand highlight the meanings, nuances and magnitude of multiple strands of trade that the St. Thomas Christians were involved in over years. The trade relations with the ports of Persian Gulf region ensured not only regular markets for their pepper and other commodities, but also ecclesiastical partnership with the Seleucian-Ctesiphon Church which supplied church personnel, materials and literature to meet their liturgical requirements, theological and spiritual needs for the Kerala-specific version of Christianity that the St. Thomas Christians developed as *Thomayude Margam* or Law of St. Thomas. The participation of the St. Thomas Christians in the trade with the various marts of Africa and Europe, either directly as suppliers of cargo in overseas markets or indirectly as intermediaries and feeders of large trade, gave them a superior financial position to overcome any type of crisis moments and religion-cum-ritual -related challenges from any corner (including the ones from the Portuguese) and survive and sustain their faith and religious practices. The huge wealth-base that they created over years by way of trade and trade-related pursuits and the long military traditions that they maintained made them remain closer and dear to the local rulers, who in turn made them either co-sharers of power (as in the case of Christian ministers being made in the kingdoms of Thekkenkur, Kizhumalainadu, Alengadu and Poonjar) or as privileged merchant group in their principalities obviously with a view to integrating them as a supportive social base for their politico-economic system.

131 The dating of these Christian settlements and the founding of their churches is done on the basis of information from HERMANN, W. (1877), *Die Kirche der Thomaschristen.* Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Orientalischen Kirchen (Gütersloh), 673–769; THOMAS, B. (2021), *Marthoma Kristianikal*. Vol. II (Mannanam), 906–908. The year of founding of these churches is taken from the respective diocesan directories, which is further cross-checked with the help of field-study, in which the statues, the church-bells, stone inscriptions, church-songs (*pallipattu*) etc. are used to verify their chronology. See also THOMAS, P.J. (1961), *Malayala Sahithyavum Kristhianikalum* (Kottayam), 63–64; MALEKANDATHIL P. (2001), "St. Thomas Christians and the Indian Ocean", in: *Ephrem's Theological Journal* 5/2, 174–202, 186. 194–95. 198–99.

132 MALEKANDATHIL (2003), *Jornada of Dom Alexis de Menezes* (see FN 36), 57. 124. 212–214.

133 MALEKANDATHIL (2003), *Jornada of Dom Alexis de Menezes* (see FN 36), 212–214.

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Along with their bolstered power and economic position, there concomitantly happened a move towards the enhancement of their caste status by the Brahmins who while migrating to Kerala in the 8th century formulated diverse caste groups out of different professional groups. The St. Thomas Christians who were involved in trade at different levels were equated with the trading caste or the Vaisyas, following which the former imbibed the various markers of Vaisya caste, including wearing of *punnul, kudumi*, observance of untouchability and the nuanced notions of pollution*(pula*) and celebration of *Sradha*. The frequency of their trade with Brahmins and Nairs necessitated them not to interact with low castes and the observance of trade-related requirements and pollution-related notions made them evolve almost like a caste group, ultimately causing Kerala-specific version of Christianity to evolve within the universal and global form of Christianity. The overwhelmingly visible elements of localism, within which they lived, internalized and experienced the religion and conducted trade, caused the St. Thomas Christians to develop an 'ecclesiastical-cum-socio-cultural structure' of their own within the polycentric frames of world Christianity.

Abstract

St. Thomas Christians who trace back their origin to the apostolic preaching of St. Thomas in Kerala, form an important entrepreneurial Indian community involved in the economic pursuits of spice production and trade. Because of their specialized skill in spice cultivation along with their closeness to the ruling figures of Kerala and their linkages with the major ecclesiastical and mercantile centres of Afro-Asia, they played a decisive role in the Indian Ocean trade of medieval and early modern periods. The success of various international merchants to conduct Indian Ocean trade in pepper and other spices depended on their ability to incorporate the spice-producing community of St. Thomas Christians and their expertise in local and inter-regional trade within the orbits of their larger system of commerce. By 9th century AD, the mercantile segment among them had already organized themselves into a trade guild known as *manigramam.* Their role in mobilizing the Indian Ocean trade of the port of Quilon made the local ruler confer on their church several commercial privileges and concessions, obviously for attracting more foreign trade of the Christians from West Asia. The market mechanism of *angadis* was established in the close vicinity of almost all the churches of the St. Thomas Christians for mobilizing pepper and other cargo from the hinterland, from where it was further taken to Quilon and other ports for trans-oceanic trade.

The long association that these Christians probably had with the Ethiopian traders and economic actors from the Aksumite kingdom from 6th century onwards, when they came to Kerala shores either independently or as commercial partners of the Byzantines, made the St. Thomas Christians get commercially connected with the African ports. We find some of the St. Thomas Christians conducting trade with the African ports of Mombasa and Melinde at a time when Vasco da Gama reached these ports in 1498. Though the relationship between the St. Thomas Christians and the Portuguese strained very much over a period of time because of the cultural and colonial tampering the Portuguese resorted to, we find occasional attempts to reinforce the business ties for enhancing the level of their Indian Ocean trade by payment of gifts and monetary incentives to local traders. Later, by the end of 18th century, Christian merchant capitalists like Thachil Mathu Thrakan were able to negotiate with the Travancorean ruler and British company officials either for

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conducting partnership trade with them or for despatching cargo to the most profitable destinations in the Indian Ocean on individual capacity. The frequent cultural adaptation these St. Thomas Christian merchants were compelled to make due to the requirements of their trade-related activities, considerably transformed them almost into a trading caste (on par with the Vaisyas). Consequently a local version of Christianity imbibing the Kerala-specific religious-cum-cultural practices and traditions started evolving almost as one of the hubs among the polycentric forms of 'World Christianity'.

Die Thomaschristen und der Handel im Indischen Ozean, 800-1800

Die Thomaschristen, die ihren Ursprung auf die Verkündigung des Apostels Thomas in Kerala zurückführen, bilden eine bedeutende indische Unternehmergemeinschaft. Aufgrund ihrer Spezialisierung im Gewürzanbau, der Nähe zu den Herrschern Keralas sowie ihrer Verbindungen zu den großen kirchlichen und merkantilen Zentren Afroasiens spielten sie im Mittelalter und der frühen Neuzeit eine entscheidende Rolle im Handel im Indischen Ozean. Ihre Erfolge beim maritimen Handel mit Pfeffer und anderen Gewürzen war Folge ihrer Integration in größere Netzwerke. In unmittelbarer Nähe fast aller Kirchen der Thomas-Christen wurden Sammelplätze eingerichtet, um Pfeffer und andere Güter aus dem Hinterland nach Quilon und zu anderen Häfen für den transozeanischen Handel weiter zu transportieren.

Der seit langem bestehende Kontakt zu äthiopischen Händlern aus Aksum (wahrscheinlich seit dem 6. Jahrhundert) ermöglichte Verbindungen auch zu ostafrikanischen Häfen. Einige Thomaschristen trieben Handel mit den Häfen von Mombasa und Melinde, als Vasco da Gama 1498 dort landete. Obwohl sich in Portugiesisch-Indien die Beziehungen zwischen den Thomas-Christen und den neuen iberischen Herren drastisch verschlechterten, gab es gelegentliche Versuche, durch die Zahlung von Geschenken und finanzielle Anreize für lokale Händler den Handel im Indischen Ozean wieder zu beleben. Gegen Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts waren christliche Handelskapitalisten wie Thachil Mathu Thrakan in der Lage, mit dem Herrscher von Travancore und den Beamten der britischen Kompanie zu verhandeln, um entweder Partnerschaften mit ihnen einzugehen oder auf eigene Faust Fracht zu den profitabelsten Zielen im Indischen Ozean zu verschiffen. Infolge ihrer kulturellen Anpassungen verwandelten sich thomaschristliche Kaufleute fast in eine eigene Handelskaste (auf Augenhöhe mit den Vaisyas). Infolgedessen entwickelte sich in Kerala eine lokale Version des Christentums, mit spezifischen religiös-kulturellen Praktiken und Traditionen, die zugleich fast als eines der Zentren des polyzentrischen "Weltchristentums" fungierte.

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Goa, the Afro-Asian Church in the Portuguese *Estado da India* and the Rise of a Catholic Underground Movement in Dutch Colonial Sri Lanka

KLAUS KOSCHORKE

I. Pre-Remarks

Like other maritime regions[1], the Indian Ocean has been a space of "global interconnectivity" and transcontinental exchange — commercially, culturally, and religiously – since earliest times[2]. The role it played in establishing links between Christians from various regions, and specifically between Asia and Africa in the early modern period, is the topic of this paper. Pius Malekandathil's contribution in this volume

1 ARMITAGE, D./ BASHFORD, A./ SIVASUNDARAM, S. (2018) (Eds.), *Oceanic Histories* (Cambridge, UK); REINHARD, W. (2014), "Einleitung: Weltreiche, Weltmeere – und der Rest der Welt", in: Reinhard, W. (Ed.), 1350–1750: *Weltreiche und Weltmeere* (München), 9–52; BORGOLTE, M./ JASPERT, N. (2016) (Eds.), *Maritimes Mittelalter*. Meere als Kommunikationsräume (Ostfildern).

2 *(The Indian Ocean in general):* SCHOTTENHAMMER, A. (2019) (Ed.), *Early Global Interconnectivity across the Indian Ocean World*. Vol. I: Commercial Structures and Exchanges. Vol. II: Exchange of Ideas, Religions, and Technologies (Cham, CH); ALPERS, E.A. (2014) (Ed.), *The Indian Ocean in World History* (Oxford, UK etc.); ROTHERMUND, D./ WEIGELIN-SCHWIEDRZIK, S. (2004), *Der Indische Ozean*. Das afroasiatische Mittelmeer als Kultur- und Wirtschaftsraum (Wien); PEARSON, M. (2003), *The Indian Ocean* (London/ New York); FERNÁNDEZ-ARMESTO, F. (2000), "The Indian Ocean in World History", in: Disney, A./ Booth, E. (Eds.), *Vasco da Gama and the Linking of Europe and Asia* (New Dehli), 11–29; MCPHERSON, K. (1993), *The Indian Ocean*: A History of People and the Sea (Dehli); CONERMANN, S. (1998) (Ed.), *Der Indische Ozean in historischer Perspektive* (Hamburg); PTAK, R. (2007), *Die maritime Seidenstraße*. Küstenräume, Seefahrt und Handel in vorkolonialer Zeit (München); ARASARATNAM, S. (1994), *Maritime India in the Seventeenth Century* (New Dehli); CHJAUDHURI, K.N. (1985), *Trade and Civilization in the Indian Ocean*: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750 (Cambridge, UK); DALE, S.F. (1994), *Indian Merchants and Eurasian Trade*, 1600–1750 (Cambridge, UK); MALEKANDATHIL, P. (2022), *Maritime Malabar*. Trade, Culture and Power (Dehli). – *(Religious networks and exchange):* SELAND, E.H. (2019), "Religion and Early Trade in the Western Indian Ocean: Ideology and Knowledge Exchange Across the Indian Ocean World", in: Schottenhammer, *Early Global Interconnectivity II* (see above FN 2), 69–83; PARKIN, D./ HEADLEY, S.C. (2000) (Eds.), *Islamic Prayer across the Indian Ocean*: Inside and Outside the Mosque (Richmond); RISSO, P. (1995), *Merchants and Faith*: Muslim Commerce and Culture in the Indian Westview (Boulder etc.); KOORIA, M. PEARSON, M.N. (2018) (Eds.), *Malabar in the Indian Ocean*: Cosmopolitanism in a Maritime Historical Region (Oxford/ New Delhi); RAY, H.P. (1994), *The Wind of Change*: Buddhism and the Maritime Links of Early South Asia (Dehli etc.); HOFMEYR, I./ KAARSHOLM, P. (2011) (Eds.), "Print Cultures, Nationalisms and Publics of the Indian Ocean", in: *Africa 81/1* – Special Issue; SHARMA, P. (2019), "Christian Traders in Maritime World of Kerala (c. 1000–c. 1300 C.E.)", in: *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences* 9/2, 567–574; SALVADORE, M. (2017), *The African Prester John and the Birth of Ethiopian-European Relations, 1402–1555* (London); KELLY, S. (2020), "Medieval Ethiopian Diasporas", in: Kelly, S. (Ed.), *A Companion to Medieval Ethiopia and Eritrea* (Leiden), 427–441.

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deals with the St. Thomas Christians and the Indian Ocean trade between 800 and 1800. He analyses the "participation of the St. Thomas Christians in the trade with the various marts of Africa and Europe, either directly as suppliers of cargo in overseas markets or indirectly as intermediaries and feeders of large trade" which "gave them a superior financial position to overcome any type of crisis moments"[3]. Around 1500, St. Thomas Christians still could be met in various regions outside India. When Vasco da Gama passed the East African coast in 1498, he encountered four Indian Christian sailors in Malindi (in current Kenya)[4]. Francis Xavier, on his way to India, met St. Thomas Christians on the island of Socotra in 1542. "They take much pride in calling themselves Christians", he wrote, although they had only "limited knowledge" of the Christian faith. But "they have Churches and crosses and lamps. … I visited this island twice. The people are followers of St. Thomas"[5].

In 1508, the Italian explorer Ludovico di Varthema reported about East Syrian "Nestorian" communities in South India, in Bengal, in Ayutthaya (in current Thailand) and in Pegu (Myanmar)[6]. Already in medieval times (since the 10th century) East Syrian travelers had used not only the continental, but also the so-called "maritime silk roads" to reach China – establishing small outposts along the route[7]. Remnants of earlier East Syrian communities have also been preserved, inter alia, in Sri Lanka[8]. Other pre-Portuguese Christian networks operating in the 'Indian Ocean World' included the Armenians. Although we know much more about their commercial activities there in the 17th and 18th centuries[9], their presence in Indian Bengal around 1500 has been mentioned already by Ludovico di Varthema.

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3 See MALEKANDATHIL in this volume (p. 185).

4 GIERTS, G. (²1986) (Ed.), *Vasco da Gama*. Die Entdeckung des Seewegs nach Indien. Ein Augenzeugenbericht (Stuttgart/ Wien), 72–78; cf. 57. 64. 69.

5 For details see: SCHURHAMMER, G. (1963), *Franz Xaver*. Sein Leben und seine Zeit. II/1 (Freiburg etc.), 120–123.

6 See excerpts (in translation) from "Itinerario de Ludovico di Varthema Bolognese nello Egypto", published in Rome in 1510; reprinted in: KOSCHORKE, K./ LUDWIG, F./ DELGADO, M. (2007) (Eds.), *A History of Christianity in Asia, Africa and Latin America, 1450–1990*. A Documentary Sourcebook (Grand Rapids, MI/ Cambridge, UK), 4f. (= Text 2).

7 See e.g.: LIEU, S.N.C. (2006), "Nestorian Remains from Zaitun (Quanzhou)", in: Malek, R./ Hofrichter, P. (Eds.), *Jingjiao*. The Church of the East in China and Central Asia (St. Augustin), 277–291, esp. 285; XIE BIZHEN (2006), "The History of Quanzhou Nestorianism", in: Malek/ Hofrichter, *Jingjiao,* 257–276, esp. 270; KOSCHORKE, K. (2009), "'Ob er nun unter den Indern weilt oder unter den Chinesen …' Die ostsyrisch-nestorianische 'Kirche des Ostens' als kontinentales Netzwerk im Asien der Vormoderne", in: *Jahrbuch für Europäische Überseegeschichte* 9, 9–35, esp. 16f. 34f.

8 Cf. KOSCHORKE (2009), "Kontinentales Netzwerk" (see FN 6), 34f. - Recently also Aksumite coins have been discovered in Sri Lanka, see: MIHINDUKULASURIYA, P. (2005), "Another Ancient Christian Presence in Sri Lanka. The Ethiopians of Aksum", in: *Journal of Colombo Theological Seminary* 4, 1–22; cf. WALBURG, R. (2008), *Coins and Tokens from Ancient Ceylon:* Ancient Ruhana (Wiesbaden), 190. 239. – On the early East Syrian presence in Sri Lanka (6th century) see: LI TANG (2014), "Traces of Syro-Persian Christians in Ancient Ceylon", in: Tamcke, M. / Grebenstein, S. (Eds.), *Geschichte, Theologie und Kultur des syrischen Christentums* (Wiesbaden), 381–392; on early trade connections (6th century) between Ethiopia, Sri Lanka and the Byzantine world see SAXCÉ, A. de (2016), "Trade and Cross-cultural Contacts in Sri Lanka and South India during Late Antiquity (6th – 10th Centuries)", in: *Heritage. Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Archaeology* 4, 121–159. Cf. also: SENGUPTA, A. (2021), "Romans Across the Indian Ocean: Sigiriya Lion Rock & Alexandrian Lighthouse in Sri Lanka", in: *Academia Letters. Article 1640*, 1–7; MUNASINGHE, D.S.A. (2021), "Sri Lanka and Greco-Roman Maritime Trade Relations", in: *Journal of Archaeological Studies in India*. Vol. I/2, 381–392.

9 Cf. SETH, M.J. (1983), *Armenians in India*. From the Earliest Times to the Present Day (New Dehli/ Madras 1992); BOURNOUTIAN, G. (2003), *A concise history of the Armenian people* (Costa Mesa, CA), 228; BHATTACHARYA, B. (2008), "The 'Book of Will' of Petrus Woskan (1680–1751). Some Insights into the

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II. Goa as Center of the Afro-Asian Church in the Portuguese Estado da India

With the arrival of the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean World in the early 16th century, new hubs of commercial exchange and transregional networks were formed. In 1510, the Iberian newcomers conquered Goa. The city became the administrative center of the Portuguese *Estado da India* in 1534. Regular shipping traffic was established between Lisbon and Goa. At the same time, all Portuguese ships on their way from Europe to the Far East had to dock here. The city experienced a rapid growth and counted around 200'000 inhabitants by 1600. Goa became ghghgfamous as a cosmopolitan city. A Dutch visitor in the 1580s, for example, encountered there "all sorts of nations, heathens, Moors, Jews, Armenians, Gujjuratis, Brahmins and of all Indian nations and people which do all … traffic therein"[10].

Goa was not only the political, but also the *ecclesiastical center* of the Portuguese *Estado da India*. In 1534 it became a diocese. The territory of the new diocese was immense. It stretched from the Cape of Good Hope to India, Malacca, the Moluccas, China and Japan[11]. At the same time, it enabled contacts between Christians from different regions in Africa and Asia. Teotonio de Souza speaks of the "Afro-Asian Church in the Portuguese Estado da India"[12]. In terms of mission history, Goa often has been mentioned primarily as a place of transition to the "mission fields" in the Far East. Pioneers like Francis Xavier, Alessandro Valignano or Matteo Ricci started their enterprises in Japan or China from there. Less attention has been paid to Goan connections with Christian communities and individuals in Africa. But there is a variety of hjhjcrosslinks that are also relevant for an entangled history of Christianity in the Indian Ocean World still to be explored[13].

– There was already a considerable Indian presence on the East African coasts in precolonial times (including, as mentioned above, the St. Thomas Christian sailors in Malindi). On the other hand, scholars like Matteo Salvadore draw our attention to the "growing African presence" in the Portuguese possessions on the Indian subcontinent (partly as a result of the trans-maritime slave trade) — some of them already Christians[14].

Global Commercial Network of the Armenians in the Indian Ocean", in: *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient.* Vol. 51/1, 67–98; ASLANIAN, S. (2006), *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean*. Circulation and the Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa, 1605–1747 (Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University); MCPHERSON (1993), *Indian Ocean* (see FN 2), 189 (Armenian presence in Siam, Mughal India, South East Asia, Spanish Manila); MOFFETT, S. (2005), *A History of Christianity in Asia*. Vol. II: 1500–1900 (New York), 203f. (early presence in Persia and India).

10 BOXER, C.R. (1991), *The Portuguese Seaborn Empire 1415–1825* (London), 69.

11 TEKKEDATH, J. (1982), *History of Christianity in India II:* From the Middle of the 16th to the End of the 17th Century (1542–1700) (Bangalore), 1–15. 353–408; NEILL, S. (1984), *A History of Christianity in India*. I (London etc.), 116ff. 134ff; PAIVA, J.P. (2021), "The First Catholic Diocese in Asia and the Spread of Catholicism: Juan de Albuquerque, Bishop of Goa, 1538–1553", in: *Church History* 90/4, 776–798; see also: ŽUPANOV, I.G. (2005), Missionary Tropics: The Catholic Frontier in India, 16th–17th Centuries (Ann Arbor).

12 DE SOUZA, T. (1988), "The Afro-Asian Church in the Portuguese Estado da India", in: Kalu, O. (Ed.), *African Church Historiography*: An Ecumenical Perspective (Bern; 56–76).

13 A survey on other — non-Christian — religious and cultural interactions in the Indian Ocean World can be found, for example, in HAWLEY, J.C. (2008) (Ed.), *India in Africa, Africa in India* (Bloomington, IN).

14 SALVADORE, M. (2020), "Between the Red Sea Slave Trade and the Goa Inquisition: The Odyssey of Gabriel, a Sixteenth-Century Ethiopian Jew", in: *Journal of World History*. Vol. 31/2, 327–360, here: 342: "Among them [sc. the Africans in Portuguese India] were also the descendants of slaves freed by the Portuguese at the

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On the institutional level, church authorities in Goa had to deal with multiple developments on the East African coast. Provincial councils in Goa were attended by the representatives of the Church in Mozambique (e.g. in 1567)[15]. Specific issues arising from the East African context were dealt with by the Goanese inquisition. So, for example, we learn that African Christians in Zambesi could not get over polygamy and the custom of circumcision so very easily. An edict of the inquisition of Goa in 1771 denounced numerous "rites, ceremonies and superstitious abuses" which were widely prevalent among the Christians of Mozambique[16].

– In Portuguese India educational facilities — such as the Seminary of the Holy Faith respectively St. Paul's College in Goa — were established quite early for native boys from Asia *and* Africa. At the same time, from the very beginning, these early attempts had been obstructed by members of the ecclesial establishment. Francis Xavier himself was in conflict with an influential Portuguese Jesuit, for expelling most of the native boys from Asia and Africa from the seminary that was meant for them[17].
– One famous African person educated at an Augustinian seminary in Goa was Chinguela, later to become King of Mombasa (r. [1614/]1627-1632). As a boy he was sent to study in Goa, where he adopted Christianity and was baptized in 1629. After returning to East Africa as Dom Geronimo, however, he got into conflict with his old masters. He gave up his new religion, became a Muslim and started a persecution of his former co-religionists in 1631. 250 Christians, both African and Portuguese, suffered martyrdom[18].
– Dominicans from Goa were serving as teachers in Mozambique. On the other hand, we also know of African doctors teaching in Goa. One was Frei Miguel who became a professor of theology there in 1670. Another one — Frei Constanino de Rosaria — gained such a position in 1712[19]. Other prominent Africans functioned in Goa as priests – like Fr. Miguel de Apresentacao, nephew of the Christianized "emperor" of Monomotapa who had been converted to Christianity in 1629. Someone who knew the friar well in Goa reported of him: "Although he is a model priest leading a very exemplary life, saying Mass daily, yet not even the habit he wears secures him respect just because he has a black face"[20]. It is true that some few blacks of East

time of conquest, slaves acquired by settlers and missionaries in the Horn, as well as free and forced migrants from Portuguese outposts on the Swahili Coast" (Ibid, 342).

15 DE SOUZA (1988), "The Afro-Asian Church" (see FN 12), 66.

16 DE SOUZA (1988), "The Afro-Asian Church" (see FN 12), 69.

17 On the initial phase of the College of the Holy Faith see SCHURHAMMER, G. (1955–1973), *Franz Xaver*. Sein Leben und seine Zeit. Bd. I/II.1–3 (Freiburg): Bd. II/1, 375; II/2, 250–266; II/3, 106. 436f. 502f.560ff. The College was planned for 500 students, with a certain number reserved for "native-born pupils … from the various nationalities", such as Goa, the Malabars, other Indian regions, Malacca, Moluccas, "six from China", further six each from Bengal, Pegu (Myanmar), Siam and Gujurat, Their number included also "Abyssinians up to eight" and "six to eight" from the "Kaffirs of Sofala, Mozambique and Saint Lawrence Island [Madagascar]" and "likewise from other nations of these regions ... also up to eight" (Ibid II/1, 254). After the dismissal of Antonio Gomes S.J. as rector – who had expelled all Indian pupils in 1550 – the college was opened for non-Portuguese students again.

18 SUNDKLER, B./ STEED, C. (2000), *A History of the Church in Africa* (Cambridge, UK), 72; cf. FREEMAN-GRENVILLE, G.S.P. (1980) (Ed.), *The Mombasa Rising against the Portuguese 1631* (London). - On pupils from East Africa sent for education to Goa see also KILGER, L. (1930), "Die Mission in Oberguinea und in Ostafrika nach den ersten Propaganda-Materialien (1622–70)", in: *ZMR* 20, 297–311, here: 311.

19 JADIN, L. (1965), *L'Afrique et Rome* (Leuven), 62f.

20 DE SOUZA, T. (1988), "The Afro-Asian Church" (see FN 12), 71.

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African origin were ordained at Goa or in Portugal from the 16th to the 18th centuries. But they usually remained in Portuguese India and did not return to Africa[21].

– In 1612, the Mozambique mission was released from organizational dependence on far-away Goa. But Portuguese missionaries, soldiers and migrants naturally continued to use Mozambique and Mombasa as stopovers on their way from Lisbon to Goa. At the same time, the number of Goanese merchants — both Christian and Hindu - on the East African coasts increased steadily. Thus a broad variety of intercultural and interreligious contacts between Goanese Indians and Africans went on. More detailed studies into this under-developed area of research could contribute significantly to a better understanding of the complex internal relationships within the Afro-Asian Church in the Portuguese *Estado da India*[22].

Special links existed between Portuguese India and *Ethiopia*. Already in 1509 the Ethiopian Queen Heleni sent a letter to her Portuguese colleague King Manuel welcoming the victories of the Portuguese in India. She offered military support by the Ethiopians in the common struggle against the Muslim arch-enemy and was even prepared "to send troops to India in order to support the Portuguese and to annihilate the Muslims"[23]. Later it was the other way round. In 1541 the Christian empire of Ethiopia only survived repeated attacks from the neighboring sultanate of Adal thanks to military intervention by a Portuguese expeditionary corps from Goa. It was led by Christoph da Gama, son of Vasco da Gama, who lost his life in this war.

Subsequent attempts by Jesuit missionaries and Goanese authorities to subjugate the Ethiopian Church to Roman control, however, failed. In 1632 Portuguese officials and Roman Catholic priests were expelled, first from the royal court, and then permanently from the country. This story has often been told[24]. Nevertheless, in spite of Ethiopia's hardening policy of self-isolation over against Catholic Europe, many connections — both commercial and cultural – between the East African country and Portuguese India were maintained. Persons like the Ethiopian Yohannes (or Giovanni Battista Abissino, 1509-1565) — pilgrim, traveler and finally also Roman Catholic bishop of the Ethiopian

21 DE SOUZA, T. (1988), "The Afro-Asian Church" (see FN 12), 70f; "In striking contrast to the efforts in the West [sc. to promote an indigenous clergy in Asia], there was hardly anything done in East Africa. For over three centuries no Bantu clergyman was ever ordained in Mozambique although it was suggested in 1694 and in 1761 that efforts should be made to develop an indigenous clergy. Only in 1875 was a seminary opened on the island, but it was closed 2 years later for lack of pupils" (Ibid, 70). See also: SCHEBESTA, P. (1966), *Portugals Konquistamission in Südost-Afrika* (St. Augustin), 259–280, esp. 264ff. 269ff; FREEMAN-GRENVILLE, G.S.P. (1962) (Ed.), *The East African Coast*. Select Documents from the 1rst to the earlier 19th century (Oxford, UK).

22 This section gives just some heterogenous examples. A more systematic study by regional specialists would be helpful - also in order to place the Indian Ocean World within the wider context of an integrated History of World Christianity.

23 So the summary of her letter, in: STREIT, R./ DINDINGER, J. (1951), *Bibliotheca Missionum* XV (Freiburg i.B.), 243–245, n°. 715: "Epistolae Helenae, aviae Davidis, ad Emmanuelem Portugalliae regem – 1509": "Sie ist bereit, Truppen nach Indien zu schicken, um den Portugiesen zu helfen und die Mauren zu vernichten". This project was never realized. The bearer of this letter became the Armenian Matteo (or Abraham), formerly a merchant and then a monk, who managed to travel in disguise first to India (in 1512) and from there to Lisbon where he arrived in 1514. The complex history and effects of this embassy have been analyzed in detail by: SALVADORE, M. (2016), *The African Prester John and the Birth of Ethiopian-European Relations, 1402–1555* (London/ New York), 107–127, esp. 124 FN 7.

24 HASTINGS, A. (1994), *The Church in Africa 1450–1950* (Oxford, UK), 136–172; COHEN, L. (2009), *The Missionary Strategies of the Jesuits in Ethiopia (1555–1632)* (Wiesbaden).

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diasporic community in Cyprus, who moved freely between Cyprus, Venice, Rome, Lisbon and travelled twice to Portuguese Goa – illustrate not only what Matteo Salvadore has called "African cosmopolitanism" in the early modern period[25]. They exemplify also the remarkably wide extension of the "diasporic networks of Ethiopian communities" connecting East African Christians in various regions such as Ethiopia itself, Portuguese India, the Near East (Egypt, Jerusalem) and Mediterranean Europe.

III. The Issue of an Indigenous Clergy and the Controversies Around Mateo de Castro Mahale (1594–1677)

In spite of its strong Portuguese presence and the control exercised by the inquisition, Indian Christians at Goa developed a distinct identity. This led to manifold conflicts – the most famous case presented by *Mateo de Castro Mahale* (1594-1677), a Goanese Brahmin and the first Indian ever consecrated bishop by the Latin Church. He repeatedly travelled to Rome and was welcomed there by Cardinal Francesco Ingoli, secretary and *spiritus rector* of the recently established 'Congregatio de Propaganda Fide' in 1622. These conflicts were primarily about the rights and position of the indigenous clergy in the Goanese Church.

Because the then Archbishop of Goa refused to ordain Brahmins, Mateo — born in 1594 of Christian parents — left India in 1621 in the hope of finding a benevolent bishop somewhere else. After passing through Persia, Armenia and Syria, he reached Rome in 1625. There he studied philosophy and theology and was ordained priest, probably in the autumn of 1629. He returned to Goa in 1633 where he found it difficult to get his faculties recognized. They were declared false or at least obtained through fraud. Owing to all these difficulties, Mateo left for Rome again, which he reached in 1636. Here he completed his theological studies with great credit and was consecrated bishop *in partibus infidelium* and sent as *vicar apostolic* to the Great Mughal. The Portuguese authorities in Goa refused to allow him to function within a territory that they claimed to fall within the jurisdiction of their *Padroado*. The plan of the Propaganda to send him first to *Japan* failed — due to the outbreak of persecutions there. In *Goa*, however, Brahmin Christians were enthusiastic about the new bishop. In spite of opposition by the Goanese archbishop, he took some of them to his diocese outside Goa (in the kingdom of Bijapur) and ordained there around 25 as priests. Mutual excommunications were the consequence. About 1643/44 he returned to Rome to defend himself against charges of sedition and disloyalty raised against him by the Goanese authorities.

In Rome he was appointed in 1645 Apostolic Vicar of *Ethiopia*. This country, however, he never entered — because Ethiopia was closed to all Catholic missionaries since the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1632[26]. He went back to India in 1650 from where he returned a last time to Rome in 1658 where he died in 1677.

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25 SALVADORE, M. (2017), "African Cosmopolitanism in the Early Modern Mediterranean: The Diasporic Life of Yoḥannəs, the Ethiopian Pilgrim Who Became a Counter-Reformation Bishop", in: *Journal of African History*, 58/1, 61–83.

26 On Castro's initial connections with *Ethiopia,* Joseph Wicki remarks that after the death of the Flemish Carmelite Jakob Weemers, who was scheduled as Apostolic vicar for Ethiopia, "Mateus de Castro was appointed as his substitute, and he accepted the provisional office with little enthusiasm, especially since the [Latin] Patriarch [for Ethiopia], the Jesuit Afonso Mendes, with whom Castro was at loggerheads, lived in Goa. As an Indian, it was thought in Rome, Castro could work better in Ethiopia than any European": WICKI, J. (1972), "Unbewältigte Probleme in Indien, Ceylon und Birma", in: Metzler, J. (Ed.), *Sacrae Congregationis*

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In 1653 Mateo published a pamphlet *Espelho dos Brachmanos* ("mirror of Brahmins")[27]. Here he protested against the "injustices, tyrannies and oppressions" of the Goanese authorities (both political and ecclesiastical) and demanded that they treat Indians as "protected persons (*vassalos*)" and not as "servants (*escravos*)". He asserted the equality of believers and the right of the Goanese Brahmins to priesthood and highlighted the quality of the Indian clergy who — in terms of "life, morals, and firmness of faith" — were superior to the Europeans[28]. He criticized his opponents and specifically the Jesuits who, he wrote, not undeservingly had been recently expelled from Malta, Venice, Japan and Ethiopia. The Indian bishop even invited the Brahman Christians in Goa to rebel against the Jesuits and the Franciscan missionaries in the colony — citing multiple historical evidence for the right of his people to rise against unlawful rule.

Mateo has been made subject of various studies. Josef Metzler portrayed him as an Indian representative of the mission policy of the Propaganda which not only focused "on the formation of an indigenous clergy and the appointment of native bishops", but also — and "already in those times" — "on a far reaching decentralization of the Roman Curia"[29]. An important more recent study has been made by Paolo Aranha. He stresses the "native

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de Propaganda Fide Memoria Rerum. Vol. I/2: 1622–1700 (Rom/ Freiburg/ Wien), 547–571, here: 554 (translated). - For the subsequent development Dr. Paolo Aranha (email of July 11, 2023) kindly provided the following informations (based on the unprinted dissertation of Carlo Cavallera [1936], Matteo de Castro Mahalo (1594-1679) [Rome]): "Mateus de Castro made a first attempt to enter Ethiopia in 1646–1647, but did not manage to go beyond Cairo. He went back to Rome and was again in Cairo around 1647–1648. At that point he left towards the Red Sea and settled for a while in Moka, where he lived until the end of 1650, engaging in a fierce fight against the Italian Jesuit Torquato Parisiani. Finally he embarked in direction of Surat. Hence, the 'fünfjähriges Äthiopien-Abendteuer' (J. Metzler) is nothing else but a series of idle stays in Cairo and Moka, without ever entering Ethiopia. Overall, it's not a very edifying or inspiring story, particularly considering that in the meanwhile two Italian Franciscan friars (Antonio da Pescopagano and Felice da Sanseverino) did suffer martyrdom in Suakin in 1648".

27 METZLER, J. (1967), "Der Brahmanenspiegel des Matthäus de Castro", in: *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 23, 252–259.

28 "My intention was to confer holy orders, including priestly ordination, on all native students worthy of it, but especially on Brahmins, because the prohibition [to ordain them] is tyranny and phantasmagoria": METZLER (1967), "Der Brahmanenspiegel" (see FN 27), 259 (translated). – In Portuguese India there existed already a considerable number of Brahmin priests (around 300), as Castro himself occasionally remarked; but for some time no more had been admitted to the priesthood. (*Ibid.*, 258 FN 17). Quite remarkably, in his critic of Portuguese racial discrimination, Castro referred to the counter-model of the Armenians who had their own hierarchy with "a patriarch and archbishops, bishops and monks" - and even sent annually a considerable sum of money "as donation to Jerusalem" (Ibid., 259). - On the issue of an indigenous clergy in Portuguese India in general cf: MÜLLER, K. (1971), "Propaganda-Kongregation und einheimischer Klerus", in: Metzler, J. (Ed.), *Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide Memoria Rerum*. Vol. I/1: 1622–1700 (Rom/ Freiburg/ Wien), 538–560, esp. 543–547; TEKKEDATH (1982), *History of Christianity in India* II (see FN 11), 417ff; NEILL (1984), *History of Christianity in India.* I (see FN 11), 335–341; MERCÊS DE MELO, C. (1955), *The Recruitment and Formation of the Native Clergy in India (16th–19th Century)* (Lisbon); DE SOUZA (1988), "The Afro-Asian Church" (see FN 12), 68ff.

29 METZLER, J. (1971), "Francesco Ingoli, der erste Sekretär der Kongregation", in: Metzler, J. (Ed.), *Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide Memoria Rerum*. Vol. I/1: 1622–1700 (Rom/ Freiburg/ Wien), 197–243, here: 214–221; Vol I/2, 551ff (quotation on p. 554). - An older, but still valuable study is found in: GHESQUIÈRE, T. (1937), *Mathieu de Castro*. Premier vicaire apostolique aux Indes (Louvain). Cf. also: NEILL (1984), *History of Christianity in India I* (see FN 11), 335–341; TEKKEDATH (1982), *Christianity in India* (see FN 11), 417–420; BOXER (1991), *Seaborne Empire* (see FN 10), 255f; DE SOUZA (1988), "The Afro-Asian Church" (see FN 12), 69; WICKI (1972), "Unbewältigte Probleme" (see FN 26), 547–571, here: 553–556.

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agency" Mateus de Castro could exert in the large place created by "the competition between Propaganda Fide and the Padroado"[30]. His case, he concludes, shows:

1. "A model of indigenous Indian Catholicism that was able to act beyond colonial restraints";
2. "Secondly, Mateus de Castro's life displays a global agency exerted not only by colonizing Europeans, but by native Indians. Castro and his Brahman" followers "had an alerted awareness of the multiple centers of Christianity, not restricted to a dichotomic relations between metropolis and a colony. While Rome was a fundamental reference point an source of support, the missionaries of [sc. Castro's diocese of] Idalcan [near Goa] and their founder [i.e. Castro] of a network of information that included the whole space between Ethiopian and Japan. If Mateus de Castro was eventually not able to enter into these two countries, nonetheless he kept providing Propaganda Fide with reports on both regions".
3. "Finally, the Brahmin bishop set a precedent for future rebellions of Native Christian clerics against the Portuguese colonial power"[31].

"The case of the Brahman cleric Mateus de Castro Mahalo", Aranha summarizes, presents "a striking example of a native Christian able to move through transcontinental spaces and live in a polycentric world thanks to his location in a 'preter-colonial' space"[32].

IV. Goanese Oratorians and the Rise of a Catholic Underground Movement in Dutch Colonial Ceylon

Another impressive example of "native agency" by Indian Christians from Goa - and the enormous impact their initiatives could have on neighboring regions - is provided by the Goanese Oratorians. They played an important role in the rise of the Catholic Underground Church in Dutch Colonial Ceylon since the late 17th century. This topic had been part of my own research in connection with the publication of the Minutes of the Dutch Reformed Church at Wolvendaal (Colombo)[33]. These fortnightly minutes cover the years 1735-1797

30 ARANHA, P. (2014), "Early Modern Asian Catholicism and European Colonialism: Dominance, Hegemony and Native Agency in the Portuguese Estado da India", in: Koschorke, K./ Hermann, A. (Eds.), *Polycentric Structures in the History of World Christianity* (Wiesbaden: StAECG 25; 285–306), here: 300.

31 ARANHA, P. (2014), "Early Modern Asian Catholicism" (see FN 30), 304.

32 ARANHA, P. (2014), "Early Modern Asian Catholicism" (see FN 30), 306.

33 KOSCHORKE, K. (2011) (Ed.), *The Dutch Reformed Church in Colonial Ceylon (18th Century).* Minutes of the Consistory of the Dutch Reformed Church in Colombo held at the Wolvendaal Church, Colombo (1735–1797). Translated by S.A.W. Mottau† (Wiesbaden; DAECG 2); cf. also: KOSCHORKE, K. (1998), "Dutch Colonial Church and Catholic Underground Church in Ceylon in the 17th and 18th Centuries", in: Koschorke, K. (Ed.), *"Christen und Gewürze".* Konfrontation und Interaktion kolonialer und indigener Christentumsvarianten (StAECG 1; Göttingen), 95–105. - A classical study on the subject is: BOUDENS, R. (1957), *The Catholic Church in Ceylon under Dutch Rule* (Rome); cf. also: KARUNARATNA, C. (1984), *Buddhism, Roman Catholicism and Dutch Presbyterianism in Ceylon till A.D. 1766* (Ph.D. Serampore/India); VAN GOOR, J. (2007), "State and Religion under the Dutch in Ceylon 1640-1796", in: Flores, G. (Ed.), *Re-exploring the Links*. Histories and Constructed Histories between Portugal and Sri Lanka (Wiesbaden), 211–234; VAN GOOR, J. (1978), *Jan Kompenie as Schoolmaster.* Dutch Education in Ceylon 1690–1795 (Groningen); BOXER, R. (1977), *The Dutch Seaborne Empire 1600–1800* (London), 132–154; DE SILVA, K.M. (1981), *A History of Sri Lanka* (Dehli etc.), 195ff.; MOFFETT, S.H. (2005), *A History of Christianity in Asia*. Vol. II: 1500–1900 (Maryknoll, NY), 222–235. – Catholic Documents on the Dutch Period are found in:

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(resp. 1837) and illustrate manifold aspects of the ecclesial, political, social and cultural life in Dutch Colonial Ceylon. The dangers and threats triggered by the rising Catholic underground movement to the Dutch colonial establishment (both ecclesial and political) of the island had been a constant topic and subject of growing concern in these minutes.

Sri Lanka has undergone three periods of colonial domination. In 1505 the Portuguese came and introduced Roman Catholicism on the island. Around 1658 the Dutch took over and established, at least among the Christian population, a religious monopoly of the Reformed faith. From 1796 to 1948, the island became a British colony and open to the various branches of Anglo-Saxon Protestantism (such as the Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists etc.). So far Sri Lanka could serve as a perfect paradigm of the close connection between Western colonial and missionary expansion. But, especially in the Dutch period, an opposite development took place. That is because Roman Catholicism — which, after the expulsion of the Portuguese by 1658, first seemed to have disappeared completely from the island — recovered underground and experienced a *tremendous revival*. Despite constant persecution by the Dutch colonial authorities, it finally became the strongest force within the Christian camp already by the mid-18th century. This is the situation still today. What we can observe here is how a specific form of Christianity — introduced in a given colonial context — transformed itself into a popular movement and developed a new identity different from its colonial beginnings.

How can this development be explained? Certainly a broad variety of factors has to be taken into account. Catholicism obviously was much more firmly anchored, at least in some specific segments of the Ceylonese society, than it had appeared after the end of Portuguese rule in 1658. This applies especially to the castes of the Karavas and Paravars, the fishermen along the coast who were the lowest in the insular caste system. Failings of the Dutch colonial Church system are another factor. With its limited number of *predicants*, residing in the coastal towns and often unable to speak or understand Sinhala or Tamil, it could not reach to the local people. In various aspects — images, music, processions, appreciation of ascetic life and of saints — popular Catholicism was much closer to traditional Buddhism or Hinduism, as compared with the more intellectual and word-oriented Calvinism of the Dutch.

But there was also another and quite decisive factor: the important role played by Oratorian priests from Goa in the revival of Sri Lankan Catholicism. Being people of colour themselves, sharing the simple life of the local people and being dependent on their support, they were *able to escape the strict controls* by which the Dutch tried to prevent Catholic clergy (feared as fifth column of the Portuguese) from entering the country. Catholic priests from Portugal or other European countries repeatedly fell victims to these controls, but the Oratorians from Goa did not. They were able to visit and re-connect the dispersed Catholics living underground, and to administer the sacraments to them. We can suppose that this consideration - the greater aptitude of Indian Christians for evading Dutch control in Ceylon - already played an important role when in Goa in 1686 the Oratory of St Neri had been founded — respectively re-organised as an Indian community — sending its members to Sri Lanka[34]. And it was these Oratorians alone who ensured the supply of priests for the Catholics in Ceylon in the next 100 years. Thus, in a certain sense, this

PERNIOLA, V. (1983–1985) (Ed.), *The Catholic Church in Sri Lanka.* The Dutch Period. Original Documents translated into English. Vol. I: 1658–1711; Vol. II: 1712–1746; Vol. III: 1747–1795 (Colombo).

34 BOUDENS (1957), *Catholic Church in Ceylon* (see FN 33), 90f.

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mission of the Indian Oratorians to Sri Lanka can be regarded as an early example of intra-Asian solidarity and ecumenical cooperation.

One pioneer among the Oratorians going to Ceylon was Father *Joseph Vaz* (1651–1711)[35]. He was a Goanese priest and belonged to a Brahmin family which had been Christian for two generations. Debarred from access to one of the established religious orders from Europe, some Goanese priests had begun (in 1682) to establish a religious community of their own. Joseph Vaz joined this community (in 1686). In spite of resistance by the Goanese archbishop, he managed to make it a missionary body by adopting the rules of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri at Lisbon[36]. Joseph Vaz succeeded in entering Ceylon in 1687. Disguised as a beggar, he travelled first through the northern parts of the country (Mannar, Jaffna), then to the Western coast (Negombo) and to the central mountain region around Kandy. Always in danger of being discovered by the Dutch authorities and having to hide, he visited his coreligionists who were scattered around the island. In addition, he led many former Christians back to the Catholic faith which they had abandoned. Later he moved around more freely and, in the more remote areas, openly revealed himself to be a priest. As early as 1689 we hear of open-air services, which were attended by hundreds of people. When Joseph Vaz died in 1711, the existence of strong Catholic communities on the island could no longer be denied. In addition, they did not need to continue to live underground in anxiety, but made their presence more and more openly felt.

In the subsequent years, the revival of Catholicism continued. The number of followers was increasing, and likewise their self-confidence. On the 11th of December 1706, an official decree ('plakaat') was published not far from Negombo requiring the children of that region to attend a Dutch Reformed school nearby. Earlier, the Catholics would have tried to circumvent such orders by means of passive resistance. This time, however, something different happened: they started a public demonstration of about 200 people. A petition was delivered to the secretary of the political council of the island. In this petition, the Catholics confirmed their political loyalty to the Dutch authorities. On the other hand, they openly declared themselves to be Catholics and requested to be exempted from the regulations of the *plakaat*. For the moment, the petition was unsuccessful. But Catholic complaints and resistance could be no longer be ignored by the Dutch authorities. They became a permanent topic in the minutes of the Dutch Reformed Church Council.

Again and again extraordinary meetings of the Colombo Church Council were held, dealing with the "increase and spread of this baneful doctrine of Popery"[37] and complaining about "the daily-increasing pernicious creeping influence of Popery in these Ceylon quarters". This, we learn in 1751,

35 BOUDENS (1957), *Catholic Church in Ceylon* (see FN 33), 89–115; PERERA, S.G. (1942), *Life of the Venerable Father Joseph Vaz.* Apostle of Ceylon (Galle); PERERA, S.G. (1936), *The Oratorian Mission in Ceylon* (Colombo 1936); PERERA, S.G. (1942), *Life of Father Jacome Goncalvez* (Madurai); DE SOUZA (1986), *Afro-Asian Church* (see FN 12), 69; ZUPANOV, I.G. (2007), "Goan Brahmans in the Land of Promise. Missionaries, Spies and Gentiles in 17th and 18th Century Sri Lanka", in: Flores, *Re-exploring the Link.* (see FN 33), 171–210, esp. 176ff.

36 TEKKEDATH (1982), *History of Christianity in India* (see FN xx), 402f: "It was this situation" of racial discrimination by the Goanese authorities and denied access to the European religious orders "that prompted some Goan priests to establish a religious community of their own". Joseph Vaz, soon chosen as their superior, "decided that the new community should adopt the rules of an existing congregation. Hence in January 1686 they asked for the statues of the Oratory of St. Philipp Neri at Lisbon". Cf. also: ZUPANOV (2007), "Goan Brahmans in the Land of Promise" (see FN 35), 176ff.

37 KOSCHORKE (2011), *Dutch Reformed Church* (see FN 33), 46 (= DRC Minutes of July 8, 1744; Vol. 4A/1 [p. 196]).

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> "in spite of all the wholesome orders and *plakkaats* issued by the authorities, has nevertheless ... again raised its head so much and so vigourously that the so called priests and vagabonds … have no longer any respect or regard, and openly by day practice their seductive religious exercises with the pealing of bells and the exposition of their idolatrous images; yes, and they even baptise and marry the people in the land in their own shed at their meeting places, and incite them to openly blaspheme the doctrine and the teachers of the Reformed religion; and in places where they have strong influence, especially like in the district of Negombo, act with oppression and scorn of the members of the Reformed Church ..."[38]

On 23 March 1754, 200 to 300 Catholics marched through the streets of the town in a public procession with banners, candles and statues of saints under a canopy. Being "afraid of a rebellion", the authorities did not dare to intervene any longer[39]. The Dutch preachers not only had to watch passively at the public activities of the Catholics. In places with a Catholic majority (like Negombo), it became also more and more difficult for them to carry out their duties (for example to perform baptisms or even to enter their churches)[40]. Only tacitly tolerated at first, the insular Catholicism was finally legalized in 1762. People whose marriages had been blessed by Catholic priests now officially were declared to be legally married[41]. At this time, the Catholic community already comprised many more Church members (and above all more native members) compared to the official Dutch Reformed Church. The latter collapsed completely in 1796, at the end of Dutch rule in Ceylon. In 1806, a British visitor of the island described Calvinism as dead. The Catholic communities in Ceylon, on the other hand, were portrayed as prospering. Thus, of the two rivalling forms of Christianity which had existed on the island during the Dutch period, the non-colonial had prevailed over the colonial one.

V. The Indian Ocean World in the 19th Century

Migration and Diaspora Formation

Let's finally have a short look at the Indian Ocean in the 19th century. Large parts of Asia and Southern and Eastern Africa were now under British control. One side-effect of the extended British rule had been the increased exchange of goods and people between the various British colonies. There was a rising circulation of merchants and migrants in the Indian Ocean and Atlantic world which also changed traditional religious geographies. Indian indentured laborers, for example, established for the first time a notable Hindu presence in the Caribbean (e.g. in Trinidad). More relevant, in the context of our conference, is the rising tide of Indian "coolies" who reached South Africa in increasing numbers from the 1860s. Among them were, little known, a considerable number of Indian Christians. Out of 350 Indian immigrants on the first boat arriving with indentured laborers in Natal in 1860, 50 were Catholics and 4 Protestants. In subsequent years, there was a disproportionate growth of Christianity among the Indian immigrants — partly due to the fact that Protestant missions offered education to the Indian "coolies". Indian pastors were

38 KOSCHORKE (2011), *Dutch Reformed Church* (see FN 33), 70f (= DRC Minutes of December 2, 1751; Vol. 4A/2 [p. 23]).
39 BOUDENS (1957), *Catholic Church in Ceylon* (see FN 33), 154f.
40 So in Negombo on September 20, 1750.
41 The decision of the Political Council of July 31, 1762 is printed in: PERNIOLA (1985), *Documents* III (see FN 33), 200; cf. BOUDENS (1957), *Catholic Church in Ceylon* (see FN 33), 156ff.

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sent from India to minister to the Tamil or Telugu communities in South Africa. In part they went there in the service of traditional missionary societies. But some of them came on their own initiative. In 1900 in Sri Lankan Jaffna an indigenous missionary society was founded, "supported by their own native Native Churches and controlled exclusively" by local Christians. Its aim was "to send the Gospel to Tamil speaking people in neglected districts of other lands", among other regions to South Africa. In 1905 in Indian Serampore a 'National Missionary Society' of India was established. It followed the principle: "Indian men, Indian money, Indian leadership". Various networks were established to connect the Indian Christian diaspora in South Asia and South Africa. The 'Christian Patriot', for example, a journal founded in Madras in 1890 by Protestant Christians from South India, regarded itself as the "Leading Organ of the Christian community in India, Burma, Straits and South Africa" ('The Christian Patriot', March 4, 1916, p. 1)[42].

Indigenous Missionary Activities

Quite generally *indigenous missionary endeavors* were regarded, along with the establishment of independent Churches (primarily in Africa) and 'National Church' movements (especially in Asia), as signs of emancipation from Western missionary control. Asia could be evangelized only by her own sons (and daughters) – India by Indians, Japan by Japanese, China by Chinese. This was the message of an ecumenical conference of Asian Church leaders in Tokyo 1907 – the first ecumenical gathering in Asia with a majority of Asian delegates. Japanese participants declared: "The recognition of the responsibility of the Christians of Japan for the evangelization of Formosa, Korea, Manchuria and North China … has been strengthened by the developments of the last years, until now it is generally shared by all intelligent Christians [sc. of Japan]"[43]. By 1910 — the year of catastrophes when Korea lost its independence and became a Japanese colony — Korean evangelists were active among their compatriots in the diaspora in Siberia, Japan, Hawaii, California, Mexico and Cuba. There are surprising parallels (in a very different context) to the Ethiopianist movement which regarded the evangelization of Africa in late 19th century as primary task of the Africans themselves[44].

42 Individual references to this section can be found in: KOSCHORKE, K. (2019), *"Owned and Conducted entirely by the Native Christian Community"*. The 'Christian Patriot' und die indigen-christliche Presse im kolonialen Indien um 1900 (StAECG 34; Wiesbaden), 192–199. 211–248; KOSCHORKE, K. (2022), "Indentured Labour, Oppression, Migration. Christian Diasporas in Asia in 19th and Early 20th Centuries", in: Burlăcioiu, C. (Ed.), *Migration and Diaspora Formation.* New Perspectives on a Global History of Christianity (Berlin), 261–272, esp. 264–266; BRAIN, J.C. (1983), *Christian Indians in Natal 1860–1911* (Cape Town); SARGANT, N.C. (1962), The Dispersion of the Tamil Church (New Dehli), esp. 96ff. (Mauritius). 104ff. (South Africa). 151ff. (Uganda).

43 *Report of the Conference of the World's Student Christian Federation* held at Tokyo, Japan, April 3–7, 1907 (Tokyo [1908]), 224f; cf. KOSCHORKE, K. (2018), "Christliche Internationalismen um 1910", in: Koschorke, K./ Hermann, A. et al. (Eds.), *"To give publicity to our thoughts"*. Journale asiatischer und afrikanischer Christen um 1900 und die Entstehung einer transregionalen indigen-christlichen Öffentlichkeit (Wiesbaden: StAECG 31), 261–282, esp. 273ff. 275ff.

44 Cf. the paper on Ethiopianism in this volume (p. 97-112)

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The 'Bombay Africans' in Kenya

One remarkable Christian example of transoceanic connections in the Indian Ocean World has been provided by the role played by the so-called *Bombay Africans* in the establishment of the Anglican Church in Kenya. This is the story of a small group of East African ex-slaves sold around 1850 by their relatives into domestic slavery at the slave markets at Zanzibar and other places who subsequently were shipped overseas. Their vessels were intercepted by the British navy, the slaves liberated and taken back not to East Africa but to Bombay where they were placed under the care of the Anglican 'Church Missionary Society' (CMS). There they embraced the Christian faith, were educated and trained for future leadership in the Church and themselves assisted in training other Africans in India. In 1864 they returned to Africa and served quite successfully in various functions in local congregations around Mombasa. Two of them — William Jones and Ishmael Semler — were ordained in 1885 as the first African clergy in the Anglican Church in Kenya. In many ways their story resembles that of Samuel Ajayi Crowther (1806/08–1891) of Nigeria, the first African bishop in modern times. Indeed, one of them (William Jones) was picked as a future bishop, the "Crowther of East Africa". All three were ex-slaves, liberated by the British Navy and turned over to the care of CMS missionaries. All three became pioneers in their respective Churches (in Western and Eastern Africa). All three represented a new type of African leadership — polyglot, trained in different religious and cultural contexts, working in areas outside their birthplace, and functioning also as "cultural brokers". All three suffered from white supremacism and racism. At the same time, all of them illustrated a new type of cosmopolitanism among the emerging indigenous Christian elites in the global South that was developing in the second half of 19th century[45].

Independent Catholics in India and Ceylon and Networking Among Rome-Free Catholic Churches

At the end of my presentation I would like to come back to Goa. Around 1900, various movements of independence and emancipation from foreign missionary control can be observed both in Christian Asia and Christian Africa. They were not confined to the Protestant world (as it has been widely assumed) but also spread in Catholic circles. So, in 1888, the foundation of a "Catholic Independent Church of Ceylon, Goa and India" was proclaimed.[46] It broke with Rome and no longer acknowledged the authority of the Pope. These 'Independent Catholics' had a long prehistory in vast parts of Asia through continued conflicts and rivalries between the Portuguese Padroado and the Propaganda Fide in Rome. As early as the 1850s the socalled "Goan schism" had split the Catholic Church in India. It

45 REEDS, C. (1997), *Pastors, Partners and Paternalists*. African Church Leaders and Western Missionaries in the Anglican Church in Kenya (Leiden/ New York etc.), passim; cf. also: HOCK, K. (2005), *Das Christentum in Afrika und dem Nahen Osten* (Leipzig), 105; ISICHEI, E. (1995), *A History of Christianity in Africa* (London), 136f.

46 For details see most recently the study by: WEI JIANG (2023), *"True Catholicism" in Colonial South Asia.* The Independent Catholics in Ceylon and India in the late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries (StAECG 38; Wiesbaden). Cf. also: KOSCHORKE, K. (2022), "Der Padroado-Propaganda-Konflikt im katholischen Indien und die Entstehung Rom-unabhängiger Katholizismen im Asien der Jahrhundertwende", in: Delgado, M. et al. (Eds.), *Evangelisierung und Geschwisterlichkeit in der pluralen Welt* (St. Ottilien), 381–391.

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resulted in internal fighting and the establishment of a "double jurisdiction" (between Padroado and Propaganda congregations) partly in the same territories.

What was new in 1888, however, was the support given to these Independent Catholics by nationalist forces and modern indigenous Christian elites in both India and Sri Lanka. They protested against the fresh dominance of European orders (from France, Belgium or Germany) — which only recently had partly taken over territories and "mission fields" in India previously cared for by local Goanese (or Portuguese) clergy. The recollection of the heroic work of the Goanese Oratorians in Dutch Ceylon in 17th and 18th centuries — who had fought successfully against a foreign ecclesiastical establishment and oppressive colonial system — also played an important role[47]. The independent Catholics of India and Ceylon tried to get in touch with other Rome-free independence movements in Asia. One church they contacted was the 'Iglesia Filipina Independiente' (IFI), established in 1903 and comprising in its initial years nearly one fourth of the population of the archipelago. The IFI still exists today[48]. Letters were exchanged between Colombo and Manila, news reprinted in their respective ecclesiastical journals, and Filipino clergy was invited to serve as priests in the 'Independent Catholic' congregations in Sri Lanka[49]. What both partners envisaged was an alliance of Rome-free Catholic Churches in Asia and worldwide. This alliance, however, ultimately did not work. The independent Catholics in India and Sri Lanka faded away and were finally dissolved in the 1930s. But they provided just one example of the multiple transregional and transmaritime connections among indigenous Christian elites from different regions and colonial or missionary contexts around 1900. Such networks could be observed, at that time (and increasingly since then), in many areas of Asia and Africa, and across the Indian Ocean World, and in the Global South in general.

47 This had contributed quite early to the formation of a distinct Goanese Christian identity. Cf. ZUPANOV (2007), "Goan Brahmans" (see FN 35), 177: "The Oratorian mission in Sri Lanka enabled writers like António Joao de Frias, a Brahman parish priest in Goa, at the turn of the 18th century to elaborate discursively the pro-Brahman arguments in the battle of identity politics among the status-ambitious Indian subjects to the Portuguese Crown".

48 On the IFI see: CLIFFORD, M.D. (1969), "Iglesia Filipina Independiente: The Revolutionary Church", in: Anderson, G.H. (Ed.), *Studies in Philippine Church History* (Ithaca), 223–255; SCHUMACHER, J.N. (1981), *Revolutionary Clergy. The* Filipino Clergy and Nationalist Movement, 1850–1903 (Quezon City); THOMAS, M.C. (2006), "Isabelo de los Reyes and the Philippine Contemporaries of *La Solidarad*", in: *Philippine Studies* 54, 315–356; SMIT, P.-B. (2011), *Old Catholic and Philippine Independent Ecclesiologies in History*. The Catholic Church in Every Place (Leiden/ Boston).

49 This correspondence has been partially reprinted in: KOSCHORKE, K./ HERMANN, A. et al. (2016) (Eds.), *Discourses of Indigenous Christian Elites in Colonial Societies in Asia and Africa around 1900*. A Documentary Sourcebook from Selected Journals (DAECG 4; Wiesbaden), 441–445; for details see HERMANN, A. (2018), "Philippinen", in: Koschorke/ Hermann/ Ludwig/ Burlăcioiu, *"To give Publicity to our Thoughts"* (s. FN 4), 53–62. 191–202.

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Abstract

With the arrival of the Portuguese and the establishment of Goa in 1534 as the political and ecclesiastical center of their empire in Asia and Africa, the Afro-Asian Church of the Portuguese *Estado da India* was created. Goa became a cosmopolitan city and meeting point also for local Christians from Asia and Africa. In spite of its strong Portuguese presence, Indian Christians at Goa developed a distinct identity. This led to manifold conflicts and far-reaching activities by local clergy like Mateo de Castro Mahale (1594–1677). He travelled widely between India, the Near East and Rome (and tried, however unsuccessfully, to get also to Japan and Ethiopia). In other colonial contexts (such as Dutch Ceylon), Goanese priests supported the underground activities of local Catholics. British rule in 19th century resulted in new forms of interaction between communities and Christians on both sides of the Indian Ocean. A significant instance was provided by the socalled 'Bombay Africans'— former African slaves, abducted from East Africa to India, liberated and educated there in mission schools who later provided African leadership in the nascent Anglican Church in Kenya.

Goa, die afro-asiatische Kirche im portugiesischem Estado da India, und das Aufkommen einer katholischen Untergrund-Bewegung im Niederländisch-kolonialen Ceylon

Mit der Ankunft der Portugiesen und der Gründung Goas im Jahr 1534 als politischem und kirchlichem Zentrum ihres Reiches in Asien und Afrika entstand die afroasiatische Kirche des portugiesischen *Estado da India.* Goa wurde zu einer kosmopolitischen Stadt und zu einem Treffpunkt auch für einheimische Christen aus Asien und Afrika. Trotz der starken portugiesischen Präsenz entwickelten die indischen Christen in Goa früh eine eigene Identität. Dies führte zu vielfältigen Konflikten und weitreichenden Aktivitäten von einheimischen Geistlichen wie Mateo de Castro Mahale (1594–1677). Dieser unternahm zahlreiche Reisen zwischen Indien, dem Nahen Osten und Rom (und versuchte, wenngleich erfolglos, auch nach Japan und Äthiopien zu gelangen). In anderen kolonialen Kontexten (z. B. in Niederländisch-Ceylon) unterstützten Priester aus Goa die Untergrundaktivitäten der örtlichen Katholiken. Die britische Herrschaft im 19. Jahrhundert führte zu neuen Formen der Interaktion zwischen Gemeinschaften und Christen auf beiden Seiten des Indischen Ozeans. Ein wichtiges Beispiel waren die so genannten "Bombay Africans" — ehemalige afrikanische Sklaven, die aus Ostafrika nach Indien verschleppt, dort frei gelassen und in Missionsschulen ausgebildet wurden. Später dienten sie als afrikanische Führungskräfte in der entstehenden anglikanischen Kirche in Kenia.

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A Thousand Little Stories?
World Christianity in a Polycentric Perspective

BIRGIT EMICH

This conference has undoubtedly provided great insights. Yet, as is the way with such success stories: New insights raise further questions, and I would like to address two of these questions in the following paragraphs. Both questions emerge from the context of discussions within the Frankfurt research group "Polycentricity and Plurality of Premodern Christianities" (POLY)[1], which provided funds for this conference and was richly rewarded in return with a wealth of insights. Special thanks are due to our POLY Senior Fellow Klaus Koschorke, for planning, organizing, and chairing this conference.

The first question I would like to address concerns the labeling of the groups that are lumped together under the umbrella term 'World Christianity' or 'Weltchristentum', respectively. There is obviously a strong temptation to mark Christian groups from all across the early modern world with confessional labels that have their origin in the Latin Church and its European history. The "Catholic Church of the Kongo" would be one such example, the interpretation of the Ethiopian Church as a confessional church with its own confessional text yet another.

Such labels are highly relevant, of course: When they come from the social agents themselves, they have to be taken absolutely seriously as expressions of their self-positioning and their claims within the social space. The Roman Curia undoubtedly regarded Christianity in the Kongo as part of the papal church, it dispatched inquisitors and members of religious orders, recognized bishops and levied taxes. And the elites in the Kongo likewise accepted that the Christian church was subject to the pope, that he alone could dispense with the accepted prescriptions of canon law, and that a local bishop had to be installed (Thornton).[2]

One should nevertheless be aware of the dangers that such confessional labels entail. For one thing, the argumentation outlined above reflects a prioritization of institutional aspects that may be in line with the self-understanding of the Roman Church, but does neither capture the syncretistic character of local religion nor its strong accentuation of spirituality. Secondly, it should not be overlooked that it was not only in the areas of dogmatics, liturgy, and piety that local traditions slipped in and combined with Rome's guidelines to form an independent hybrid. Institutional relations and interactions were adapted as well (Cavarzere); here, too, the tension between Rome's expectations and offers

1 For more information and resources visit our webpage at www.poly-unifrankfurt.de.

2 On the legal aspects, see CAVARZERE, M. (forthcoming), "Konfessionen jenseits Europas. Recht und kirchliche Institutionen im frühneuzeitlichen Kongo", in: Emich, B. et al. (Ed.), *Konfessionen auf dem Prüfstand*.

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on the one hand and local traditions, needs, and demands on the other, fueled a dynamic of hybridization and appropriation that rendered the local church a very specific special case under the umbrella of global Catholicism (see also Thornton). Insights of this kind have led to a growing body of research that prefers speaking of catholicisms in the plural. And it is precisely this pluralization of perspectives and concepts that the findings of our conference also provide numerous arguments for.

But perhaps one ought to go one step further and ask more fundamentally whether the confessional classification of Christian groups does not create more problems than it provides answers. The fact that both the Portuguese in Ethiopia and the Catholic clergy gathered in Trent regarded Ethiopian Christianity as a variety of Orthodoxy (which, being a metropolis of the Coptic Church, it was, at least from the point of view of canon law), while the same group appeared to the Lutherans as fellow protestants (see Daniels, Paulau), undoubtedly says more about the confessional bias in the thinking of Europeans and their selective perception than about their thus-appropriated object of interest. Nonetheless, these judgements had consequences: By applying the confessional grids which they brought with them from home and were so used to quarreling about, both sides effectively established the confessions outside of Europe in the first place. For what are confessions? "Confessions" emerged because the early Reformation in the Holy Roman Empire set off an ecclesiastical schism whose political explosiveness could only be contained by the instruments of imperial law: that is, by establishing subgroups recognized by imperial law whose members defined themselves by agreeing to a confessional text – the Confessio. And because this reading of the confession as a collective that held certain rights vis-à-vis the authorities, and whom one belonged to and could join by virtue of avowing to a central text, prevailed in Central Europe, the concept of confession, at least in German usage, leads to a focus on the confessional text as the core element of religious group formation up until this day.

This focus was not without consequences. Stanislau Paulau has skillfully shown how Protestants in the Holy Roman Empire imagined Ethiopian Christianity as their confessional kin in the Horn of Africa: By declaring texts with an entirely different function to be THE confessional text of the Ethiopian church (and also slightly adapting the content to Lutheran expectations), they created such a church in their own image.[3] In other regions outside Europe, Christians may have been "turned" into a confession by the confessionalized Europeans in the first place as well. Such ecclesiological imaginations do not only bear the risk of a religio-historical "orientalism" (Paulau). They are also cautionary tales about labeling Christian groups beyond the Latin Church as "Protestant" or "Catholic" all too quickly.[4]

What else should we call these groups, then? An alternative would be to adopt the plural introduced as an indication of diversity, but to refrain from denominational classifications:

3 PAULAU, S. (2021), *Das andere Christentum*. Zur transkonfessionellen Verflechtungsgeschichte von äthiopischer Orthodoxie und europäischem Protestantismus (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte, Abteilung für Abendländische Religionsgeschichte 262; Göttingen). For a dense summary of the abovementioned hypothesis, see Id., Erfindung einer außereuropäischen Konfession – Konstruktionen des äthiopisch-orthodoxen Christentums im frühneuzeitlichen Protestantismus, Poly Lecture 8th February 2022, at www.poly-unifrankfurt.de.

4 It should be added that these confessional categories can also be a hindrance to the study of the Latin Church. The various contributions to the Winter Term 2021/22 Poly Lecture Series discuss this issue at length, see *Konfessionen auf dem Prüfstand / Confessionalism revisited*, at www.poly-unifrankfurt.de.

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"Christianities" would be a term that is as broad and open as can be. Beyond a reference to Jesus Christ, it carries about as few presuppositions as possible into the debate.

This conceptual openness should make it easier to grasp the diversity of world Christianity. But of course, at the same time, this raises the question of how such a great variety can be brought to a common denominator or even to a common perspective. In other words, do we want to describe the diversity of congregations, churches, and groups that make up world Christianity in "a thousand little stories" (to borrow David Daniels' beautiful phrase from the final discussion which inspired the title of this commentary)? Or could it be possible to bring together the plurality of Christianities into one great narrative (Daniels' conceptual counterpart)?

This brings me to the second point I want to address in this short commentary. It is intended as a suggestion as to how the diversity of world Christianity might not be rashly sorted into categories, while nonetheless being fitted into an analytical framework that points to interconnections and patterns as well as allowing for a comparative view. This proposal revolves around the concept of polycentricity, which is certainly being applied in the study of world Christianity, but could perhaps use some conceptual sharpening. So far, world Christianity has been described as polycentric in a rather general, less specific sense: Precisely because the Christian world is so diverse, it also has many centers. In this general use of the term, polycentricity refers to the diversity of world Christianity and thus certainly marks a central insight. The concept of polycentricity itself, however, remains somewhat underdetermined. We at the Frankfurt POLY Research Group believe that the term could be far more useful if polycentricity were used as an analytical concept rather than as a given fact or a description of a condition. The following proposal is based on the group's work.

We understand polycentricity as an analytical tool which calls for and helps to 1. consider the respective Christianities on different scales in order to do better justice to their complexity and multi-layeredness (keyword: scales), 2. integrate them even more strongly into political, economic, cultural and other contexts (keyword: domains), and in this way 3. gain a clearer understanding of the connections, interdependencies and interplays within world Christianity (keyword: polycentric dynamics). The keywords scale, domain and polycentric dynamics certainly do not provide a coherent narrative for the plurality of world Christianity. However, they could provide a conceptual and terminological basis for a framework to the "thousand little stories" of world Christianity.

The starting point is our understanding of centers as dynamic variables: centers are not fixed entities or static constructs; they are constantly being created and recreated through the interplay of supply and demand. Centers offer central services and resources (decisions, goods, pieces of information — Walter Christaller's concept of central places comes into play here), but if these are not in demand, the respective places eventually lose their appeal and their role as centers.[5] The concept of the center thus combines claims to centrality with individual and group agency: Social agents within the center certainly lay claim to playing a central role for others and hold appropriate services ready (courts and authorities, markets, sources of information). Social agents outside the center, however, participate in shaping such claims and services through a process of negotiation: Their requests, appropriations, and rejections of these services not only shape the local situation; they also affect the center's room to maneuver and how it manifests itself. The fact that in the early

5 It should be noted that individuals and institutions can also assume central roles. This cannot be elaborated on in the required brevity.

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modern period collections were made for the holy places in Jerusalem in large parts of the Christian world, including the Black brotherhoods of Latin America (Daniels), may serve as an example of the centrality of certain religious places in the imaginary world of world Christianity. And the fact that the Christians in the Kongo also turned to Rome with their requests and wishes by way of petitions (Cavarzere) illustrates the centrality of the Roman Curia and its decision-making procedures. But of course, just like the Christians in the Kongo, the Black brotherhoods formed independent, highly individual Christianities that were shaped more by local interests and circumstances than by the demands of Rome (Daniels, Thornton). Moreover — to continue with the Roman example —, the development of Rome's central authorities shows that and how the Curia adapted to the requests it received from outside. And the Protestant Reformations vividly demonstrated how quickly an ecclesiastical center could lose its central role altogether.

Asking about centers therefore does not serve to revive traditional center-periphery dichotomies. The point is rather to use the concept of the center to systematically inquire about processes of interaction and thus to permanently include two aspects in the analysis: the agency of the social agents, both on the central and the local level, on the one hand, and on the other, the processes of consolidation and institutionalization, or of detachment and alienation, which result from these interactions and which give the structure of world Christianity its dynamics.

What needs to be borne in mind here is that centers exist in a variety of domains: In addition to religious centers, which could be further differentiated according to the nature of their services (centers of the institutionalized church and its decision-making, centers of piety, of dogmatic authority, education, charity, etc.), there are also political, economic, and other centers. What is crucial to understanding both any concrete instance of Christianity as well as the dynamics of world Christianity as a whole are the interactions between these domains and their centers. In his introduction to the conference, Klaus Koschorke reminded us that Christianity spread not only through mission, but also through trade relations and migration; John Thornton and others have emphasized the importance of the slave trade in this context. Conversely, however, church policy decisions could also be fueled by a desire to prevent trade relations: As Pius Malekandathil has shown, the Synod of Diamper in 1599 prohibited relations of St. Thomas Christians with the ecclesiastical-political centers in West Africa not least with the intention of bringing the pepper trade under Portuguese control. The focus here was not on the incorporation of indigenous Christians into the Latin Church; it was on spices and profits.

Even more obvious is how the ecclesial development hinged on the political framework, and here above all on the ecclesiastico-political patronato system and its Iberian centers. Take for instance the question of the admission of indigenous candidates to the priesthood, which was discussed at the conference: the fact that Rome pressed for the admission of members of the indigenous population to the priesthood and for their corresponding training should not be misunderstood as the Curia's endorsement of a decolonized church. Rather, the Propaganda Fide's objective with adopting this policy was to gain ground on the religious clergy under the control of the Iberian patronates and to expand Rome's

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overall influence on the Christian mission by promoting an indigenous clergy in the colonies.[6]

However, centers can be found not only across different domains, but also on different levels and scales: Depending on the scaling of one's research, religious centers can be found not only in the papal palace or in the bishopric, but also in monasteries and pilgrimage sites, in the parish church, the village, and even in the household of the individual believer with his or her home altar. On all these levels there is a dynamic of supply and demand, and at each layer, centers can emerge and also disintegrate again. This may sound trivial, but it could stimulate the research on world Christianity: The wide range of the scale itself raises the question which areas of life were actually permeated by Christianity and which ones were perhaps not. And by systematically including the often neglected smaller scales, the role such phenomena as family images and gender roles have played in the appropriation of the Christian religion should receive even more attention.[7]

Of crucial importance for the study of Christianities and their dynamics, however, is undoubtedly the interplay between all these domains and levels. For on the one hand, each individual instance of Christianity can be better understood by looking at the manifold centers and the interaction processes that constitute them. And on the other hand, "world Christianity", the sum total of all these Christianities, cannot be understood without the polycentric dynamics between centers, domains and levels. Basically, such dynamics constitute the object of our interest in the first place: Talking about one world Christianity, which wants to be more than the mere enumeration of scattered Christian communities, only makes sense, in my opinion, when the individual elements of this global patchwork also come into contact with each other, both in historical retrospect and in analytical terms. Our conference offered a number of fascinating examples of this increasing interconnectedness of the world. This commentary has hopefully been successful in showing that it might be worthwhile to approach this diversity with the very open concept of Christianities and, in turn, to look at these through the polycentric framework of our Frankfurt research group.

6 PIZZORUSSO, G. (2014), "La Congregazione romana 'de Propaganda Fide' e la duplice fedeltà dei missionari tra monarchie coloniali e universalismo pontificio (XVII secolo)", in: *Librosdelacorte.es, Monográfico 1*, 6, 228–241, here: 240.

7 For an exemplary study, see AMSLER, N. (2018), *Jesuits and Matriarchs*. Domestic Worship in Early Modern China (Seattle/ London). With a special focus on the aspects of scale and space, see id., Hidden Spaces: Women and Domestic Religion in Chinese Christianity, POLY Lecture 10th January 2023, accessible online at www.poly-unifrankfurt.de.

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Results and Perspectives: Some Remarks on Circulation Processes in Early Modern Missionary Provinces

FABIAN FECHNER

1. Steps towards a new history of World Christianity

The papers presented at this conference have analyzed a wide range of South-South links in the history of World Christianity. This is a specific response to church history as taught in German-speaking countries, which usually takes not just a Eurocentric but rather a veritably Germanocentric approach. The papers of this conference also represent an impressive deviation from the well-trodden paths of classical mission history, not just at a programmatic level but also at an empirical one. Instead of focusing purely on well-explored concepts such as "mission" or "church", "(World) Christianity" serves as an umbrella term for manifold entities, like households, sodalities, missionary institutions, and denominations. This shift of focus foregrounds polycentric structures and processes like dialogue and exchange and sets them against the simplifying concept of expansion.

These approaches prove that Globalization does not have to mean Europeanization. They are part of a promising field of study that reflects the current experience that in Word Christianity non-European actors are increasingly gaining importance.[1] Flagship topics include the global impacts of reformation[2] and of the Council of Trent[3], global connections of indigenous and black brotherhoods,[4] and the transcontinental veneration of saints[5] — the

1 WARD, K. (2018), "Zusammenfassung und Ausblick" in: Schjørring, J.H./ Hjelm, N.A./ Ward, K. (Eds.), *Geschichte des globalen Christentums*. Vol. 3 (Die Religionen der Menschheit 34; Stuttgart), 767–791, especially 775-779; BLASCHKE, O. (2019), "Einleitung. Katholizismus- und Protestantismusforschung vor der Herausforderung der Globalgeschichte" in: Blaschke, O./ Ramón Solans, F.J. (Eds.), *Weltreligion im Umbruch*. Transnationale Perspektiven auf das Christentum in der Globalisierung (Religion und Moderne 12; Frankfurt/ New York), 9–55. I would like to thank Lena Moser for the careful proofreading.

2 SCHILLING, H./ SEIDEL MENCHI, S. (Eds.) (2017), *The Protestant Reformation in a Context of Global History.* Religious Reforms and World Civilizations (Annali dell'Istituto Storico Italo-Germanico in Trento. Contributi 33; Bologna/ Berlin).

3 VILLEGAS, J. (1971), *Die Durchführung der Beschlüsse des Konzils von Trient in der Kirchenprovinz Peru, 1564–1600*. Die Bischöfe und die Reform der Kirche (PhD Cologne); KOSCHORKE, K. (2022), *Grundzüge der Außereuropäischen Christentumsgeschichte*. Asien, Afrika und Lateinamerika 1450–2000 (UTB 5934, Tübingen), 55–62; WICKI, J. (1963), "Die unmittelbaren Auswirkungen des Konzils von Trient auf Indien", in: *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae* 1, 241–263.

4 JAQUE HIDALGO, J./ VALERIO, M. (2022) (Eds.), *Indigenous and Black Confraternities in Colonial Latin America*. Negotiating Status through Religious Practices (Connected histories in the early modern world; Amsterdam).

5 STEINER, N. (2012), "Globales Bewusstsein und Heiligenverehrung – Spuren eines weltweiten Kults der japanischen Märtyrer von 1597 / Global Consciousness and Veneration of Saints – Vestiges of an Universal Cult of the Japanese Martyrs" in: Koschorke, K. (Ed.), *Etappen der Globalisierung in*

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latter not in the sense of diffusionism, but of the commonality of saints. Many other examples show the possibilities of a non-Eurocentric history of World Christianity, such as the ordination of indigenous priests, Afro-American mission work in Africa, local ecumenical approaches, Christian-indigenous networks, and the foundation of independent churches in West and South Africa.[6] But as usual in the study of global connections, it is quite difficult to distinguish South-North connections (when the Global South shaped the Global North) from "pure" South-South connections.[7] To make matters more difficult, the history of the very recent concept of the "Global South" has not yet been written. This concept might be profitably used in the analysis of South-South connections, but it requires careful definition and differentiation, which it currently lacks. At this stage, it is only certain that the concept is based on a European perspective and that the "Global South" itself is a structural rather than a geographical concept[8] — this would avoid decisions whether geographical entities like Ethiopia and the Middle East continuously formed part of the "Global South" or not.[9] Perhaps, in the context of World Christianity, it may programmatically serve as an auxiliary concept used to identify and understand knowledge and experiences of local Christianities outside of Europe.

2. How to write a new story?

Whenever a new historiographical narrative is being established, polemics are not far. The beginnings of a polycentric history of World Christianity can be compared with the postcolonial reassessment of national histories: While for the supporters of postcolonial historiographies the history of a nation can only wholly be understood through a postcolonial lens,[10] others see the new sources and interpretations as an "addition" and as irrelevant for the history of a nation.[11] Furthermore, the sources which support a new kind of historiography might seem like anecdotal evidence. A reason for that is the lack of a new, overarching narrative, and the unclear relation between the individual cases and a nation (or in our case: a religion) as a whole. Or, even more generally, many studies tend to show connections and entanglements but hesitate to go further, declining to detail the effects and objectives of the processes they have uncovered.

What might such an overarching narrative look like, a common topic not defined from a Western point of view? The search for tangible structures and persons that embody the connections in World Christianity could serve as a first step in the right direction. The

christentumsgeschichtlicher Perspektive / Phases of Globalization in the History of Christianity (Studien zur außereuropäischen Christentumsgeschichte 19, Wiesbaden, 135–156).

6 KOSCHORKE (2022), *Grundzüge* (see FN 3), 91. 124. 182. 184. 202.

7 WENDT, R. ([2]2016), *Vom Kolonialismus zur Globalisierung*. Europa und die Welt seit 1500 (UTB 2889, Paderborn), 17.

8 HONG, Y.-S. (2015), *Cold War Germany, the Third World, and the Global Humanitarian Regime* (Human Rights in History, Cambridge), 3.

9 See e. g. YAZDANI, K./ CASTRO, C. (2023), "Capitalismos del 'Sur Global' (c. siglos X-XIX) – Viejos y nuevos aportes y debates", in: *Historia Crítica* 89, 3–41, here: 7f.

10 BECHHAUS-GERST, M./ ZELLER, J. ([2]2021) (Eds.), *Deutschland postkolonial?* Die Gegenwart der imperialen Vergangenheit (Berlin); CONRAD, S./ OSTERHAMMEL, J. (2004) (Eds.), *Das Kaiserreich transnational*. Deutschland in der Welt 1871–1914 (Göttingen).

11 The quoted term in RICHTER, H. (2021), *Aufbruch in die Moderne*. Reform und Massenpolitisierung im Kaiserreich (Edition Suhrkamp 2762, Berlin), 99; see also WEHLER, H.-U. (2006), "Transnationale Geschichte – der neue Königsweg historischer Forschung?" in: Budde, G.-F./ Conrad, S./ Janz, O. (Eds.), *Transnationale Geschichte*. Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien (Göttingen), 161–174.

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purpose of this approach is best explained by Debora Gerstenberger and Joël Glasman: "If there is something that was purportedly global, there must have been actors who made it global."[12] The study of Early Modern missionary orders may be one field whose contributors are equipped to face this task.

3. The significance of legal and administrative history: the value of internal debates in religious orders

A considerable proportion of classical mission historiography is based on chronicles, journals, and reports of the respective institutions. Thus, it is not particularly surprising that the historiography tends to follow the rather apologetic bias of the texts which were written to address a defined in-group and to gain additional support in the shape of missionaries and finances.[13] It is difficult to grasp more critical, internal debates which discuss the core topics between missionary ideal and practice. In the case of the Society of Jesus, such sources have recently been analyzed, especially for early modern oversea provinces.[14] In what follows, three fields exemplify the plurality of actors, and especially native agency: the initial discussions of Provincial Congregations, the connecting figure of the Provincial Procurator, and the role of manuscript local rules.

The first field, the institution of the Provincial Congregations, is commonly neglected in historiography, probably because it doesn't play a significant role in the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and other printed rules. According to the last version of the Constitutions, this congregation was defined as a regular assembly in each province of the order. In the case of oversea provinces, it was to take place every six years. Up to 40 fathers, including the most important superiors and a certain number of additional professed, could suggest whether a General Congregation in Rome ought to be convoked, and they voted for up to three Provincial Procurators as representatives of their respective province. The decisive task of the congregation is invisible in the printed, widely distributed text of the Constitution, but it can be observed in the manuscript files and letters of the congregations: For one or two weeks or even longer, the congregated fathers debated intensely about the most urgent problems of their province. Those concerns which were supported by the majority of the assembly were included in an official list of "postulates" for the General; those which were supported only by a minority were occasionally collected in another, unofficial list, or discussed further at one of the next assemblies, or never again. In these postulates, the social reality of a province far away from Europe with its challenges was fragmented and transformed into questions within the conceptual horizon of the General and the Roman Curia of the Jesuits. In numerous cases, this internal discourse concerned the social status and the agency of the indigenous population and enslaved

12 GERSTENBERGER, D./ GLASMAN, J. (2016), "Globalgeschichte mit Maß. Was Globalhistoriker von der Akteur-Netzwerk-Theorie lernen können" in: Gerstenberger, D./ Glasman, J. (Eds.), *Techniken der Globalisierung*. Globalgeschichte meets Akteur-Netzwerk-Theorie (Histoire 78, Bielefeld), 11–40, here: 15.

13 COLLIN, M. (2022), "Histoire et historiens jésuites (époque modern et contemporaine)" in: Fabre, P.A./ Pierre, B. (Eds.), *Les Jésuites*. Histoire et dictionnaire (Paris), 735–739.

14 MORALES, M.M. (2005) (Ed.), *A mis manos han llegado*. Cartas de los PP. Generales a la Antigua Provincia del Paraguay (1608–1639) (Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu. Nova Series 1; Madrid-Roma); FECHNER, F./ WILDE, G. (2020), "'Cartas vivas' en la expansión del cristianismo ibérico. Las órdenes religiosas y la organización global de las misiones" (*Nuevo Mundo Mundos Nuevos*), mis en ligne le 24 février 2020. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/nuevomundo/79441> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/nuevomundo.79441>.

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Africans. In the case of the Provincial congregation of Paraguay, for instance, it was debated if and in what rank indigenous persons or mestizos could become members of the order; if all the missionaries ought to be expert in an indigenous language; how the pastoral care for enslaved Africans could be guaranteed; if indigenous representatives and benefactors could be buried in Jesuit churches. Surprisingly, many of the suggestions made by the Provincial Congregations were accepted by the Roman Curia without any changes or with only minor ones. This everyday practice questions, from below, the notorious image of a top-down administration.[15]

These Provincial Congregations were not isolated at all. From among their members, they elected up to three Provincial Procurators who represent an influential instance of interaction between Jesuit provinces all over the globe. Every three years, these procurators gathered in Rome to discuss and compare the social reality of their home provinces, during the Congregations of Procurators (*congregationes procuratorum*). The movement of these participants is significant: They were not sent from Rome to the oversea missions but the other way around. They were elected and sent by their provinces to gain advantages for their institutions and the baptized indigenous, i.e. goods, privileges, and more missionaries. The impulse did not originate from Rome or another center of power but from Peru, Paraguay, Japan, and all the other provinces in Europe and overseas. This polycentric disposition is a mayor motif for the specific kinds of circulation within the Society of Jesus: the circulation of expertise, missionaries, and goods, especially books and works of art.[16] This regular gathering of representatives during the Congregations of Procurators from all over the globe was probably unique in the early modern period. Most of the discussions held there are not preserved in written form, but there were enough controversial issues to talk about. One of the discussions had its peak around 1640. Indigenous slavery was tolerated in plantations in Brazil but forbidden on ranches in neighboring Paraguay.[17] This difference touched the economic foundation of two oversea provinces and did not resonate with the claimed universalism of Jesuit rules and values.

This ideal of a set of rules which were valid all over the world fits in with the Jesuit concept of obedience and the vertical administrative structure. In the past decade, historians studying autonomous forums for negotiation processes, such as consultations and Provincial Congregations, have questioned whether this vertical structure did in fact exist.[18] Only recently has historiographical scholarship discovered that the well-known Jesuit method of cultural accommodation had a parallel in the legal realm: Jesuit rules were adapted to the specific conditions and necessities in the different provinces. The best source material for this topic are manuscript local rules for Jesuit oversea provinces which reflect the local agency of the missionaries and autochthonous converts (in this context, "autochthonous" or "local" is more precise than "indigenous" because there are no ethnic implications). They comprise a selection of letters of the Father General, decrees of the

15 FECHNER, F. (2015), *Entscheidungsprozesse vor Ort*. Die Provinzkongregationen der Jesuiten in Paraguay (1608–1762) (Jesuitica 20; Regensburg), 185–297.

16 ALCALÁ, L.E. (2007), "'De compras por Europa'. Procuradores jesuitas y cultura material en Nueva España", in: *Goya. Revista de arte*, 141–158; GRAMATKE, C. (2019), "'La portátil Europa'. Der Beitrag der Jesuiten zum materiellen Kulturtransfer" in: Emmerling, E./ Gramatke, C. (Eds.), *Die polychromen Holzskulpturen der jesuitischen Reduktionen in Paracuaria, 1609–1767*. Kunsttechnologische Untersuchungen unter Berücksichtigung des Beitrags deutscher Jesuiten (Munich, 191–397).

17 FECHNER (2015), *Entscheidungsprozesse* (see FN 15), 233–242.

18 FRIEDRICH, M. (2011), *Der lange Arm Roms?* Globale Verwaltung und Kommunikation im Jesuitenorden 1540–1773 (Frankfurt/ New York).

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General Congregation, and letters of local superiors which dealt with local challenges and purposes. In some cases, it is obvious that some rules which were valid in a non-European province had been inspired by a norm in another overseas province.[19] Terms like "non-European" or "overseas" are useful in this context because these provinces "in the Indies" shared legal privileges. The analysis of norms reflects the "(re)discovery of laws as a factor shaping social life".[20]

4. Possible ways forward

The approaches taken to the Jesuit context here are likewise applicable to the broader context of a polycentric World Christianity. Hitherto, case studies have usually focused on specific institutions, and it falls to the readers of collective volumes to draw their own comparisons and distil syntheses. There are only a few exceptions in the shape of lucid explorations of the use of language in missions or the theological dimension of enslavement in missionary territories.[21] Comparisons between different institutions may help scholars to better understand the complexity of these dynamics between local Christianities. Editions of sources originating from less studied institutions are available but as of yet awaiting interpretation.[22]

Another avenue of research may tie in the history of World Christianity with social history, as World Christianity has hitherto only been studied with reference to theology and the history of the church. In turn, outside the spheres of the history of the church, ecclesiastical entities are sometimes understood as mere "source-generating machines", and their spiritual context is largely ignored. Thus, both fields of study might profit from methodological links. This is also true for didactical purposes. Studies on World Christianity and Global History are both searching a kind of shared history and new topics which they may have in common. This is a promising step towards a more inclusive historiography that merges separate visions of distinct groups, especially in an immigration society.

19 WICKI, J. (1989), "Die Provinzkongregationen der Ordensprovinz Goa 1575–1756. Ein geschichtlicher Überblick", in: *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 58, 209–276; FECHNER, F. (2020), "Exzerpieren, ordnen, aussortieren. Die Spannung zwischen universalistischem Anspruch und lokalem Rechtspragmatismus am Beispiel der legislativen Praktiken der Jesuiten in Indien und Peru" in: BRAUNER, Ch./ FLÜCHTER, A. (Eds.), *Recht und Diversität*. Lokale Konstellationen und globale Perspektiven von der Frühen Neuzeit bis zur Gegenwart (Bielefeld), 227–260. DOI: https://doi.org/10.14361/9783839454176.

20 DUVE, Th./ EGÍO, J. L. (2023), *Rechtsgeschichte des frühneuzeitlichen Hispanoamerika* (Methodica 6; Munich), 47.

21 WENDT, R. (1998), *Wege durch Babylon*. Missionare, Sprachstudien und interkulturelle Kommunikation (ScriptOralia 104, Tübingen); PRIESCHING, N. (2016), *Sklaverei im Urteil der Jesuiten*. Eine theologiegeschichtliche Spurensuche im Collegio Romano (Sklaverei – Knechtschaft – Zwangsarbeit 15, Hildesheim-Zürich).

22 MEERSMAN, A. (1972), *Annual reports of the Portuguese Franciscans in India, 1713–1833* (Lisbon); KOSCHORKE, K. (Ed.), *The Dutch Reformed Church in Colonial Ceylon (18th Century)*. Minutes of the Consistory of the Dutch Reformed Church in Colombo (1735–1797) (Dokumente zur Außereuropäischen Christentumsgeschichte 2; Wiesbaden).

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Conclusion

Non-European actors are increasingly gaining importance in current ecclesiastical organization and infrastructure, as evidenced also by the development of a historiography of World Christianity. This commentary suggests a systematization of separate observations to highlight specific persons and institutions as the backbone of circulation processes, using the examples of intercontinental links and the Jesuit institution of the Congregation of Procurators. This convention of representatives from all over the globe at regular intervals is probably unique in the early modern period.

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Common Themes and Future Possibilities in the Global History of Early Modern Christianity

MIRA SONNTAG

In an attempt to reflect the changes we have seen in the study of global Christianity (and of global history as such) over the last decades, I am currently in the process of compiling a textbook on the history of Christianity in Japan. Thus, I was listening to the rich and thought-provoking presentations at this conference with one question on my mind: Which parts of my textbook do I have to rewrite? This conference has been invaluable to me to better understand aspects of the early modern history, specifically the web of South-South links in which the beginnings of Christianity in Japan were embedded. Consequently, I would like to highlight *two themes* which can be found in early modern Japan as well as other regions around the world as this conference has revealed. The two themes are a) medieval vs. reformed Catholicism and b) colonial and counter-colonial representations of martyrdom and sainthood. I will argue that these themes ought to be analyzed in more depth from a comparative perspective and then conclude my comments by issuing a call for two specific publications on global Christianity in the early modern world.

Feudal Systems (Medieval Catholicism) vs. Early Modern Humanist Approaches (Reformed Catholicism) in Europe and the Non-Western World

The globalization of Christianity in the sixteenth century was fueled, among other factors, by the Reformation in Europe, and often pushed forward by proponents of the Counter-Reformation. Therefore, the latter naturally found themselves in conflict with agents of pre-reformational, that is, medieval Catholicism in a number of "mission fields". However, how this conflict played out in detail depended on the political and social structures as well as the cultural landscape of the region in question. In focusing on common patterns across cultures, global history pays attention to integration *and* difference.[1] In the case of early modern Christianity, this allows us to reassess the meaning of the conflict between medieval Catholicism and reformed Catholicism in Europe from the margins, i.e. its manifestations in the non-European world.

In a contribution to volume no. 24 of the Munich series "Studies in the History of Christianity in the Non-Western World", Kiri Paramore bemoans that the portrayals of Jesuit accommodation strategies in Japan and China are often collapsed into one model,

1 HARE, J.L./ WELLS, J. (2015), "Promising the world. Surveys, curricula, and the challenge of global history", in: *History Teacher* 48, 371–88.

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represented by Matteo Ricci's (1552–1610) humanist and individualistic approach[2], which Paramore sees as a forerunner of later Protestant theories of "civilizing missions". However, the situation of Japan in the 16th century was very different from that in China. Jesuits in Japan generally supported a subordinating mission policy prioritizing church authority over individual reasoning, except in their negotiations with the local power elites. Paramore argues that the mission in Japan was only successful because of the Jesuit missionaries' engagement with the local feudal system and the development of an ethics of feudal warlordism.[3] Thus, he questions the prevalent depiction of the Jesuits in Japan as proponents of early modern humanist ethics and the "civilizing mission". Instead, he characterizes them as guardians of church hierarchy and violent feudal authoritarianism who successfully communicated the "virtues" of "militarism, bond loyalty, and obedience".[4]

Following the decisive prohibition of Christianity and expulsion of missionaries in 1614, some of them became a threat to the mission in China. Because of their feudal approach which supported (even forceful) mass conversions ordered by the local power elites, these missionaries started to question the humanist approach of Matteo Ricci. As Paramore argues (with Paul Rule and Michael Cooper), this internal Jesuit vs. Jesuit questioning was the beginning of the Chinese Rites Controversy.[5] It seems ironic that missionaries who had been expelled were still convinced they knew the secrets of successful evangelization.

But more importantly, the Japanese feudal approach was not applicable to China which at that time was a highly centralized bureaucracy in which local officials did not have the power to order mass conversions in their administrative region. To date, few studies have considered this aspect of the interaction between the Japan and China missions. However, it is an important factor in the developing South-South links in the early modern world, which are the focus of this conference. Another important facet of Japan's embeddedness in South-South links is the fact that the first Korean converts were enslaved Koreans brought to Japan by Christian feudal lords who participated in the Korea invasions of the late sixteenth century.[6] This serves as an example of how the feudal practice of slavery was connected to the spread of Christianity.

Finally, I would also like to mention an article by Gonoi Takashi,[7] which traces how missionaries expelled from Japan imported a highly stratified Japanese organizational system for catechists—appropriated from the Rinzai School of Buddhism—when they started to evangelize in Tonkin (present-day Hanoi). Paramore and Gonoi thus both pay attention to the feudal character of the Christian mission in Japan which is closely related to medieval Catholicism, and show how it was exported from Japan to the Asian continent. They also attest to the inner diversification of globally acting mission orders, a point which was also made by Fabian Fechner during his comments. Fechner writes in his contribution to this volume that the "ideal of a set of [universal] rules … fits in with the Jesuit concept

2 PARAMORE, K. (2015), "Christianity as Feudal Virtue or as Civilization Mission? Mission Strategy and Contra-Individualization in Japan and China (1560–1860)", in: Fuchs, M./ Linkenbach, A./ Reinhard, W. (Eds.), *Individualisierung durch christliche Mission?* (Wiesbaden), 403–20, here: 405.

3 PARAMORE (2015), "Christianity as Feudal Virtue" (see FN 2), 406–410.

4 PARAMORE (2015), "Christianity as Feudal Virtue" (see FN 2), 408.

5 PARAMORE (2015), "Christianity as Feudal Virtue" (see FN 2), 410.

6 PARAMORE (2015), "Christianity as Feudal Virtue" (see FN 2), 406.

7 GONOI, T. (1994), "Iezusu-kai hikaiin no konguregasan to kaisōka. Nihon no dōjuku to Tonkin no katekisuta no kakawari", in: *Shigaku Zasshi* 103, 351–389.

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of obedience and the vertical administrative structure", but recent research had "questioned whether this vertical structure did in fact exist". He sees the "Jesuit method of cultural accommodation" as giving birth to a "parallel in the legal realm" which had led to the adaptation of rules to "the specific conditions and necessities in the different [Jesuit] provinces". I would argue that, contrary to the general interpretation of the term, "accommodation" in this sense may also mean a decisive choice to suppress specific processes of indigenization if deemed necessary in a specific context. I understand Fechner's comments as a reminder that scholars of global Christianity ought to pay more attention to differences, especially when looking at global actors in diverse contexts, and suppress—as a methodological choice—the urge to develop "a new, overarching narrative".

The case of the contradictory approaches to accommodation by the Jesuits in Japan and China inspires new questions when compared to the spread of Christianity in Kongo, which is not connected to East Asia in any obvious way. As John Thornton explains in his contribution to this volume, the highly centralized political system of Kongo played an important role in the self-evangelization of the country, which was supported by nonviolent mass conversions through a system of educational bureaucracy that had been established by the second Christian king of Kongo, Afonso Mvemba a Nzinga (1506–1542). Although politically a feudal system, Kongo's strategy of "education in the hands of the Kongo elite (for nobles attended the schools and became *mestres*) and sacraments in the hands of mostly foreign clergy" successfully transformed the country into a Christian nation through a bureaucratically enforced process of "civilization". Here, it was not missionaries who gained access to feudal elites and, having converted them, relied on their rule for successful mass conversion. Instead, the local elite drafted foreign clerics to ritually "finalize" and sustain the conversion of the masses which had already been achieved by the local elite of Christian teachers. Thus, the case of Kongo shows that, contrary to the case of China, a centralized bureaucracy can be a powerful tool in the expansion of Christianity.

Thornton's paper also addresses the issue of Capuchin and Jesuit, or more generally counter-reformational criticism of indigenized forms of Christianity which actively embrace local religious traditions. He argues that such criticism results from the clash between medieval and reformed Catholicism. Since the Christianization of Kongo started in the 15th century, the Capuchins encountered pre-reformational Christian communities when they were drafted for sacramental duty by the king. As foot-soldiers of the Counter-Reformation they detected strong similarities between Kongolese expressions of Christian belief and the "paganism" of the medieval Church in Europe. Therefore, their fight against indigenized forms of Christianity was double-charged with meaning since it functioned also as an affirmation and validation of the counter-reformational enterprise in Europe itself.

However, criticism of indigenized forms of Christianity can also be found in Japan, although the Catholic mission here started only after the Reformation and lay in the hands of the Jesuits from the beginning. It is also prevalent in other Asian regions lacking a pre-reformational Christian tradition, where it tends to be understood exclusively as a denial of local religious cultures and all indigenized forms of Christianity that engage with them, precisely because of the absence of a pre-reformational Christian tradition. The criticism stereotypes them as polytheistic, "idolatrous" or "magic oriented" and thus essentially "pagan" without acknowledging that this stereotyping was primarily motivated by the counter-reformational criticism of the medieval church in Europe. Unfortunately, many Catholics in these regions internalized this criticism and subscribe to it even today, thus,

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continuing to fight alleged manifestations of the "medieval church" in their own contemporary cultures.

This criticism also pervades the work of Japanese church historians like Miyazaki Kentarō, where it is framed as an insistence on reformed Catholic "orthodoxy" continuously seeking to expel "non-Christian" forms from the realm of "acceptable" localized versions of Christianity. It may be worth noting that Miyazaki was the scholar shaping the application for the designation of "Hidden Christian Sites in the Nagasaki Region" as UNESCO World Heritage. During this process he established a controversial terminology to distinguish a hidden "orthodox" Christian tradition (*Senpuku Kirishitan*) from an equally clandestine, "non-Christian" tradition of "folk beliefs" (*Kakure Kirishitan*). According to Miyazaki, the latter is characterized by "layered beliefs [stemming from different religious traditions], ancestor worship, orientation towards this-worldly benefits and a focus on rituals".[8] In accepting Miyazaki's terminology, the UNESCO legitimated his discriminatory, anti-indigenizational depiction of the history of Christianity in Japan as scientific fact.

The impact of such unheeding subscription to counter-reformational criticism on today's cultural policy is problematic, to say the least, and should be addressed based on insights from historical studies on global Christianity. In Japan's case, church historians need to acknowledge that "pagan" notions and practices associated with medieval Catholicism were not only identified in preexisting local religious traditions, but also introduced to Japan by missionaries of the mendicant orders as well as by Jesuits themselves.

I would argue that the fervent veneration of human remains, for instance, can be understood as an element of medieval Catholicism. The Jesuit emphasis on the miraculous power of the relics of saints and their subsequent collection and display—an impressive example of which can be found in the Jesuit mother church in Lisbon—as well as the early sanctification of Francis Xavier (1506–1552) and the beatification of the 26 "Japan martyrs" sent a loud message to newly converted Catholics in Japan and elsewhere. It suggested that people who lived not so far in the past—who could indeed be called ancestors—could enter, or at least get very close to the realm of the holy and to other potent spiritual actors. Raphaèle Preisinger's important contribution to this volume focusses on the global reinterpretation of martyr veneration, but she also mentions the strategic gathering of relics at the execution site of the Nagasaki martyrs which is included in pictorial renderings of the event.

Today the veneration of relics constitutes an integral part of what is perceived to be reformed "orthodox" Catholicism. However, in the sixteenth century it represented medieval Catholic piety which easily connected to local traditions of the veneration of religious objects and the protection through talismans and rituals. Most importantly, it was negated by the Council of Trent. Rituals and prayers were employed for relief from (this-worldly) physical as well as spiritual ailments, and their "effectiveness" was advertised by the missionaries themselves. This suggests that the proponents of the Counter-Reformation had, at least during the sixteenth century, not yet completely grown out of the medieval church they sought to reform. Their support for feudal political systems, perhaps, was indebted to medieval Catholicism as well. Comparative research into counter-reformational discourses on indigenized Christianity and religion in general across the non-European

8 MIYAZAKI, K. (2014), *Kakure Kirishitan no jitsuzō.* Nihonjin no Kirisutokyō rikai to juyō (Tokyo), 163.

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world can destigmatize indigenized Christianities and stimulate new discussions in theology and religious studies about the interreligious meaning of ancestor worship and the veneration of religious objects and spiritual actors.

Colonial and Counter-Colonial Representations of Martyrdom and Sainthood

In order to introduce the second theme, I will now comment on Erin Kathleen Rowe's paper on Gonçalo Garcia (1556–1597), one of the 26 martyred in Nagasaki. His violent death was somewhat ironically based on a decree by Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598) whose wish to start trade with Spain brought him to Japan in the first place. The child of a Portuguese father and a South Asian mother, Garcia was venerated as black "Patron saint of the Padros of Porto" in 18th century Portugal before he became the patron saint of a mixed race (*mestiço*, i.e. "brown") confraternity in Brazil. Rowe examines his "life and afterlife as a global microhistory, illuminating the complex ties between Portuguese colonial territories, trade, and global Catholicism", thus contributing to the methodological integration of microhistory into global history. I will return to this point later, but the case of his veneration also constitutes an inspiring example of how Christians of the South, as people of color, acted against the colonial discourse on the "Japan martyrs".

Concerning visual representation in sacred art and veneration, Rowe argues that European Catholic propaganda treated group martyrdoms mainly in a collective manner; the twenty-six "Japan martyrs" were often depicted as two sub-groups: three Jesuits and 23 Franciscans. However, in this case, two exceptions exist with Felipe de Jesús (1572–1597) and Garcia. As Rowe explains, the former "was leveraged by his Mexican brothers as a way to elevate the Christian perfection of the 'new' world creoles", while Garcia was chosen as an individual object of veneration predominantly because of his ambiguous racial/ethnic background characterized by "hybridity", thus, being open to a range of interpretations. Similar processes of the adaptation of some of the "Japan martyrs" to the South American context are also described in Preisinger's contribution to in this volume. Thus, both Rowe and Preisinger highlight *counter-colonial* representations of saints and martyrs and their underlying discourses on sainthood.

In a different approach, Rady Roldan-Figueroa's study[9] analyzed the publication history and "official" discourses on the "Japan martyrs" in connection with Catholic missions in the Spanish World (Spain, New Spain, and the Philippines). He argues that Spanish mission orders predominantly gave attention to the Western missionaries who died in Japan, whereas the Japanese martyrs among them were soon eclipsed, which led to a "martyrological bifurcation". Subsequently, the event as such became an illuminating example of Japan's "paganism" and brutality which defined the image of Japan in the Spanish world until the 19th century. Thus, Roldan-Figueroa concludes that the "official", that is, colonial European Catholic propaganda of the "Japan martyrs" was hardly working in favor of the Japanese Christians, but predominantly in favor of the European missionaries.[10] Echoing Roldan-Figueroa, Preisinger[11] has shown during the conference

9 ROLDAN-FIGUEROA, R. (2021), *The Martyrs of Japan.* Publication History and Catholic Missions in the Spanish World (Spain, New Spain, and the Philippines, 1597–1700) (Leiden/ Boston).

10 ROLDAN-FIGUEROA (2021), *The Martyrs* (see FN 9), 257–264. During the 17th century, a negative depiction became normative for lyrical representations of Japan and the Japanese.

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that in European depictions the appearance of the "Japan martyrs" was westernized and adjusted to classical images of the crucifixion of Christ. This process is especially intriguing in the case of the Jesuit martyrs all three of whom were Japanese members of the order. The eclipse of the Japanese martyrs—or of their Japaneseness—was revoked only in the second half of the 19th century during the canonization process of the 26 "Japan martyrs"[12].

If we accept Roldan-Figueroa's thesis, the examples of Garcia and de Jesús become even more important as examples of defiance against the "official" European, that is, colonial discourse on martyrdom and sainthood, a discourse that was produced and disseminated by specialized offices of religious orders[13] and protected through censorship, as Preisinger has shown here. Given the parallels that can be drawn from Roldan-Figueroa's study on print media in the Spanish world, Preisinger analysis of pictorial renderings from New Spain—among them the adaption of a Franciscan pictorial scheme to the particular local Andean context—and Rowe's work on hagiographies, sermons, and other written sources from the Portuguese world, it would be a promising departure to search for differences and similarities across hegemonial spheres as well as between the different material sources.

In a next step we should, perhaps, compare the above counter-colonial interpretations of some of the "Japan martyrs" with that of Lorenzo Ruiz (ca. 1600–1637) whose transnational identity is highlighted in Christoph Nebgen's contribution to this volume. Ruiz died 40 years after the original "Japan martyrs" in Okinawa and was canonized in 1987 as the first Filipino saint. The above-mentioned studies are, of course, very instructive on their own. However, an analysis of how such individual cases of saint veneration were embedded in and contributing to larger colonial and counter-colonial discourses on the representations of martyrdom and sainthood would certainly contribute to a deeper understanding of the meaning and significance of martyrdom, sainthood, and saint veneration among colonial subjects in the early modern world.

A Call for Specific Studies on Global Christianity in the Early Modern World

As I have shown, both of the above themes warrant further study. In addition, I strongly support Adrian Hermann's proposal (in this volume) to foster comparative research into Christianity in the Asian context from the perspective of religious studies. In closing, I would like to propose two publications I believe ought to be written.

The first book would be a comparative study into the organizational patterns of Christian lay people, catechists, and others, which pays special attention to restrictions imposed on locals and their strategies to overcome those restrictions, or to develop their

11 PREISINGER, R. (2024, Forthcoming), "The Global Itineraries of the Martyrs of Japan: Early Modern Religious Networks and the Circulation of Images across Asia, Europe, and the Americas" in: Emich, B./ Sidler, D./ Weber, S./ Windler, C. (Eds.), *Making Saints in a Glocal Religion* (Leiden etc.), 375–411.

12 STEINER, N. (2012), "Globales Bewusstsein und Heiligenverehrung—Spuren eines weltweiten Kults der japanischen Märtyrer von 1597 / Global Consciousness and Veneration of Saints—Vestiges of an Universal Cult of the Japanese Martyrs" in: Koschorke, K. (Ed.), *I Phases of Globalization in the History of Christianity / Etappen der Globalisierung in christentumsgeschichtlicher Perspektive* (Studies in the History of Christianity in the Non-Western World. Vol. 19; Wiesbaden), 135–56, 136.

13 ROLDAN-FIGUEROA (2021), *The Martyrs* (see FN 9), 258.

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agency in alternative ways. This study should include the export of "indigenous" organizational patterns to other "mission fields".

A second book I wish to see available for the use in the classroom as an addition to Klaus Koschorke's textbook[14] on the history of Christianity in Asia, Africa, and Latin America and the preceding sourcebook,[15] would be a collection and comparison of individual careers marked by the globality of early modern Christianity and inspired by a vision which pushed those individuals on transnational trajectories. Several examples were already introduced during this conference. But gathering, organizing, and relating individual stories to each other systematically—perhaps as global microhistories (see Rowe's paper)—, would reaffirm the fact that global Christianity was then and is now brought about and shaped by individuals who understand their faith as an invitation to transcend their (known) world.

14 KOSCHORKE, K. (2022), *Grundzüge der Aussereuropäischen Christentumsgeschichte.* Asien, Afrika und Lateinamerika 1450–2000 (Tübingen).

15 KOSCHORKE, K./ LUDWIG, F./ DELGADO, M. (2007) (Eds.), *A History of Christianity in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, 1450–1990*: A Documentary Sourcebook (Grand Rapids).

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Global History of Christianity: Potentials and Chances of a South-South Perspective

CHRISTOPH MARX

By turning to a South-South perspective, the conference has chosen an innovative and promising approach to the global history of Christianity. For the sake of simplicity, I will define the Global South for this comment as the world outside Europe and North America. However, the change of perspective does not only refer to overcoming a monocentric view of the history of Christianity that spreads from Europe across the world. It also involves the choice of the early modern period as an epoch that does not always receive the attention it deserves in the context of the history of the spread of Christianity. In the following, I will address both of these changes in perspective and, based on the results of this conference, attempt to show what possibilities open up beyond this.

We are still used to taking countries and continents as reference points for historical reconstructions. In doing so, we often forget how conventional the choice of continents as units actually is, i.e. it is based on human decision and not necessarily on natural conditions. At the latest when we try to determine the eastern borders of Europe, it becomes clear how arbitrary this is. An alternative has been developing for some time now, particularly with regard to the Indian Ocean. This was obvious, as the Indian Ocean is relatively easy to cross due to the monsoon winds, which is why it was characterised by intensive trade and exchange relations centuries before the Atlantic. The western Indian Ocean can be described as an Islamic sea, even if, as Pius Malekandathil has shown in his article on the St. Thomas Christians in Indian Ocean trade, it is by no means exclusively Islamic in character. Nevertheless, it is constituted by Islam as a uniform legal space that enabled and facilitated trade. The Indian Ocean has long been recognised as a "seascape" and this term has provided an alternative to continental thinking. Since the early modern era, the Atlantic has also been an area of intensive exchange, and Paul Gilroy coined the term Black Atlantic to describe the results of the slave trade.[1] If the oceans are understood as contact zones and communication spaces, new approaches and perspectives can also be opened up with regard to the history of Christianity. The conference demonstrated this impressively and the individual contributions and the conference as a whole were extraordinarily stimulating. They have virtually called on us to pursue the paths outlined here further. In the following, I would like to suggest some possibilities.

The conference is particularly innovative because, with regard to the history of Christianity, it overcomes the Eurocentric approach with the South-South perspective, which is particularly remarkable in the case of the history of the spread of Christianity. Instead, the history of the spread of Christianity was presented here in the sense of a

1 GILROY, P. (1993), *The Black Atlantic*. Modernity and Double Consciousness (London).

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missionary history and a history of the churches in the global South and their mutual contacts. Stanislau Paulau's contribution on the contacts between Ethiopian Christians and Martin Luther reversed the perspective and placed the initiatives of Africans at the centre of his study.

Missionary history has been traditionally regarded as Eurocentric. The call to "Go into all the world" points back to the origin of the mission, namely to Europe, where Christianity became permanently established and from where the first missionary endeavours took off. In view of this historical baggage, the change of perspective from South to South is also of greater methodological significance than in economic or political history, where it is easier to depart from a Eurocentric perspective. This is because in the case of the history of the spread of Christianity, there is a danger that it will not only remain geographically centered on Europe, but that the reception of Christianity outside Europe will be interpreted as deficient, as "syncretistic", as a deviation from a (European-influenced) norm.

This other, decentralised approach to the history of the spread of Christianity can be examined in two forms, either as the history of a locality or region in the global South, or as an interregional history. The first variant places the indigenous mission at the centre of research, i.e. the extent to which local Christians were responsible for the spread of the Christian religion, which Klaus Koschorke has impressively traced in his contribution on the re-Catholicisation in Ceylon (Sri Lanka). The history of the mission is usually written as a story of European missionary agents spreading the word of God under hardship and danger. However, the contributions of John Thornton, James Campbell and Ciprian Burlăcioiu have provided important examples of the spread of Christianity by indigenous agents. For a long time, these Christian agents remained in the shadow of the white missionaries, who were regarded as central figures in missionary history. However, in recent decades, research has clearly identified the contribution of local Christians and in many cases discovered that its impact was often much greater than that of Europeans.[2] For obvious reasons, indigenous Christians were more convincing than the foreigners from Europe.

The second approach deals with indigenous Christians who left their own society and missionised elsewhere, as examined by Christoph Nebgen in his paper on the Philippines and Latin America. Even involuntary migrants who were deported as slaves were able to become missionaries if, like the examples of Christian inhabitants of the historical Kingdom of Kongo in America discussed by John Thornton, they adhered to their faith and spread it further. The possibilities for pursuing the paths taken in this conference concern the transregional and transepochal perspectives.

The conference used the three great oceans for a regional organisation. However, this transoceanic perspective can be intensified by focussing on smaller interregional relationships, such as the trans-Caribbean region or the circumpolar region, in which communicative exchange between Siberian peoples and Canadian or Alaskan Inuit existed for long periods of time. It is also possible that the Caspian Sea region could be understood in this sense as a region of religious and ecclesiastical exchange.

As commendable as the concentration of this conference on the early modern period was, it should be borne in mind that the division of epochs on which this is based was

2 See, for example, MALHERBE, V. C. (1979), "The Life and Times of Cupido Kakkerlak", in: *Journal of African History* 20/3, 365–378.

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derived from caesuras in European history and does not apply to non-European history in the same way.[3] It would be regrettable if the attempt were not made to overcome these epochal boundaries, because crossing them can open up new perspectives. Thus, the reference of this conference to the Pacific region is essentially limited to the Catholic networks, simply because the Protestant mission did not begin until the 19th century. However, it is precisely in their case that we find that it was the adoption of missionary activity by Polynesians that contributed to the rapid Christianisation of the vast island world of Polynesia[4]. Comparisons resulting from this would not be possible if we were to fixate on (European) periodisation and an important opportunity would be missed. The success of the Christianisation of Polynesia is also due to the fact that the indigenous religion legitimised and supported the pronounced power hierarchies and elite rule. Many Polynesians therefore welcomed a more egalitarian alternative. The class aspect of religious history that emerges here can certainly be methodologically fruitfully applied through comparisons with other regions. Gender aspects could also be incorporated more systematically into these approaches to a global history of Christianity, for example by analysing different understandings of femininity or masculinity in the respective cultural frameworks.

Sources and Interdisciplinarity

In addition to conventional historical sources in the form of texts, the papers also included visual representations. This is a rich field for further research and at the same time leads to greater interdisciplinarity. Koschorke's recent project on the journals of Christian elites was a first important step towards making various media accessible. This could be made even more fruitful in various respects by including ecclesiastical rituals, music, poetry, architecture and art. This would, of course, have the consequence and would be a promising approach of working even more interdisciplinarily than before, for example by involving musicologists (church music), art and literature scholars and architectural historians in the exchange.

A few examples: An exchange with musicologists, especially those researching church music and religious music, would be worthwhile. The study of instruments can also provide further cultural-historical insights into transoceanic and transregional contacts, as A. M. Jones was able to demonstrate.[5] However, not only musicologists but also historians are concerned with the audible side of religious encounters. Stephanie Zehnle is currently conducting a project in Passau as part of a research group on “The Difficulty and Possibility of Tolerance” entitled “Bells, Drums, Muezzins - Colonial (In)Tolerance of Religious Sounds”, which deals not with music but with calls to prayer in the broadest sense.

3 COBET, J. (2000), “Die Ordnung der Zeiten”, in: Cobet, J., Gethmann, C.F., Lau, D. (Eds.), *Europa*. Die Gegenwärtigkeit der antiken Überlieferung (Aachen), 9–31.

4 HOWE, K.R. (1984), *Where the Waves Fall*. A New South Sea Island History From the First Settlement to Colonial Rule (Honolulu), chapter 6; see also HIERY, H. (2014), “Inselmissionare. Die Verbreitung des Christentums in und aus der pazifischen Inselwelt”, in: Koschorke, K./ Hermann, A. (Eds.), Polycentric Structures in the History of World Christianity, Wiesbaden (StAECG 25), 205–214.

5 JONES, A.M. (1971), *Africa and Indonesia*. The Evidence of the Xylophone and other Musical and Cultural Factors (Leiden).

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Important approaches with regard to other neighbouring disciplines were also recognisable in some of the conference contributions. The pictorial sources, which were presented and analysed in several contributions, could be made even more fruitful for research if they were systematically used as an independent source genre and not just as illustrative material. This applies to artefacts such as paintings and sculptures, but also to the history of architecture with regard to church buildings. The archaeology of cemeteries and burials can also provide important information about the understanding of Christianity and cultural adaptation.

Finally, the perspective can be reversed in another manner by looking not only at the changes in Christianity and its independent organisation, but also at the persistence of traditional religious beliefs that borrowed from Christianity. For example, it is known from South Africa that in the 19th century indigenous prophets adopted elements of Christianity, such as the doctrine of resurrection from the dead, which did not exist in the Xhosa religion. After the devastating wars with which the British had overwhelmed them and to which numerous chiefs had fallen victim, this idea gained great appeal, but became part of a new version of their own religious beliefs.[6]

Astrid Windus has presented similarly revealing findings in her innovative and original research on the Andean highlands of Bolivia and Peru, in which she has included aspects of performance and religious rituals.[7] It is not always possible to decide whether it is a question of Christianisation or an adaptation of Christian rituals into local cosmologies. To give another example: Steven Vertovec has described how the Hindu descendants of Indian indentured labourers in Trinidad discovered an Indian goddess in a statue of the Madonna in a local church and incorporated it into their rituals and celebrations, to the obvious discomfort of the Catholic priest.[8]

This conference brought together interesting research perspectives in a meaningful concentration on a specific time period, but the approach has great potential and can easily be extended and developed in a way as I tried to outline in this commentary.

6 PEIRES, J. (1989), *The Dead Will Arise*. Nongqawuse and the Great Xhosa Cattle-Killing Movement of 1856–7, (Johannesburg/ Bloomington).

7 WINDUS, A. (2022), *Myths, Images, Objects*. On the Communication of Religious Knowledge in an Andean Contact Zone. Carabuco, 17th–18th Century (Münster/ New York).

8 VERTOVEC, S. (1992), *Hindu Trinidad*. Religion, Ethnicity and Socio-Economic Change (London/ Basingstoke), 219–221.

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The History of World Christianity (16th–19th Centuries) from the Perspective of Religious Studies and Global Religious History

ADRIAN HERMANN

In the following, I will comment on the topic of the conference and the papers presented from the perspective of Religious Studies. In particular, I will adopt the emerging perspective of "global religious history" to draw attention to some research questions that are shared by a history of World Christianity in the 16th to 19th centuries and recent theoretical and historical investigations in the discipline of Religious Studies.

These current debates concern, among other things, the following questions: What role should the study of Christianity play in the discipline of Religious Studies? To what aspects of a general history of religion(s) is Christianity most relevant? I want to quickly reference two perspectives and relate especially the second one in very broad strokes to the topic of the conference of early South–South links in the history of World Christianity.

One discussion – not in Religious Studies, but in Anthropology – about the role of Christianity in this discipline, has, in the last couple of years, been focused on how Anthropology has been historically (to put it extremely broadly) not very interested in Christianity, apart from how Christian missions and the spread of Christianity were disturbing the cultures that anthropologists were trying to study.

Over the last fifteen to twenty years, however, a subdiscipline called "Anthropology of Christianity" has emerged, which directly investigates Christian missions, movements, and identities, and also the ways in which Christianity has shaped cultures and religious contexts worldwide. This is one example of renewed debates about what role the study of Christianity should play in different academic disciplines that (also) study religion.

In Religious Studies, there are two prominent perspectives that I want to highlight and that also build on each other. On the one hand, the so-called European History of Religion (or "Europäische Religionsgeschichte"), which was proposed by Burkhard Gladigow in 1995 in the conference proceedings of the 1993 meeting of the German Association for the History of Religion (DVRG, today DVRW).[1] He argued that Religious Studies needed a new and rather different understanding of the history of religion in Europe, or of what he called the European History of Religion. And that, of course, then also raises the question of what role the study of Christianity should play for Religious Studies.

Following this intervention, the question of how to engage with Christianity has been discussed broadly in Religious Studies, especially in the German-speaking context, in the

1 GLADIGOW, B. (1995), "Europäische Religionsgeschichte", in: Kippenberg, H./ Luchesi, B. (Eds.), *Lokale Religionsgeschichte* (Marburg), 21–42.

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last two or three decades, in particular in relation to the concept of a European History of Religion. On the one hand, this was an attempt to show that studying the history of religion and Christianity in Europe is a much more complex endeavor than simply proposing a renewed study of the history of Christianity, with an additional but marginal focus on Judaism and Islam.

But, on the other hand, these debates also, equally importantly, raised the question of in what ways the study of Christianity should be part of Religious Studies in general. In highlighting this question, the proposed perspective of a European History of Religion disrupted an established division of labor that the discipline had mostly settled into: Religious Studies was mostly responsible for the religions of antiquity and the religion of the regions beyond Europe, while theology and church history were responsible for Europe and Christianity.

But, of course, this renewed focus on Christianity and on Europe also raises the question of the study of Christianity beyond Europe as a task for Religious Studies. This is still an ongoing debate as, from a Religious Studies perspective the study of Christianity in Asia, for example, is still a rather marginal endeavor. Nevertheless, in building on such discussions in the last couple of years, an additional conceptual and theoretical perspective has emerged: a "Global History of Religion" (as one could call this in continuation of Gladigow's program[2]) or "Global Religious History" (as others have called it). And these questions are, in my mind, closely connected to the topics of this conference.

Why? An important aspect of this proposed perspective of Global Religious History is to center the role of global entanglements. For example, in a recent introductory overview over this approach, Religious Studies scholars Giovanni Maltese and Julian Strube write that the "respective contradictions, ambiguities, continuities, and ruptures" in understandings of religion since the nineteenth century "can be most comprehensively grasped when viewed against the background of global entanglements". And for them this then raises the "question of what global entanglements mean in global religious history, along with the question of how to distinguish global religious history from approaches usually qualified by the prefix trans as, for example, in 'transregional'".[3] I myself have contributed to these discussions by trying to extend Gladigow's concept of a European History of Religion towards a Global History of Religion.[4]

In their article on Global Religious History, Maltese and Strube also write that "[w]hat can be observed" in the existing studies that adopt this new perspective, "is not a meeting of 'Western' and 'non-Western' religion. Rather, different understandings of religion were produced and constantly negotiated through global exchanges during the nineteenth century". Global religious history is an attempt "to understand the historical conditions for these processes".[5]

On the one hand, therefore, these two authors draw our attention to the production and negotiation of understandings of religion through global exchanges. On the other hand, they

2 HERMANN, A. (2021), "European History of Religion, Global History of Religion: On the Expansion of a Gladigowian Concept for the Study of Religion", in: Auffarth, C./ Grieser, A./ Koch, A. (Eds.), *Religion in Culture – Culture in Religion: Burkhard Gladigow's Contribution to Shifting Paradigms in the Study of Religion* (Tübingen), 237–268.

3 MALTESE, G./ STRUBE, J. (2021), "Global Religious History", in: *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 33, 229–257, here: 229.

4 HERMANN (2021), "European History of Religion, Global History of Religion" (see FN 2).

5 MALTESE/ STRUBE (2021), "Global Religious History" (see FN 3), 242.

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focus primarily (but of course not exclusively) on the 19th century in aiming to understand the historical conditions for these processes.

What I want to suggest, then, is that what is being presented in the proceedings of the conference under discussion is of great importance for Religious Studies and the perspective of Global Religious History. Early South–South links in the History of World Christianity from the 16th to 19th centuries are an important aspect of that which produced what Maltese and Strube call the "historical conditions" for the emergence of a global and interconnected history of religion(s) in the 19th and 20th century. Also, these various links and transfers point us to sometimes surprising connections and exchanges that predate the mid to late 19th century entanglements between Buddhist, Hindu, Christian, and Islamic local elites in different regions and across continents. But they also predate, of course, the large impact in the 19th century of Protestant missions and Protestant understandings of religions.

What examples have been discussed at the conference and in these proceedings? One is the so-called Christian Black Atlantic. In the context of the questions that I have raised so far, this points us mainly to the agency of Afro-American and African Christians from the 16th to the 19th century. It highlights global connections and entanglements that shaped the history of Christianity, and through this, shaped the Global History of Religion in the Atlantic regions. Such connections and entanglements were created and furthered by African Christians in Africa, the Americas, and in Europe. Their history, especially the history of such early South–South links before the 19th century, has so far not been adequately recognized in existing research in Religious Studies circles who work on Global Religious History.

Secondly, other world regions have been relevant as well (and are discussed in this volume for the first time in a comparative perspective). The Indian Ocean, for example, has been, since early times, a space of transregional interactions and entanglements between indigenous Christian actors from different places (such as the Indian St Thomas Christian traders and other East Syrian "Nestorian" travelers). Later it was local Catholics from Goa and Sri Lanka, as well as from the Philippines and Mexico, who moved frequently between different regions within the Indian Ocean and the Pacific world and made them centers of transfers and entanglements. Remarkable has been, inter alia, the paradigm of the Japanese martyrs of 1597 and their transcontinental and global reception. All this, I think, points us to a very important point in the ongoing debates about the global history of the concept of 'religion', and also more generally about Global Religious History: the deep history of global entanglements already in the context of early modern Catholic missions and in the history of Catholicism in 17th and 18th centuries, with a particular focus on 'native agency'. I think the role of such connections and entanglements has not yet been sufficiently recognized. The various examples and various figures that were discussed at this conference, like Mateus de Castro (1569–1677), have played an important role in creating the historical conditions from which Global Religious History could emerge at a later point in time.

And lastly, we have heard about non-Latin Christian entanglements, about the wider Eastern Christian world, about Ethiopian Christianity and Ethiopianism. And in this context, I appreciate very much the question that Stanislau Paulau has asked (in this volume). He requires of us a shift of perspective. A shift in which we ask not so much 'how did the influence of the Reformation impact the wider Christian world?', but, rather, 'how did the wider Christian world impact the Reformation in Europa?'. In doing so, he points to

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the "intricate tapestry of global influences" that challenge existing and conventional narratives of a strictly European origin of the Reformation.

And this points us, again, to recognizing that such early South–South links and the entanglements created and furthered by them, were the basis on which modern forms of Christianity, as well as the modern forms of Buddhist, Hindu, and Islamic reform movements emerged in the 19th century. These are links and the entanglements that until now have not really played a central role in discussions about a Global Religious History in Religious Studies. It can be hoped that this volume contributes to starting such interdisciplinary conversations.

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Reflections on South-South Links and the Polycentric Nature of World Christianity

KEVIN WARD

Introduction

The 20th century has seen the gradual emergence of autonomous Christian churches in the global south, conscious of their own particular indigenous heritage, but keen to participate, on an equal basis, in a religion with links and commonalities throughout the world. Nevertheless, what one Ghanaian theologian has dubbed the 'Anglo-Saxon captivity'[1] of the church (or, more broadly, a Western colonial captivity) remains a powerful force, both in the persistence of post-colonial, neo-colonial political, economic and cultural institutions, and in secular western academic insistence that global Christianity is a cultural hangover, trapping Africans, Asians and South Americans in a debilitating false-consciousness. As Frantz Fanon so powerfully articulated in his *Peau Noire, Masques blancs* (Black Skin, White Masks), of 1952[2], this sense of inferiority can indeed insidiously pervade the 'colonial subject', but it is inexcusable for the colonisers or former colonisers to use this to diminish the creativity and ingenuity of local institutions and culture, or to demean the right of non-western cultures to claim autonomy, humanity and freedom, including the right to express their religious sensibilities, not least Christianity, in their own distinctive terms. A renewed attention to South-South links historically in world Christianity plays an important role in the articulation of this understanding. The historical study of this process is of vital importance in giving depth and complexity to the story of world Christianity. Moreover, it throw light on the character of contemporary Christianity, or Christianities, both in their variety and commonalities.

'South-South' Christianity is more than a geographical expression. Essentially, it refers to relations between Christians which fall outside the narrative of traditional missionary Christianity created by European colonial expansion. Both Japanese and Korean Christianities have a complex history outside this 'North-South' matrix. This reflection begins with an account of a visit to St Mary's Roman Catholic Cathedral in Tokyo, and what its architecture and its memorials say about the history of Christianity in Japan, and of its relations to its near neighbour, Korea. Korean Catholicism is itself distinctive, in that a Catholic community existed from the late 18th century, long predating any western missionary involvement, and developed a distinctive ethos which subsequent substantial missionary involvement a century later did not efface. Moreover, although Protestant

1 POBEE, J., "Non-Anglo-Saxon Anglicanism", in: Sykes, S./ Booty, J. (1986), *The Study of Anglicanism* (London), 395–396.

2 FANON, F. (1970 and many subsequent editions), *Black Skin, White Masks* (tr. by Charles Lam Markmann) (London).

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missionary activity was concurrent with the creation of a Protestant community in the late 19th century, Protestantism also developed along lines which the (predominantly) American missionaries could not have envisaged. Korea also has a unique colonial history: the brief colonial period (formally from 1910–1945) was traumatic in that the colonial power was its near-neighbour Japan. Colonialism disrupted a long-standing national identity, and Korea's native Christianity was an important factor in resistance to a colonial rule which attempted to suppress what was distinctive about Korean culture. The second part of this essay focuses on Africa, and explores the work of the historian Adrian Hastings, who both in his life and as a historian, articulated an African Christianity which focused on African agency in creating a vibrant African Christianity, rather than a foreign missionary implantation. The essay also briefly explores the impact of African Caribbean and African American influences, as well as the inspiration of the ancient Orthodox Christian tradition of Ethiopia, in enabling the creation of Orthodox forms of Christianity in Africa. FInally, there is a brief discussion of the formation of South-South links in the world wide Anglican Communion, and the need to avoid polarising differences between a conservative, traditional biblical Christianity of the global South, on the one hand, vand a 'Northern' liberalising secularism, on the other. The reality is much more complex and multi-faceted.

North East Asia: Japan and Korea

In a recent visit to Japan in November 2023, I stumbled across St Mary's Roman Catholic Cathedral in Tokyo (Sekiguchi, Bunkyo-ku district). The original wooden church was built in French Gothic style, but originally with tatami matting and without seats. It was destroyed during the intense bombing of Tokyo on 25 May 1945. In the grounds a replica of the grotto of St Theresa of Lourdes still stands, and (from my brief visit) is still the focus of prayer for Catholic faithful. But the new church stands in stark contrast to 19th century French piety. The architect, Tango Kenzo[3] had been involved in the creation of the Hiroshima Peace Park, soon after the end of the war. The cathedral was built in an expansive modernist style, but with a strong Japanese aesthetic sensibility of light and space, of weightlessness and infinity, perhaps something of the great 20th century Japanese philosopher Nishida's principle of *mu (*'nothingness'/'emptiness') in the soaring concrete, starkly unadorned walls.[4] The archdiocese of Cologne has a companion relationship with the archdiocese of Tokyo, and helped financially in the building of the cathedral. At its opening in 1964 Cardinal Frings presented the cathedral with a bust of St Francis Xavier. The cathedral also houses a relic of the Magi, whose cult Cologne is intimately associated. This link can be seen as symbolic of a new equal partnership in a post-missionary age, also as a memorial of the fact that both cities had been devastated by allied bombing during WW2. It also signifies the hardships which Catholics in both Tokyo and Germany suffered, along with other Christians and religious communities, during the era of ultra-nationalism.

An even more potent symbol of a the polycentric nature of Christianity, was the statue in the cathedral dedicated to Dom Justo Ukon Takayama (c.1553–1615). Takayama was an early convert to Christianity, a samurai who became a daimyo (territorial lord) during the

3 LIN, Z. (²2024), *Kenzo Tange and the Metabolist Movement.* Urban Utopias of Modern Japan (London/ New York).

4 CARTER, R.E. (2013), *The Kyoto School*: An Introduction (New York). Chapter One: Nishida Kitaro (1870–1945), 13–61.

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rule of the military rulers, Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi. When Christianity came under intense suspicion, Takayama renounced his fiefdom rather than give up his faith. Eventually, during a renewed attempt by Tokugawa Ieyasu finally to wipe out Christianity, Takayama was forced, with his family and 300 other Catholics, to go into exile in the Philippines. After a gruelling sea voyage, he died in Manilla only 44 days after arrival. His fame as an outstanding witness to Christianity was already well known in the Philippines, and he was given a highly honoured public funeral. In 1630 the diocese of Manilla petitioned the Pope for his beatification. Unfortunately, by this time, the closure of Japan to foreigners and the banning of Japanese from leaving the country, prevented any evidence from being gathered to assist in the process, and it was only in 2017 that Pope Francis was able to affirm his status as 'blessed'.[5] But here is more evidence of the Pacific links which other writers in this collection have focused on.

Takayama's death occurred some time between 3rd and 5th February 1615. 5th February happens to be the anniversary of the death of the 26 Japanese martyrs, some 18 years earlier, in 1597. Contributors to his volume have discussed the fact that, due to Jesuit-Franciscan rivalries, each missionary order magnified the death of their own members at the expense of their opponents. An etching by the French artist, Jacques Callot, produced some time before his death in 1635, even omits the three Japanese Jesuits altogether in his depiction of the crucifixions (including Paulus Miki, later accorded priority in the memorialising of the saints). The Franciscans naturally promoted the six friars who were executed (four Spaniards, one Mexican and one Portuguese-Indian) in their devotional iconography, but, as Professor Professor Rowe, shows, it was the mixed race missionary Goncalo Garcia, born in India of a Portuguese father and an Indian mother, who made the greatest impact in Brazil, his mestizo status enabling an increasing number of Brazilian Catholics (themselves aware of their mixed Portuguese, African and indigenous American ancestry) to identify with someone who was not simply a representative of the colonising power.

With the total banning of Christianity in Japan, the opportunity to honour the 20 Japanese martyrs on the part of the secret Christians (kakure kirishtan) simply did not exist. Nevertheless, they were beatified in Rome as early as 1627. This may have been an important factor in the 1630 petition of the Philippine church, with its continuing Japanese presence, to begin the process for the beatification of Takayama), it was only in 1862 that the martyrs of Japan were canonised, in anticipation of the revival of the Catholic Church in Japan which began with the Meiji restoration. In 1962 (to mark the centenary of the canonisation) a fitting memorial of all the martyrs, foreign and Japanese, was inaugurated, designed by the sculptor Funakoshi Yasutake, who had himself become a Catholic after WW2. Funakoshi's figures were represented as individuals, as the charcoal drawings, particularly of the young Japanese martyrs, deposited in the Nagasaki Prefectorial Museum, movingly portray. The great tableau of the 26 martyrs was erected in Nagasaki at Nishizaka, the hill where the executions had taken place. Paul Miki was on the point of ordination when his life was cut short. Funakoshi represented most of the martyrs with hands closed in prayer. But Miki's is portrayed with his hands outstretched, as if preaching, a recognition of his eloquence and evangelistic zeal; according to contemporary accounts he had from the cross spoken of his faith in Christ, to friends and enemies alike, forgiving

5 UCERLER, A. (2022), *The Samurai and the Cross*: The Jesuit Enterprise in Early Modern Japan (Oxford), especially 193–99.

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his persecutors. Catholic and Protestant Christians remain to this day a tiny proportion of the population of Japan. But they have contributed enormously to the development of modern Japanese culture and society (not least through the development of Christian socialism, and their contribution to theological thinking, which utilises but is not dependent, on western models. The architect of Tokyo Cathedral, Tange Kenzo, is himself a symbol of this.

As well as its service to the Japanese community, Tokyo Cathedral has a special ministry among the Korean community. Given the large number of *Zainichi* (long-term Korean residents), and the struggle which they have endured to gain full acceptance into Japanese society, both during the period of Japanese colonisation of Korea (1910-45), and subsequently, this is an important ministry, not least because of the success of Christianity in Korea.[6] On a visit to Niigata in North West Japan, I noticed the prominence of literature in Vietnamese in the small Catholic cathedral — an increasing number of Vietnamese workers have been settling in Japan in recent years, as have people from the Philippines. But, given Japanese restrictive policies on immigration, it was surprising to find that there are also African asylum seekers in Japan. I attended a midweek service at St Alban's Church (an English language church of the Anglican Nippon Sei Ko Kai). I was invited to a working lunch organised by the Minorities Group, in which two asylum seekers from the Democratic Republic of Congo were presenting their need for assistance. They had arrived in the country two months earlier with 20 other young men, and had been sleeping in parks during this time. None knew any Japanese, and only the two leaders had any fluency in English. 'Why Japan?' The response: 'Why, indeed! Refugees don't choose where they go.' The church group is trying to arrange some French language services, as well as attending to the important tasks of providing material needs, and the all-important advocacy for those vulnerable refugees trying to negotiate the fraught relations with authorities, whether police of government agencies. At the moment, African migration to Japan is tiny. Not so in Hong Kong, where the Union Church in Kowloon has a well-organised ministry among political refugees, and African members of the LGBTQ+ community. In the People's Republic of China, particularly in Guangzhou, there are substantial numbers of Africans, not refugees but traders, coming especially from Nigeria.[7] Pentecostal churches are springing up for West Africans — at the moment there is probably not much contact with Chinese Protestant agencies such as the Three Self Patriotic Movement or the Christian Church of China. But the Catholic Cathedral in Guangzhou does have a substantial African Catholic congregation (as I discovered on a visit in 2019). While these phenomena appear to be completely new, the papers in this present volume are important in giving an historical context to these developments.

Myeondong Catholic cathedral in Seoul was built in 1898, a year before the original Tokyo cathedral. The Seoul cathedral was not destroyed during the war and remains the mother church of Korean Catholics in the capital. It is in a restrained 19th century French Gothic style.

But, as Professor Koschorke has noted, Korean Catholicism is almost unique in existing long before western foreign missionaries arrived. The Korean church had existed for over

6 LIE, J. (2008), *Zaiichi (Koreans in Japan)*: Diasporic Nationalism and Postcolonial Identity (Berkeley CA).

7 MATHEWS, G./ LIN, L.D./ YANG, Y. (2017), *The World in Guangzhou*: Africans and Other Foreigners in South China's Global Marketplace (Hong Kong). Chapter 7: Religion in a Foreign World, 165–195.

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50 years before the first French missionaries came, and for long after that there was never a continual presence. The original foreign links were with Beijing and China, not the west.

The first Korean Christian community began in the 1780s from among the yangban elite.[8] They largely belonged to the Confucian Namin (Southerner) faction, which had been for long been marginalised in the factional power struggles which characterised the Joseon court. The Namin had always been more receptive to the Silhak (western learning) emanating from Beijing, including Matteo Ricci's treatises which attempted to interpret Christianity in Confucian terms. The first Korean Christians saw their adoption of Catholicism as a fulfilment of Confucian teachings rather than a replacement. However, hostile factions accused them of abandoning filial piety (in refusing ancestral worship), and obedience to the Joseon king in acknowledging God as the supreme ruler. The first Korean Christians attempted to practice the seven sacraments which they rightly understood to be central to Catholic teaching, until they realised that a priest was needed for the validity of the full sacramental life. The historian of early Korean Catholicism refers to this early dominance of the laity as 'a pseudo-ecclesiastical hierarchy', which seems an overly prejudicial term; perhaps 'provisional hierarchy' might be more fitting for sincere Christians who were working in difficult circumstances. The Korean Christian community endured a series of persecutions between the 1790s and the 1860s in which many lost their lives. The first priest, Zhou Wen-mo, from China, worked in Korea from 1794 until his arrest and execution in 1801.

The first Korean priest, Fr. Andrew Kim Dae-geon, was educated at the Catholic seminary in Manila and in Shanghai, but was arrested and executed in 1846, shortly after his return to Korea as a priest. A succession of French priests, who began to arrive secretly from the 1830s, also suffered martyrdom. The persecutions targeted the yangban elite, but Catholicism had spread far beyond the higher echelons of society, to all classes. Tracts in hangul (the indigenous alphabetical system of writing invented in the 15th century) served for these groups and for women, who unlike the yangban were unversed in Chinese literature. Thus, for over a hundred years the Korean Catholic Church developed and expanded under conditions of severe repression and persecution, largely a lay movement, and with only a sporadic western missionary presence. The contacts were with China and, as in the case of Kim Dae-geon, with the Philippines.

Ironically, neither the lay Catholic yangban nor the first Korean priest, Kim Dae-geon, were actually the first Koreans Christians who lived and died for their faith. In the late 16th century the Japanese ruler, Hideyoshi, had launched an attempt to conquer Korea, and devastated the country for much of the 1590s. During that time some Koreans were taken to Japan as prisoners-of-war. One such prisoner became known as 'Caius of Korea' - unfortunately his Korean names are not recorded. He became a Catholic in Japan, after being rescued from drowning and nursed to health by a Japanese Christian. He chose to accompany Yusto Takayama into exile in the Philippines, as part of his domestic household. He remained in the Philippines for two years, despite the untimely death of his master, but eventually returned to Japan, and as a catechist exercised a ministry among both Japanese and the Korean exiles in Japan. He was executed in 1624, on the charge of assisting foreign missionaries.[9]

8 CHOI, J.-K. (2006), *The Origin of the Roman Catholic Church in Korea*: An Examination of the Popular and Governmental Responses to Catholic Missions in the Late Chosen Dynasty (Seoul).

9 DALLET, Ch. (1874), *L'histoire de l'église de Corea.* Vol. 1+2 (Paris).

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When American Protestants first entered Korea in the 1880s they found a ready reception. Like the Catholics, they developed the common script hangul as the best way of communicating their message to all classes, and of translating the Bible into a lively demotic Korean. The 'Nevius method' of building up autonomous, self-supporting churches, is often credited with the success and rapid expansion of Protestant Christianity in Korea, but one should note that from the beginning Koreans asserted their freedom to appropriate the Gospel on their own terms, and were often critical of the western missionary assumption of superiority. Christianity was indeed associated with modern as opposed to 'feudal' values, but Koreans insisted that they were the arbiters of how these values should be shaped. Moreover, Christians were a significant presence in the formation of the March 1st 1919 declaration of independence and opposition to Japanese colonialism.[10]

Korea occupies a special position in colonial history, in that it was the victim of colonisation by a fellow Asian country, Japan. Towards the end of this period, the repression of Korean language and culture became particularly harsh. Janet Poole describes how Korean artists and writers coped with the restrictions of this period, in her vividly entitled 'When the Future Disappears: The Modernist Imagination in late Colonial Korea': in a situation of increasing horror and hopelessness, and where opportunities to write in Korean became increasingly restricted, if not impossible, Korean artists managed nevertheless to produce alternative visions of the future. As Poole puts it: 'In colonial histories there are few examples where colonial languages have been inducted into the modern only to be shut out again through the violence of state power.'[11]

I was reminded of this when visiting the campus of the prestigious Yonsei University in Seoul, a Presbyterian foundation. A famous alumnus was Yoon Dong-ji, in post-colonial South Korea one of their most popular poets. Born in 1917 into a Korean family settled in the Jilin Province of China, in what was then called Manchuria. Yoon came from a staunch Presbyterian family. Both Christian faith and Korean identity were integral to his life. In 1941 he graduated from Chosen Christian College (the future Yonsei), at a time when the Korean language was being replaced by Japanese — a traumatic time for a budding Korean poet, who needed to express his soul in his native language. He went on to Rikkyo University in Tokyo (an Anglican institution) to study English but was advised by his Japanese professor that Kyoto might be a safer place for a Korean to study than Tokyo. He joined Doshisha University, a Presbyterian foundation. He was, nevertheless, arrested in 1943, partly because a relative and fellow student at Doshisha was suspected of being active in an anti-Japanese resistance movement. He was incarcerated in Fukuoka Prison, where he died, aged 28, on 16 February 1945. There is a suspicion that he was the victim of medical experiments by which prisoners were injected on a regular basis with sea-water in the name of some bizarre medical experiment. He did not, in any direct way, die because of his Christian faith; nevertheless, one is reminded of another Christian who died prematurely - less than two months later, on 9 April 1945 - Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Much of Yoon's poems are meditations on life and death:

10 KIM, S./ KIM, K. (2015), *A History of Korean Christianity* (Cambridge).
11 POOLE, J. (2014), *When the Future Disappears* (New York), 11.

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Until I breathe my last breath
I wish to face my sky without shame,
Even the wind blowing on leaves
Has left me restless.

With a heart singing hymns to the stars
I shall love all that must die;
And I shall walk diligently
Upon the path assigned to me.

Tonight again, the stars are blown by the wind. [12]

Yoon is described by Lee Sung-Il, the translator of his poems into English, as a person who was deeply influenced by the writings of Kierkegaard. Yoon himself referred to Rilke and the French poet, James Jammes, as inspirations for his own poetry. He was, nevertheless, deeply embedded in Korean culture, and expressed himself through a language at risk of extinction. He also felt at home in European intellectual developments, not slavishly following an alien culture, but able to express himself creatively and confidently, his soul nourished by his Christian faith. This is why Yoon and the other Korean historical expressions of Christianity have potentially so much to contribute to contemporary understandings of polycentric, South-South, colonial and post-colonial expressions of world Christianity.

Africa

Turning to Africa, a pioneer in the study of world Christianity as a discipline which does not prioritise western, colonial missionary activity, but which gives voice to the development of Asian, African, Pacific, South American and indigenous peoples' experience, was Professor Adrian Hastings (1921–2001).

As a novice in the White Fathers' noviciate in the Netherlands (Peres Blancs), he became convinced that the Catholic Church must shake off its authoritarian, centralising aura, if it were to become truly catholic. In the 1950s the only African Catholic bishop was Joseph Kiwanuka, bishop of Masaka in Uganda. Hastings aspired to work in Kiwanuka's diocese, not as a missionary, but as an ordinary diocesan minister, under the same conditions as local clergy. He was inspired by the work of Fr Vincent Lebbe in China, who had fully supported the creation of a local hierarchy in China in the 1920s and had founded the Societe des Auxiliaries des Missions, by which European priests could directly assist local diocesans rather than being answerable to European mission societies.[13] Hastings petitioned the White Fathers to allow him to do the same in Africa. His superiors were sceptical, citing among other things the difficulties of diet and lifestyle in successfully overcoming

12 YOON, D.-J. (2022), *Counting the Stars at Night*: The Complete Works in Verse and Prose (tr. by Sung-Il Lee) (Eugene, OR), 27.

13 SERVAIS, P./ MIRGUET, F./ ARNAUT, J.-L. (2023) (Eds.), *La Sinisation du Catholicisme après Vincent Lebbe*. Continuités, ruptures et défis (Louvain).

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the colonial barriers of race. Eventually they acceded, but warned Hastings that he should not think of returning to the mission society if the experiment failed.[14] His experience in Uganda from 1959 to the mid-1960s further radicalised him:

> The church in Uganda still has great possibilities: not only an extraordinary numerical growth, but a truly indigenous Christian life deeply rooted in some areas …. But there is no country in Africa today where reluctance to face up to the inadequacies of the established system and the need for reorientation is beginning to have more disastrous effect upon the whole quality of the church's life. The Roman Catholic Church in Africa [is] a dinosaur, kept on its legs with the annual blood transfusion of men and money from Europe and North America.[15]

Hastings did important work in explaining the decisions of Vatican II to African clergy, in ecumenical work, and in activism against apartheid in South Africa and colonial oppression in the Portuguese African colonies. But his advocacy of married clergy, of women's ministry and ordination, and his criticism of the authoritarianism of the episcopacy (not least in Uganda) were steps too far for him to remain as a diocesan priest in Africa. His later career was in universities (Aberdeen, Leeds, Harare), where he wrote his superb histories of Christianity in Africa, prioritising African agency in its diverse forms.[16]

Various contributors to this volume have articulated the importance of trans-oceanic connections in the development of an African Christianity — the 'Black Atlantic' with its cross-fertilisation of Africa and Brazil, the Caribbean and North America; but also across the Indian Ocean, from Mombasa's tempestuous relations with Goa in the 17th century, to the role of the 'Bombay Africans' for the transmission of Christianity in East Africa in the late 19th century.

Colonial powers in Africa became more suspicious of African American involvement during the high colonial period: an attempt by the YMCA to send Max Yergan[17] and other African American workers to Kenya met with official disapproval in the 1920s, so that the project was eventually wound up.[18] This did not deter Africans from looking to African Americans for inspiration. In the years before WW1, the Jubilee Singers from the black American college at Fisk, made a series of enormously successful visits to South Africa, and helped to establishment of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in that country.[19] These networks continue to this day - 'reverse mission' has resulted in the establishment of African churches in Europe - and, indeed, more recently in East Asia. In Southern Africa, Brazilian Pentecostal churches like the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God (Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus), have expanded rapidly, not only in former Portuguese colonies but in South Africa and Zambia. Their aggressive evangelism has at times brought it into conflict with governments.

African Christians, both in African Independent Churches and in the traditional churches have consistently looked to Ethiopia as inspiration for a 'truly' African foundation for Christianity. As Koschorke has noted the interest in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church goes back to the late middle ages. Luther's interest was as an example of a non-Roman ancient

14 HASTINGS, A., *Spiritual Diary 1950–80,* in: *University of Leeds Special Collections: Adrian Hastings Papers*, MS1710.

15 HASTINGS, A. (1971), *Mission and Ministry* (London), 122. 214.

16 HASTINGS, A. (1979), *A History of African Christianity 1950–1975* (Cambridge); HASTINGS, A. (1986), *African Catholicism* (London); HASTINGS, A. (1994), *The Church in Africa 1450–1950* (Oxford).

17 ANTHONY, D.H. (2006), *Max Yergan*: Race Man, Internationalist, Cold Warrior (New York).

18 KING, K. (1971), *Pan-Africanism and Education* (Oxford).

19 CAMPBELL, J. (1998), *Songs of Zion*: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa (Raleigh NC).

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church. It was based on little actual engagement with the church that actually existed in Ethiopia. The Jesuits who later did conduct a mission to Ethiopia grew disenchanted with the church they actually encountered, with disastrous consequences.[20] It seems unlikely that Lutheran contact in the 16th or 17th centuries would have convinced them of the evangelical nature of the church. Swedish Lutherans, in the 19th and 20th centuries, have successfully established the Mekane Yesu Evangelical Church.[21] But, by and large, neither Catholics nor Protestants have found it easy to work closely with a church whose traditions are so different from their own. The same has to be said of African churches. Their interest in Ethiopia was idealistic rather actual encounter, based on favourable representation of Africa in both Old and New Testaments, and the sense that Christianity is as much, if not more, a part of Africa's heritage as European Christendom. Both the Coptic Church and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church have made significant but small attempts to assist African Independent Churches (especially in Kenya), where their assistance has been welcomed, on the understanding that it does not become an attempted takeover.

Ciprian Burlăcioiu has a chapter on the various forms of Orthodoxy which have developed in Africa. For Reuben Spartas in 1920s Uganda, Orthodoxy was attractive as a way of overcoming colonial dominated forms of Christianity: he called people to join with him in creating a church for those who wanted to escape being perpetual 'house boys' in their own homes. (Spartas had held such a position in the house of Canon Daniel, the warden of the Anglican seminary at Mukono). Spartas was influenced by Marcus Garvey's periodical *Negro World.* Spartas became interested in the African Orthodox Church which had affiliations with Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association. The AOC had a bishop operating in South Africa. Bishop Alexander visited East Africa and ordained a number of people in conflict with their missions churches in Kenya (where the so-called female circumcision crisis had recently erupted) and in Uganda. Spartas, however, became disenchanted with Bishop Alexander, and affiliated instead to the Greek Orthodox Church, through contact with the Greek Patriarch in Alexandria in Egypt. A number of Ugandans have trained in Athens. Spartas was insistent that his church was an *African* Orthodox Church.[22]

The insistence on autonomy, and the right of indigenous expressions of faith, has become a major issue in 21st century world Christianity. In the Anglican Communion the unchallenged presumption that English leadership and values should be the standard for the whole Communion has been seriously challenged since the Lambeth Conference of Bishops held in 1997.[23] In 2023 some leaders in the Global South declaring that they no longer have confidence in the Archbishop of Canterbury, arguing that primacy in the Anglican Communion should be established on a rotating basis, in which the numerical dominance of churches in the South can find greater expression. Justin Welby, the present Archbishop of Canterbury, has expressed his sympathy for such an evolution. However, this issue, eminently capable of amicable resolution, has become entangled with the alarm

20 CRUMMEY, D. (2000), *Land and Society in the Christian Kingdom of Ethiopia From the 13th to the 20th Centuries* (Oxford).

21 AREN, G. (1978), *Evangelical Pioneers in Ethiopia*: Origins of the Evangelical Church Mekane Yesu (Stockholm and Addis Ababa).

22 WELBOURN, F.B. (1961), *East African Rebels*: A Study of Some East African Independent Churches (London).

23 HASSETT, M. (2007), *Anglican Communion in Crisis*: How Episcopal Dissidents and Their African Allies are Reshaping Anglicanism (Princeton).

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at the way in which European and North American churches are becoming socially liberal, particularly on questions of sexual morality generally and on same-sex relations in particular. This has proved a much more intractable problem, involving accusations of apostasy, the ignoring of basic biblical teaching, on the one side, and of a narrow biblical fundamentalism on the other. Simplistic caricatures of 'southern' naivety and authoritarianism, and 'northern' secularism and imperialistic disdain have abounded.[24] The issues have been complicated by the fact that northern traditionalists have been eager to gain allies in the south to bolster what they fear is their marginalisation by liberal ecclesiastical authorities' and by the fact that the societies of the south are by no means monolithic - for example, LGBTQ+ and minority civil rights groups in Africa and Asia are demanding to be heard, often opposed by the ecclesiastical hierarchies in their own countries.[25] One of the strengths of the series of essays in this book is that it calls into question such polarisations, revealing the diversity of world Christianity, its ability to adapt to adverse circumstances, and its resistance to being pigeon-holed into one monolithic form.

24 RAO, R. (2020), *Out of Time*: The Queer Politics of Postcoloniality (Oxford).

25 VAN KLINKEN, A./ STIEBERT, J. (2021), *Sacred Queer Stories*: LGBTQ+ Refugee Lives and the Bible (London).

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Appendix

Polycentricity and Plurality of Premodern Christianities*

KLAUS KOSCHORKE

I. Transcontinental Interactions

I would like to start in Cuzco (Peru), the last Incan and first Spanish capital in the region. Here, in the cathedral and in the Jesuit church, there are three paintings by the Indo-Christian artist Marcos Zapata (1710-1773), representing three central themes of Latin America's Christian history during the colonial period. The first painting - in the cathedral - is a depiction of the Last Supper (*Cena ultima*), designed according to European models, but supplemented by Andean motifs. These include - in addition to local fruits and flowers - a guinea pig as food. Guinea pigs are still considered a delicacy in Peruvian cuisine. This 'supper with guinea pig (*cuj*)' represents the aspect of inculturation (fig. 1-2). The second painting - in the Jesuit Church - shows the marriage of a Spanish Capitano (incidentally a nephew of Ignatius of Loyola) with an Inca princess. It illustrates the union of old indigenous and new colonial elites - a highly significant event in social history, without which the rapid conquest and lasting domination of the vast Inca Empire by a handful of Spanish conquistadores would remain incomprehensible (fig. 3). The third picture - also in the Jesuit church - is entitled 'Ignatius Defeats the Heretics'. It shows the founder of the Jesuit order, with the *Exercitia spiritualia* in his hand and his gaze turned toward heaven, while various figures roll around on the ground. An inscription on their headgear reveals the figures' names: Luther, Calvin, Melanchthon, Oecolampad, Wyclif and Hus - i.e. the heads of the Protestant heresies of Europe (and their precursors) (fig. 4-5)[1]. This motif - the victory of the Catholic Church over the Protestant heretics - enjoyed great popularity also in other areas of colonial Peru. Images of heaven and hell contrast the well-being of the local nobility (often with mestizo features) with the miserable fate of the Protestant heretics, who are readily joined in hell by other representatives of the Protestant scum of Europe - such as Henry VIII, Elizabeth I, or even Erasmus (promoted to heretic in times of Philip II). Always in the picture, however, is Luther, the arch-heretic.

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* Slightly updated version of the Keynote Speech at the Inauguration of the Frankfurt Collegiate Research Group "Polyzentrik und Pluralität vormoderner Christentümer. Zur Eröffnung der Frankfurter Kollegforschungsgruppe" (October 27, 2020).

1 On Marcos Zapata and the 'School of Cuzco' cf. PALMER, A.L. (2008), "The Last Supper by Marcos Zapata (c. 1753). A Meal of Bread, Wine and Guinea Pig", in: *Aurora*: The Journal for the History of Art, 54–73; ZENDT, C. (2010), "Marcos Zapata's Last Supper. A Feast of European Religion and Andean Culture", in: *Gastronomica* 10, 9–11; MESA, J. DE/ GISBERT, T. (1982), *Historia de la pintura cuzqueña*. 2 Vols. (La Paz); BROSSEDER, C. (2014), *The Power of* Huacas. Change and Resistance in the Andean Worlds of Colonial Peru (Austin), 29.

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This fact is particularly notable because Lutherans had virtually no physical presence in this part of Spanish America. The Spanish crown, after all, pursued a very restrictive immigration policy and took great care to deny Protestants access to its overseas possessions. Nevertheless, Protestantism was not only present as an enemy image that reached the New World through the Jesuits' image programs and other media. It also had an immediate impact on the development of the nascent churches overseas. For one of its salient features was the translation of the Bible and other use of vernacular languages, which was considered the "mother of all heresies" in the eyes of many a Roman critic and Tridentine hardliner.

It is worth noting that the reception of the Tridentine Council in Spanish America was accompanied by a decline in the use of vernacular idioms. The many experiments aiming at the formation of a *'theologia indiana'* in the first half of the sixteenth century are hardly known outside the limited circle of some regional specialists. These efforts were accompanied (especially on the part of the Franciscans) by the production of a religious literature in the various Indian American languages. From Mexico alone, for example, at least 109 native-language works in a variety of regional idioms (Nahuatl, Tarascan, Otomí, Pirinda, Mixtec, etc.)[2] have been preserved for the period between 1524 and 1572. Researchers occasionally even speak of a 'Nahuatlisation of (Mexican) Christianity'[3]. All this then broke off largely parallel to the reception of the Tridentine at the second and third Mexican provincial councils of 1565 and 1585. Referring to the dangers of a "Lutheran heresy", the Mexican Inquisition, established in 1571, also fought the uncontrolled circulation of Bible texts in the vernacular languages[4]. Thus even from afar, Protestantism, demonized as heretical, influenced the development of the emerging churches in the New World.

2 BAUMGARTNER, J. (1992), "Evangelisierung in indianischen Sprachen. Die Bemühungen der Ordensleute um das wichtigste Hilfsmittel zur Verkündigung der Frohbotschaft und zur Unterweisung im christlichen Leben", in: Sievernich, M. et al. (Eds.), *Conquista und Evangelisation* (Mainz), 313–347, esp. 340–342; BECKMANN, J. (1971), "Utopien als missionarische Stoßkraft", in: Baumgartner, J. (Ed.), *Vermittlung zwischenkirchlicher Gemeinschaft* (Immensee, 361–407); SPECKER, J. (1974), "Missionarische Motive im Entdeckungszeitalter", in: Rzepkowski, H. (Ed.), *Mission – Präsent – Verkündigung – Bekehrung?* (Steyl), 80–91; SYLVEST, E.E. (1975), *Motifs of Franciscan Mission Theory in 16th Century New Spain* (Washington); PHELAN, J.L. (1956), *The Millennial Kingdom of the Franciscans in the New World*. A Study of the Writings of Geronimo de Mendietta (1525–1604) (Berkeley).

3 KLAUS, S. (1999), *Uprooted Christianity*. The Preaching of the Christian Doctrine in Mexico Based on Franciscan Sermons of the 16th Century Written in Nahuatl (Bonn), 11.

4 "Es soll den Indianern nicht erlaubt sein, Handschriften von Predigtsammlungen, Zitaten und anderen Teilen der Hlg. Schrift zu besitzen, sondern nur die von den Bischöfen approbierte und von sprachkundigen Ordensleuten übersetzte *Doctrina Christiana ...*" (Mexiko II [1565]), quoted from BAUMGARTNER [1992], *Vermittlung* (see FN 2), 341. Cf. PRIEN, H.-J. (2002), "Das Trienter Konzil (1545–1563) und der Rückgang lokalkirchlicher Experimente in Spanisch-Amerika", in: Koschorke, K. (Ed.), *Transkontinentale Beziehungen in der Geschichte des Außereuropäischen Christentums* (Wiesbaden), 163–188; PRIEN, H.-J. (1978), *Die Geschichte des Christentums in Lateinamerika* (Göttingen), 255–261; BAUMGARTNER (1992), *Vermittlung* (see FN 2), 340–344; cf. PENRY, S.E. (2018), "Canons of the Council of Trent in Arguments of Priests and Indians over Images, Chapes and Cofradies in 17th Century Peru", in: Francois, W./ Soen, V. (Eds.), *The Council of Trent.* Reform and Controversy in Europe and Beyond (1545–1700). Vol. 3 (Göttingen), 277–299; HENKEL, W./ PIETSCHMANN, H. (1984), *Die Konzilien in Lateinamerika.* Teil I: Mexiko 1555–1897 (Paderborn etc.); HENKEL, W./ SARANYANA, J.-L. (2010), *Die Konzilien in Lateinamerika.* Teil II: Lima 1551–1927 (Paderborn etc.); DELGADO, M. (2017), "Katholizismus in Spanien, Portugal und ihren Weltreichen", in: Schjoerring, J.H./ Hjelm, N.A. (Eds.), *Geschichte des globalen Christentums*. Vol. I (Stuttgart), 105f. ("Gegen Bibelübersetzungen in der Volkssprache"), 56. 87. 89. 94. 102.

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Analogous observations can be made also in other regions outside Europe. For example, in *Portuguese India*, where at the beginning of the 16th century a peaceful coexistence between the Portuguese newcomers and Indian St. Thomas Christians had begun to develop. In the second half of the century, however, parallel to the consolidation of the colonial presence and the reception of the Council of Trent at the three Goanese provincial councils of 1567 (Goa I), 1575 (Goa II) and 1585 (Goa III), the Portuguese became increasingly intolerant of local traditions and deviant forms of religious life. This was true both with respect to the Hindus, whose temples in the urban area of Goa were now destroyed, and in relation to the indigenous St. Thomas Christians, who faced increasing pressure to become Latinized. Many of the latter's time-honoured traditions were now rejected as pagan, and the use of the Syriac church language was stigmatized as the source of numerous "heresies". In 1599, at the infamous synod of Diamper, the St. Thomas Christians were more or less forcibly integrated into the Portuguese colonial church, from which at least some of them were able to break away, but only later (in 1653) [5].

A constellation comparable to that in India - native Christians in conflict with the Portuguese newcomers - also developed in the 16th century in the Christian empire of *Ethiopia*. Here, too, the Iberians were initially welcomed as allies and helpers in need in 1540, and their priests could serve as pastors to the small Portuguese community in the country. When, however, the Jesuit missionaries sought to bring the Ethiopian Orthodox Church under the control of Rome and rejected its ancient traditions as "heretical", a clash ensued, with the result that the Portuguese were finally expelled first from the imperial court and then from the country in 1632. Subsequently, the country entered a prolonged phase of self-isolation from Christian Europe (and less so from its Muslim neighbors). At the same time, this self-isolation led to an intensified emphasis on specific Ethiopian traditions, in contradistinction to Western traditions. From then on, the East African country was almost completely closed to European missionaries – both Catholics and, later, Protestants[6]. When, at the end of the nineteenth century, Anglican missionaries asked Emperor Menelik II (r. 1889–1913) – the same ruler who had driven out the Italian invaders in 1896 – for access to the country, he informed them that their visit was superfluous, since Ethiopia was already a Christian nation. In addition, he, Menelik, would take care of the evangelization of Africa himself. The Western missionaries could go to Asia or take care of Europe – there was still enough work for them to do[7].

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5 WICKI, J. (1976), "Die unmittelbaren Auswirkungen des Konzils von Trient auf Indien (ca. 1565–1585)", in: Id., *Missionskirche im Orient* [Immensee], 213–229; DE SOUZA, T. (2002), "The Council of Trent (1545–1563): Its Reception in Portuguese India", in: Koschorke, K. (Ed), *Transkontinentale Beziehungen in der Geschichte des Außereuropäischen Christentums* (Wiesbaden), 189–202; DE SOUZA, T. (1998), „The Indian Christians of St. Thomas and the Portuguese Padroado: Rape after a Century-Long Courtship (1498–1599)", in: Koschorke, K. (Ed.), *"Christen und Gewürze"* (Göttingen), 31–42.

6 BÖLL, V. (2012), „Die Jesuiten und die gescheiterte Katholisierung der äthiopisch-orthodoxen Kirche", in: Koschorke, K. (Ed.), *Etappen der Globalisierung in christentumsgeschichtlicher Perspektive* (Wiesbaden), 157–170; BÖLL, V. (1998), "Von der Freundschaft zur Feindschaft. Die äthiopisch-orthodoxe Kirche und die portugiesischen Jesuiten in Äthiopien, 16. und 17. Jh.", in: Koschorke, *"Christen und Gewürze"* (see FN 5), 43–58); HASTINGS, A. (1994), *The Church in Africa, 1450–1950* (Oxford), 130–161, esp. 139ff. Cf. also: COHEN, L., "A Postmortem of the Jesuits Banishment from Ethiopia", in: Francois, W./ Soen, V. (Eds.), *The Council of Trent.* Reform and Controversy in Europe and Beyond (1545–1700). Vol. 3 (Göttingen), 257–276.

7 This letter even found its way into the black West African press (Lagos Standard, June 17, 1896): "Teach it [sc. Christianity] in Europe and Asia. I am having it taught in Africa" (reprinted in: Koschorke, K. et al. [2016] [Eds.], *Discourses of Indigenous Christian Elites in Colonial Societies in Asia and Africa around 1900*. A Documentary Sourcebook from Selected Journals [Wiesbaden], 325f.; as well as another Menelik

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II. Polycentricity in the History of European and Non-European Christianities

The theme of this event - or rather of the collegial research group whose inauguration we are celebrating here - is: "Polycentricity and Plurality of Pre-modern Christianities". This opens up a wealth of new perspectives and fields of research, each with different approaches and emphases. The model of polycentrism is already relevant for describing intra-European processes of pluralization. Even with regard to early modern Europe, it is no longer appropriate to speak of a monolithic Catholicism or a homogeneous Tridentine Church. In contrast, concerning the Council of Trent, for example, one should point to the strongly divergent regional and national processes of reception, the resulting rejection of the idea of a quasi-absolutist papal rule, the genesis of multiple Catholicisms and the internal diversity within the Protestant confessional churches that were now forming.

In Munich, where we have been working with the concept of polycentrism for some time, the focus is rather on the interactions between Europe and the world beyond Europe. In contrast to the previous dominance of Western missionary activities in traditional descriptions of the global diffusion of Christianity, we are particularly interested in the multitude of indigenous initiatives, regional centers of expansion, local versions and cultural expressions of Christianity in the emerging overseas Churches. Without them, the worldwide spread of Christianity since the early modern period cannot be adequately described[8].

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letter: ibid., 324f.). The authenticity of Menelik's letters to European missionaries and rulers has been assessed differently. Prof. Wolbert Smidt (Mekele University, Ethiopia), for example, considers the letter cited here (in contrast to others) to be spurious (emails of February 14, 2019 and May 10, 2020). In any case, however, it documents the *external perception* of the Ethiopian emperor, in parts of the West African educated public, as the *leading representative of an autonomous African Christianity.* Menelik II's victory over the Italians at the Battle of Adwa in 1896 — at the heighnoon of European colonialism (!) — made his country the only one in Africa (besides Liberia) to remain free of European colonial rule. His predecessor Tewodros II (1855–68) had even made plans for a crusade to "liberate" Jerusalem. The evangelization of Africa by Africans (instead of Western missionaries) was generally a core approach of so-called Ethiopianism (for more on this, see article on Ethiopisnism in this volume, p. 97-112); and Ethiopia — black, Christian, independent (religiously as well as politically) — represented the reference point as well as the projection screen of such aspirations.

8 See: KOSCHORKE, K./ HERMANN, A. (2014) (Eds.), *Polycentric Structures in the History of World Christianity* (StAECG Vol. 25; Wiesbaden); KOSCHORKE, K. (2012) (Ed.), *Etappen der Globalisierung in christentumsgeschichtlicher Perspektive / Phases of Globalization in the History of Christianity* (StAECG 19; Wiesbaden); KOSCHORKE, K. (1998) (Ed.), *Transkontinentale Beziehungen in der Geschichte des Außereuropäischen Christentums / Transcontinental Links in the History of Non-Western Christianity* (StAECG 6; Wiesbaden); KOSCHORKE, K. (2016), "Transcontinental Links, Enlarged Maps, and Polycentric Structures in the History of World Christianity", in: Hermann, A./ Burlăcioiu, C./ Phan, P.C. (Eds.), *The 'Munich School of World Christianity'*. Special Issue of 'The Journal of World Christianity'. Vol. 6/1 (Pennsylvania), 28–56; BURLĂCIOIU, C./ HERMANN, A. (Eds.) (2013), *Veränderte Landkarten.* Auf dem Weg zu einer polyzentrischen Geschichte des Weltchristentums. Fs. Klaus Koschorke (Wiesbaden); KOSCHORKE, K. (2010), "Polyzentrische Strukturen der globalen Christentumsgeschichte" (in: Friedli, R. et al. [Eds.], *Intercultural Perceptions and Prospects of World Christianity* [Frankfurt a.M. etc.], 105–126); KOSCHORKE, K. (2016f.), "Religion und Migration. Aspekte einer polyzentrischen Geschichte des Weltchristentums" (in: *Jahrbuch für Europäische Überseegeschichte* 16, 123–144); KOSCHORKE, K./ HERRMANN, A./ LUDWIG, F./ BURLACIOU, C. (Eds.) (2018), "To give publicity to our thoughts". Journale asiatischer und afrikanischer Christen um 1900 und die Entstehung einer transregionalen indigen-christlichen Öffentlichkeit (StAECG 31; Wiesbaden); see especially p. 225–260 ("Die Entstehung einer transregionalen und transkontinentalen indigen-christlichen Öffentlichkeit") and esp. 261–282 ("Christliche Internationalismen um 1910"); KOSCHORKE, K., "Dialectics of the Three Selves". The ideal of a "self-governing" native Church – from a missionary concept to an emancipatory slogan of Asian and African Christians in the 19th and early 20th

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So, for example, the first Munich-Freising Conference in 1997 dealt with the topic of "Confrontation and Interaction between (Western) Colonial and Indigenous Variants of Christianity" in the southern hemisphere[9]. The decisive point was the insight that the Western missionary movement should be understood just as a part of much wider and multidirectional processes of dissemination, despite its enormous significance in specific regions and times (especially in situations of an initial contact). For even before, after or outside the (quite limited) reach of Western missionary activities, Christian communities already existed to some extent in various non-European societies. In other places, they were established completely anew as result of local initiatives. This was the case, for example, in Korea at the end of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, where native Confucian literati founded an underground church in 1784. It subsequently spread in the country, inspite of immediate and heavy persecutions. This happened 50 years before the first European Catholic missionary, the Frenchman Pierre Maubant, reached the 'closed country' in 1835[10].

Elsewhere - such as in *India* and Ethiopia - the Portuguese encountered already existing ancient churches and pre-colonial Christianities in the 16th century. Well known is the story of Vasco da Gama's men setting foot on Indian soil for the first time in 1498 at Kalikut in present-day Kerala. In response to an ironic welcome by local Arab traders – "What the hell are you looking for here?" – they gave the famous answer: "Christians and spices". Spices was the economic and Christians the ideological motive of the Portuguese expeditions to Asia. And it was rather by chance that the Iberians just happened to land in that part of southern India where there had indeed been an ancient (and, for more than a millennium, continuously present) Christian community in the form of the St. Thomas Christians. So it was not the European missionaries who brought Christianity to India. Rather, it had existed there already long before. The subsequent history of the Portuguese and the St. Thomas Christians was, however, marked by a long series of sometimes bizarre intercultural misunderstandings and asymmetrical power relations[11]. In the twentieth century, India's St. Thomas Christian communities were rediscovered as representatives of a non-Western and pre-colonial type of Christianity. In addition, they also play an essential role in global ecumenism.

Quite analogous was the situation in *Ethiopia*, as already mentioned. There, too, the Portuguese – who, by the way, came to the East African country at Ethiopian invitation – encountered an ancient form of African Christianity (dating back to the 4th century), which they soon sought to dominate, with the results already described. Expelled from the country in 1632, their exclusion, conversely, also played a considerable role in the confessional controversies of Europe at that time[12]. Until today, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo

centuries (in: Hoffmeyr, H./ Stenhouse, J. [Eds.], *Internationalising Higher Education* (Zwarkop), 127–142); KOSCHORKE, K. (2022), *Grundzüge der Außereuropäischen Christentumsgeschichte.* Asien, Afrika und Lateinamerika 1450–2000 (Tübingen).

9 KOSCHORKE, K. (1998) (Ed.), *"Christen und Gewürze".* Konfrontation und Interaktion kolonialer und indigener Christentumsvarianten (StAECG Vol. 1; Göttingen).

10 KIM, S.C.H./ KIM, K. (2015), *A History of Korean Christianity* (Cambridge), 19–44; KIM, S. (2014), "Non-Missionary Beginnings of Korean Catholic Christianity in the Late 18th Century", in: Koschorke, *Transkontinentale Beziehungen* (see FN 8), 73–98.

11 For example, the first worship service of the Portuguese on Indian soil took place in a Hindu temple, which the Portuguese mistook for a Christian church.

12 FN 12 PAULAU, S. (2021), *Das andere Christentum*. Zur transkonfessionellen Verflechtungsgeschichte von äthiopischer Orthodoxie und europäischem Protestantismus (Göttingen). On the other hand, Catholic overseas

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Church remains of great importance as a central element of the Amharic national consciousness (as well as in the country's public life).

But Christian Ethiopia is also remarkable because it is far more than just a museum relic from the long past - despite its archaic rites, picturesque processions, or handwritten Bibles in remote monasteries that fascinate tourists and other visitors. Rather, the country - in the form of so-called *Ethiopianism* - became a productive symbol of religious modernity in the 19th and 20th centuries. It inspired diverse movements of emancipation among black Christians on both sides of the Atlantic. Ethiopia was black, Christian, and independent (religiously and politically). As such, it exerted a tremendous fascination on the continent's new, Western-educated elites, who wanted to be religiously modern (i.e., Christian) but, at the same time; without subjecting themselves to missionary and/or European control. Numerous mission-independent black churches emerged in the south of the continent toward the end of the century calling themselves "Ethiopian"[13]. This was true regardless of the concrete knowledge they had about the East African country. Quite remarkably, in the African-American diaspora in the Caribbean or in the south of the (nowadays) United States, there was a longing for the Ethiopia already mentioned in the promises of the Bible (Ps 68; Acts 8; etc) which was even stronger than in Africa itself. The Ethiopia motif was central to many of the numerous remigration movements of black Christians to Africa during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It resulted in the formation of what has been labelled in recent research as the 'Christian Black Atlantic' – the Atlantic as a space of communication and transcontinental exchange between Black Christians on both sides of the ocean (fig. 9-14).[14]

Back to the 16th century and the manifold encounters of the Portuguese in different contact zones. In southern Africa, this led, initially still in a quasi extra-colonial context, to diverse forms of exchange with indigenous African rulers. As a result, the so-called Kongo Catholicism developed as a 'distinctly *Kongo version of Christianity*'[15]. The long reign of King Mvemba Nzinga (1506–1543), baptized as Afonso I, was decisive here. This African ruler was committed to a program of modernizing and Christianizing his empire. He sent

missions also served as a powerful argument — here for Catholic superiority and universalism — in the confessional debates of the time; cf. PO-CHIA HSIA, R. (1995), "Mission und Konfessionalisierung in Übersee", in: Reinhard, W./ Schilling, H. [Eds.], *Die Katholische Konfessionalisierung* (Gütersloh), 158–165.

13 Thus the "Ethiopian Church", founded in Pretoria in 1896 by the former Methodist preacher Mangena Maaka Mokone Mokone (1851–1931), which gave its name to the following wave of mission-independent black church foundations in southern Africa labelling themselves as "Ethiopian". - On Ethiopianism see: KAMPHAUSEN, E. (2002), "Äthiopien als Symbol kirchlicher und politischer Unabhängigkeit", in: Koschorke (2002), *Transkontinentale Beziehungen* (see FN 8), 293–314; CAMPBELL, J.T. (1995), *Songs of Zion.* The African Episcopal Church in the US and South Africa (Oxford); FREDRICKSON, G.M. (1996), *Black Liberation.* A Comparative History of Black Ideologies in the United States and South Africa (New York); MOITSADI MOETI (1997), *Ethiopianism.* Creation of a Nationalist Order for African and the Africans in South Africa (Boaba); BENESCH, K. (2004), *African Diasporas in the New and Old Worlds.* Consciousness and Imagination (Amsterdam/ New York 2004); KALU, O.U. (2005), "Ethiopianism in African Christianity", in: Id. (Ed.), *African Christianity*. An African Story (Pretoria), 258–277. 337ff.; HASTINGS, A. (1994), *The Church in Africa 1450–1950* (Oxford), 493ff. 338–358. 365ff. 437ff. Cf. also: COUTO, D. (2020), "All Roads Lead to Goa: Messengers, Interpreters, Jewish and New Christian Informants in the Indian Ocean in the Sixteenth Century", in: Weil, S. (Ed.), *The Jews of Goa* (Dehli), 200–237.

14 BARNES, A.E. (2018), "The Christian Black Atlantic. African Americans, Ethiopianism, and Christian Newspapers in Africa", in: Koschorke et al., *"To Give Publicity to Our Thoughts"* (see FN 8), 345–362.

15 THORNTON, J. (1984), "The Development of an African Catholic Church in the Kingdom of Kongo, 1491–1750", in: *Journal of African History* 25, 147–167, 155; THORNTON, J. (^{2}1998), *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400–1800* (Cambridge).

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his son Dom Henrique to Portugal for theological training in order to develop a native church in the Kongo. From Rome he returned to his country in 1521 as Africa's first – and until the nineteenth century, last – black bishop, but soon died there. Portuguese missionaries came to the country, but as invited guests. According to historian Horst Gründer, "the phenomenon of Christianization carried out by the natives without pressure from outside" can be observed here. Moreover, it was "pushed by the Africans more than by the Europeans, sometimes even against their resistance"[16].

In addition, Kongo Catholicism also played a role in the *Christianization of African Americans* in the New World. This subject has attracted considerable attention in recent research. Many Congolese who were taken to America (especially to Brazil and the Caribbean) by the Portuguese were already baptized Christians. Some of them functioned in the New World also as evangelists among their compatriots and fellow sufferers. Up to the early nineteenth century, in various places, there is evidence for a specific Kongolese Christian self-identification and continued evangelistic commitment. The conversion of African Americans, according to the American social anthropologist John Thornton, was therefore a "continuous process commencing in Africa and carrying over to the New World". "Much of the Christianity of the African world was carried across the seas to America. In addition to the Africans who were themselves Christians there were also the catechits who helped to generate an African form of Christianity among the slaves who were not Christians". But, he adds, "modern scholarship las largely overlooked this aspect of the problem".[17]

This also applies to the Christian Kongo Empire as such. Its ruler Afonso I. was engaged in a lively and, between 1512 and 1540, well-documented exchange of letters with both the Portuguese crown in Lisbon and the Curia in Rome. His successors even could adorn themselves with the title "Defensor fidei". In Heinz Schilling's otherwise masterful work "*1517. Weltgeschichte eines Jahres*" (1517: World History of a Year)[18], however, the Christian Kongo and its rulers do not even appear in the index - yet another testament of the numerous white patches on the map of global Christianity in the early modern period when seen primarily through European eyes.

III. New Topics, Approaches, Challenges

We are just at the very beginning of the project of a polycentric history of World Christianity. This aim can be achieved only through intensive interdisciplinary and international cooperation. The Frankfurt Collegial Research Group (KFG) can be expected to provide some highly weighty stimuli to this enterprise. The necessity of a polycentric approach to the history of World Christianity does not result only from new methodological considerations or historiographical debates. It is also an expression of the fundamental changes in the contours and demographic shifts within World Christianity itself. Around 1900, about 82% of the world's Christian population still were to be found in the northern hemisphere. Since the late 1980s, however, a growing majority have been living in the so-

16 GRÜNDER, H. (1992), *Welteroberung und Christentum*. Ein Handbuch zur Geschichte der Neuzeit (Gütersloh), 58; cf. HASTINGS, A. (1994), *The Church in Africa 1450–1950* (Oxford), 73–86.

17 THORNTON ([2]1998), *Africa and Africans* (see FN 15), 254. 262. 254.

18 SCHILLING, H. (2017), *1517*. Weltgeschichte eines Jahres (München).

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called global South. This has also profound consequences for our understanding of the historical developments that have led to the current situation.

In many churches and related academic institutions in the global South, the process of organizational and theological emancipation from Western dominance in the period of decolonization after World War II had been accompanied also by a historiographical reorientation [19]. As a result, in countries like India, Japan, Korea or South Africa, and even in communist China, centers were founded for studying the history of Christianity within their specific national or cultural context. Exciting as many of these experiments have been - one problem still exists that academic teaching there often continues to be based on traditional (i.e. Eurocentric) curricula, to which then – in a second step - the respective regional histories often simply have been more or less tacked on. Little attention has been paid, however, to the perception of simultaneous – analogous or different – developments in neighboring regions or other cultural contexts. In Asia, for example, there have been remarkable historiographical initiatives since the 1960s, and in Latin America since the 1970s. The latter, however, were initially hardly noticed outside Latin America, due to language barriers that still exist in the Anglophone academia. On the other hand, immigrational societies like the US have become very productive places for an intercultural and 'polycentric' study of the history of global Christianity. There exist not only numerous academic centers with a corresponding focus (for example, in Yale, Princeton, Boston, New York or Atlanta). In addition, the broad variety of 'World Christianity' in its manifold denominational and cultural expressions can be met there also in form of numerous immigrant Churches, along with the respective linguistic skills and cultural competences [20]. Cooperation and exchange with a much wider spectrum of research centers and academic institutions outside Europe should be intensified.

The varied perspectives and possible contributions to a polycentric approach to the history of World Christianity are, of course, depending on the profile and regional focus of the individual research projects. Essential steps and fields of future research should include:

(1) The systematic search for, and targeted exploration of, indigenous Christian sources, both in the respective colonial and regional languages or local idioms, which often still lie undiscovered in local or even Western colonial and missionary archives;

19 The 'Church History Association of India' (CHAI), for example, was founded in 1969 in order to study Christian history from an 'Indian perspective', and in 1973 the 'Comisión de Estudios de Historia de la Iglesia Latinoamericana' (CEHILA) was established as a continental association of Latin American historians with a liberation-theological approach. Transregional and transcontinental cooperation was the goal of the 'History Group' of the 'Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians' (EATWOT), which was founded in 1983, and other related associations in the so-called global South.

20 "It is no longer only the 'WASP's (White Anglo-Saxon Protestants), sitting in our seminar rooms", told me once the President of the 'Union Theological Seminary' in New York. "You will find there also Copts from Egypt, Aladura Christians from Nigeria, Bolivian Pentecostals, Vietnamese Catholics, Chinese Lutherans or Myanmar Baptists". – Relevant research groups for regional studies are, i.e., the 'China Christianity Studies Group' (中國基督宗教研究學會) or the team of the 'Dictionary of African Christian Biography' (DACB) - Project. - On the concept of 'World Christianity Studies' and '(History of) World Christianity' cf. Irvin, D.T. (2008), "World Christianity. An Introduction", in: *The Journal of World Christianity* 1,1: 1–26; Kim, S./ Kim, K. (2008), *Christianity as a World Religion* (London); Frederiks, M. (2021), "World Christianity: Contours of an Approach", in: Frederiks, M./ Nagy, D. (Eds.), *World Christianity*. Methodological Considerations (Leiden/ Boston), 10–39; and the current debates in The Journal of World Christianity (established in 2008).

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This is a point of utmost importance. Traditionally, the history of Christianity beyond Europe has been described primarily through the eyes of missionary sources or documents from colonial (and other Western) archives. But, as mentioned above, the Western missionary movement has been just one factor, among others, in the transregional and global spread of Christianity since the early modern period. "Native agency" thus has become a keyword in current research on the history of world Christianity – in order to get access to the voices of previously neglected groups (and the majority of Christian believers in the global South). There are many more relevant documents by (or about) indigenous authors and actors to be found both in dispersed local archives or private collections as well as in established colonial or missionary archives than is generally known. But they have often been simply overlooked or are known only to a limited number of specialists or discussed just in confined regional discourses[21]. In any case, they represent often a very different look at the processes of Christianization in a given cultural context, the variety of interreligious interactions, local appropriations, and non-missionary views on Christianity. Considerable progress has been made in recent times. But a systematic search for these documents "from the other side of history", so far missing[22], would bring a wealth of new insights to light.

(2) Multidirectional and early South-South connections. Examples (some already mentioned):

- Kongo Christianity in the New World (sixteenth through eighteenth centuries);-
- African American remigration to Africa and the Sierra-Leone Experiment (1792 onwards);
- Transatlantic black brotherhoods, Brazilian priests in Nigeria (eighteenth century)
- African American missionaries in West and South Africa (nineteenth century);
- Media networks of black Christians on both sides of the Atlantic (nineteenth / twentieth century).
- These are all examples from an area recently labelled as the 'Christian Black Atlantic' (which has already been extensively researched, in part due to the

21 To give one example from a later period (which has been subject of a Munich-based research project on indigenous Christian journals and periodicals from Asia and Africa around 1900): "The Christian Patriot" (CP) (Madras/ Chennai, 1890–1929), mouthpiece of the (quite influential) Protestant elite of South India who were proud of this journal as "a purely indigenous venture. It was planned by Indian Christians, started by them, and is being conducted by them" (CP January 10, 1903, p. 3). Inspite of its remarkably wide circulation in India, South Asia and South Africa, and its resonance also in UK and US, today it is virtually unknown even among specialists in mission history (for details see now: KOSCHORKE, K. [2019], *"Owned and Conducted entirely by the Native Christian Community"*. Der 'Christian Patriot' und die indigen-christliche Presse im kolonialen Indien um 1900 (StAECG 34; Wiesbaden). Quite instructive is a comparison with contemporary missionary writings dealing partially with the same event (see, e.g., GÄBLER, U. [2018], *Ein Missionarsleben*. Hermann Gäbler und die Leipziger Mission in Südindien (1891–1916) [Leipzig]).

22 Quite remarkably, the turn in Indian Christian historiography in the 1960s mentioned above (see FN 18) – from Western missionary activities to the "pioneers of Indigenous Christianity" in India – had been accompanied by the establishment of archives dedicated to the collection and preservation of relevant source materials, both in India (e.g. in Bangalore) and other places in Asia. Current projects of digitization of missionary sources – as welcome as they are, since they make previously inaccessible source material accessible to a wider circle of users - sometimes have an opposite effect. Being based primarily on archival materials in the major archives in the west, they often have a tendency to reinforce the metropolitan perspective, instead of a polycentric view on the variety of local developments.

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considerable scientific-political influence of African American lobby groups in the US)[23].

(3) The 'Black Christian Atlantic' as a model for other world regions and spaces of a transregional and transcontinental interaction, such as:

– the Pacific Ocean (the Philippines as a sub-colony of Mexico, with corresponding forms also of religious exchange) or the Indian Ocean (with its manifold interactions, for example, between India and South Africa) [24];

(4) Migration and ethnic diaspora networks as channels of a non-Western-missionary diffusion of Christianity:

– from the Armenians and East Syrians in times of the European Middle Ages, to the transatlantic slave trade of the early modern period, and the system of indentured labour in the British colonial empire of the nineteenth century[25];

(5) Locating traditional themes on an extended map of the global history of Christianity:

– The Council of Trent, for example, should be perceived not only in its European but also in its non-European spaces of reception (Spanish America, Portuguese India, Ethiopia etc.), where it partly set in motion completely different dynamics, with considerable impacts on the respective (already existing or emerging) local Christianities [26];
– the Chinese rite controversy's repercussions in Europe: initially a locally-confined dispute between rival missionary orders in China, it increasingly determined debates first within ecclesiastical circles and then also among the philosophically enlightened public in Europe (Leibniz, etc.);
– the emergence of national church movements in Asia at the end of the nineteenth century, and their enormous significance for the beginnings of the Western ecumenical movement in the context of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference in 1910; etc.

(6) Integration of European and non-European historiographical traditions - a theme not only relevant in current projects on the history of overseas Christianities, but already found in the works of indigenous authors of the early modern period.

23 See now the essays by John Thornton, David Daniels, Ciprian Burlăcioiu and James Campbell in this volume. On the variety of transregional and transcontinental indigenous Christian networks around 1900 cf. KOSCHORKE (2018), "Christliche Internationalismen um 1910", in: Koschorke et al., *"To give Publicity to our Thoughts"* (see FN 8), 261–282, esp. 263ff.

24 See the articles by Erin Kathleen Rowe, Christoph Nebgen, Raphaele Preisinger, Pius Malekandathil and Klaus Koschorke in this volume.

25 See, e.g.: BURLĂCIOIU, C. (2022) (Ed.), *Migration and Diaspora Formation*. New Perspectives on a Global History of Christianity (Berlin); HANCILES, J. (2021), *Migration and the Making of Global Christianity* (Grand Rapids); ADOGAME, A. et.al. (2019) (Eds.), *Migration and public discourse in world Christianity* (Minneapolis).

26 Cf. the articles by Hans-Jürgen PRIEN and Teotonio DE SOUZA in: Koschorke (2002), *Transkontinentale Beziehungen* (see FN 4), 163–202; and the other authors mentioned in FN 4 (above).

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A remarkable example is provided by the famous pictorial chronicle by the Peruvian Guamán Poma de Ayala (ca. 1535/50 to after 1616) in his 'Nueva Corónica Y Buen Gobierno', written in Spanish and Qetschua around 1615. His world history begins with Adam and Eve and reaches first to the appearance of 'our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ', who -so it is said (not quite correctly) -, was born when "Julius Caesar" ruled in "Rome" (sic), and the "Inca Cinche Roca" in Cuzco. Afterwards, both lines of tradition, that of the Roman emperors and popes and the Inca rulers in Cuzco, are continued parallel to each other until they join again at the time of the conquest of Peru by the Spaniards. The subsequent preaching of the Christian faith is welcomed by Poma de Ayala, and at the same time, sharp criticism is levelled at both Spanish colonial rule and the realities of the colonial church system[27]. - There exists quite a number of such historical works by indigenous authors often known only to a limited number of specialists[28]. They, too, are a highly worthwhile subject of research for a polycentric history of Christianity.

IV. Christian Universalism and the Multiplicity of Local Christianities

How should we name the diverse forms of Christianity that have evolved from interaction with a particular local or regional culture? We are talking about localisation, regionalisation, variants of Christianity, local religion, indigenous Christianities, local Christianities, etc [29].

I do not want to discuss here the question of appropriate terminologies in detail. But I would like to point out one important aspect that should be taken into account in this debate: the conviction of the universality of the Christian faith, shared by many believers across different regions and cultures.

In many cases this was also a determining factor for indigenous actors who resisted missionary dominance and claims to exclusivity. What was it, then, that could have made the message of Western missionaries attractive to people in various non-European societies in eighteenth or nineteenth centuries? Besides access to certain modern technologies – provided by, or at least expected from, the missionaries – it had been quite often their

27 THIEMER-SACHSE, U. (Ed.)/ KUNZMANN (Tr.), (2004), *Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala*. Die neue Chronik und gute Regierung / El Primer Nueva Corónica Y Buen Gobierno. Faksimile-Ausgabe und Übersetzung auf CD-ROM (Berlin), 13. Further literature: ADORNO, R. (2000), *Guamán Poma*. Writing and Resistance in Colonial Peru (Austin: University of Texas Press); PRIEN (1978), *Geschichte des Christentums in Lateinamerika* (see FN 4), 221–228; STEINER, M. (1992), *Guamán Poma de Ayala und die Eroberer Perus*. Indianischer Chronist zwischen Anpassung und Widerstand (Saarbrücken).

28 Further examples are being discussed in the Special Issue of; *Periplus:* Jahrbuch für außereuropäische Geschichte 16 (2006); see there the articles by Richard NEBEL ("Mestizische und indigen-christliche Autoren im kolonialen Mexiko", 142–161), Paul JENKINS ("Westafrikanische Pastoren als Pionierhistoriker. Carl C. Reindorf [1834–1917] und Samuel Johnson [1846–1901]") and Werner USTORF ("Olaudah Equiano [1745–1797] – afrikanischer Christ, Publizist und Abolitionist", 116–128).

29 See for instance the contributions in: TAVÁREZ, D. (Ed.) (2017), *Words and Worlds Turned Around.* Indigenous Christianities in Colonial Latin America (Boulder/CO); GLEI, R./ JASPERT, N. (Eds.) (2016), *Locating Religions*. Contact, Diversity, and Translocality (Boston); WELTECKE, D. (2016), "Space, Entanglement and Decentralisation. On How to Narrate the Transcultural History of Christianity, 550 to 1350 CE" (ibid., 315–344); AMSLER, N./ BADEA, A./ HEYBERGER, B./ WINDLER, C. (Eds.) (2019), *Catholic Missionaries in Early Modern Asia.* Patterns of Localization (London); EMICH, B. (2019), "Afterword. Localizing Catholic missions in Asia. Framework conditions, scope for action and social spaces" (ibid., 218–229).

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preaching of a supreme God who is ethically consistent (important in a world of constant uncertainties) and who could be worshipped everywhere (and not only at specific holy places or in restricted areas). This latter aspect could be of enormous importance, especially in times of incipient globalization and the dissolution of small-scale living worlds (for example, in sub-Saharan Africa in the nineteenth century). Indeed, this argument of universality has played a decisive role since the beginning of the history of Christian expansion – from the Germanic mission in the Middle Ages to the religious discussions between Aztec nobles and Franciscan fathers in Mexico in 1524 up to later stages in the history of Western missions.

The crucial point here is that it has been exactly this conviction that often was also the motivating force for local Christian who separated in protest from the mission establishments and founded their own churches under indigenous leadership. This happened repeatedly in Asia and Africa in the nineteenth century. They denounced the growing paternalism (or even racism) of Western missionaries and European settlers as a violation of the 'universal brotherhood' and 'equality of all believers' which had been preached to them earlier by these very same missionaries. They even formally condemned such an attitude as 'heresy' and 'sectarianism'. A growing number of Asian or African believers were convinced that 'true Christianity' had now found a home in their own community. In many cases, they saw themselves as legitimate representatives of the universal church, while colonial pastors or racist settlers increasingly were regarded as 'corrupters' and traitors of Christian values and principles [30].

Quite remarkably, there is also much earlier evidence of an emerging global awareness among indigenous Christian elites – which could result in severe criticism of the given circumstances on the spot. In 1745, for example, the black African pastor Jacobus Elisa

30 For examples from 19th century southern Africa, see ELPHICK, R. (2012), *The Equality of Believers*. Protestant Missionaries and the Racial Politics of South Africa (Charlottesville/ London); on paradigms from India and Asia at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries cf. KOSCHORKE (2019), *"Owned and Conducted"* (see FN 21), 51–53. 254ff. 266ff. Indian Christians, for example, condemned the racism of European churchmen as incompatible with Christianity as a universal "religion of love" as well as "the most damnable of all heresies in Christ's Church" ('Christian Patriot' February 20, 1896, p. 4; 23.10.1909 p. 6). In order to be able to criticize the colonial church conditions on the spot, they made it a principle "to look around and to see what is being done in other parts of the world by the races newly brought into the fold of Christ" ('Christian Patriot' of March 11, 1905, p. 5). But evidence of a global awareness among indigenous Christian elites and resulting criticism of local developments can be found much earlier. In 1745, for example, the black African pastor Jacobus Elisa Capitein in the Dutch colony of Elmina (in present-day Ghana) wrote a bitter letter of complaint to the ecclesiastical and political authorities in Amsterdam, pointing to the unequally better working conditions enjoyed by his Indian colleagues in the Danish Lutheran colonial church in Tranquebar, South India. Experiments there to form an indigenous pastorate, in turn, were inspired by corresponding news from Boston about Native Indian pastors in British-ruled New England. Local communities and movements could, of course, also separate themselves from the respective mainstream churches and reject connection with other branches of global Christianity. In Japan, after centuries of persecution and enforced isolation, contacts between underground Japanese Christians (the so-called *Sempuku Kirishitan*) and European missionaries re-emerged for the first time in the mid-19th century. Some of these *Sempuku Kirishitan* then rejoined the Roman Catholic Church, while others (known as *Kakure Kirishitan*) insisted to continue their now self-imposed separation. Among Chinese Christians, at the beginning of the 20th century, numerous initiatives to form mission-independent communities under Chinese leadership could be observed. This led on the one hand to the founding of the interdenominational 'Church of Christ in China' - as representative of a 'soft' (i.e. ecumenically oriented) type - and on the other hand to the birth of the 'True Jesus Church' (Zhen Yesu jiahui) - serving as paradigm of a 'hard' (resp. ethnonationalist and partly even xenophobic) version of Chinese independentism (cf. XI, LIAN [2010], *Redeemed by Fire.* The Rise of Popular Christianity in China [New Haven], 9. 42–63, esp. 49f).

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Capitein in the Dutch colony of Elmina (in present-day Ghana) wrote a letter of bitter complaint to the ecclesiastical and political authorities in Amsterdam. He referred to the much better working conditions enjoyed by his Indian colleagues in the Danish Lutheran colonial church in Tranquebar, South India, as compared to the situation in Elmina. In Tranquebar, vice versa, first attempts to form an indigenous pastorate had been inspired by news from Boston about the ordination of Native Indian pastors in British-dominated New England. Thus, quite early we can observe the incipient formation of what might be called a transregional indigenous Christian public sphere.

Self-identification as part of the global Christian community played a role also in sixteenth-century debates between Ethiopian Orthodox theologians and the Jesuit missionaries, as expressed in 1555 in the so-called 'Confessio Claudii' of the Ethiopian Emperor Gelawdewos. According to the monarch, the practices of the Ethiopians criticized by the Jesuits (such as circumcision, celebrating the Sabbath, etc.) had no religious significance. Instead, they corresponded to wide-spread civil or cultural conventions[31]. In its decisive characteristics, the Ethiopian Church saw itself as one with the apostolic tradition of the universal Church; and it was then the attempted imposition of particular Roman practices that finally led to the break with Rome.

V. An Encounter in Medieval Rome

I would like to conclude with an episode from 1287, when a Mongolian Christian, Rabban Bar Sauma (ca. 1220–1294), envoy of the East Syriac Patriarch and the Mongol ruler Il-Khan Argun, met twelve Roman Catholic cardinals in Rome. This was one of the few direct (and 'official') contacts between representatives of the 'Church of the East' and the Latin Christianity of the West in times of the European High Middle Ages. Rabban Bar Sauma had initially set out from China with a companion on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, which he never reached. Instead, they both went to Baghdad. His companion Rabban Markos became there first bishop and later patriarch of the 'Church of the East'. Rabban bar Sauma moved on to Constantinople, Rome, Genoa, Paris and Bordeaux on a diplomatic mission.

On his arrival in Rome, Rabban Bar Sauma was questioned about the creed and rites of the Orientals. When confronted with the cardinals' attempts to impose on him the norms of Roman orthodoxy, he referred to the venerable age and the autonomy of the 'Church of the East'. Never, he declared, "has an envoy of the Pope come to us in the East". Quite the contrary: "many of our priests have gone to the countries of the Mongols, Turks and Chinese", converting many there, including "princes and queens". Above all, he said, it had been the apostles Saint Thomas, Mar Addai, and Mar Mari who initiated the work of conversion in these regions. These were other apostles than those who once had founded the Roman Church, i.e. Peter and Paul. Rabban bar Sauma eagerly sought out their graves in Rome to share in the blessings also of these saints. You have your apostles, was his message, and we have ours, and in that we are equal. "I have not come from distant lands to debate matters of faith", he told the cardinals, but to consider issues of common concern

31 English Translation in: KOSCHORKE, K./ LUDWIG, F./ DELGADO, M. (Eds.) (2007), *A History of Christianity in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, 1450–1990.* A Documentary Source Book 1450-1990 (Neukirchen), 157–159; cf. PAULAU (2021), *Das andere Christentum* (see FN 12); ULLENDORFF, E. (1987), "The Confessio Fidei of King Claudius of Ethiopia", in: *Journal of Semitic Studies* 32/1, 159–176.

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(such as the recapture of Jerusalem)[32]. The figure of apostolic plurality thus was being used to express the equal status of Eastern and Western traditions.

This argument played an important role also in later intra-Christian encounters. For example, the St. Thomas Christians of South India used it against Portuguese colonial Catholicism in the early sixteenth century. They claim, so goes a report by the priest Penteado in a letter to the Portuguese king in 1516/1518, "that just as there were twelve apostles, they [at the same time] founded twelve [different forms of ecclesial] customs, each different from the others"[33] – a noteworthy contribution to the topic of 'Polycentricity and Plurality' in the early modern period.

32 TOEPEL, A. (2008) (Ed./ Tr.), *Die Mönche des Kublai Khan*. Die Reise der Pilger Mar Yahballaha und Rabban Sauma nach Europa (Darmstadt), 75–83; BUDGE, E.A.W. (1928) (Tr.), *The Monks of Kublai Khan* (London); MOFFET, S.H. (1992), *A History of Christianity in Asia* I (San Francisco), 430–435; BAUM, W./ WINKLER, D.W. (2000), *Die Apostolische Kirche des Ostens*. Geschichte der sogenannten Nestorianer (Klagenfurt), 85–91.

33 MUNDADAN, A.M. (1967), *The Arrival of the Portuguese in India and the Thomas Christians under Mar Jacob 1498–1552* (Bangalore), 83.

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Fig. 1: Cuzco (Peru) — Cathedral and Jesuit church (with the paintings of Marcos Zapata)

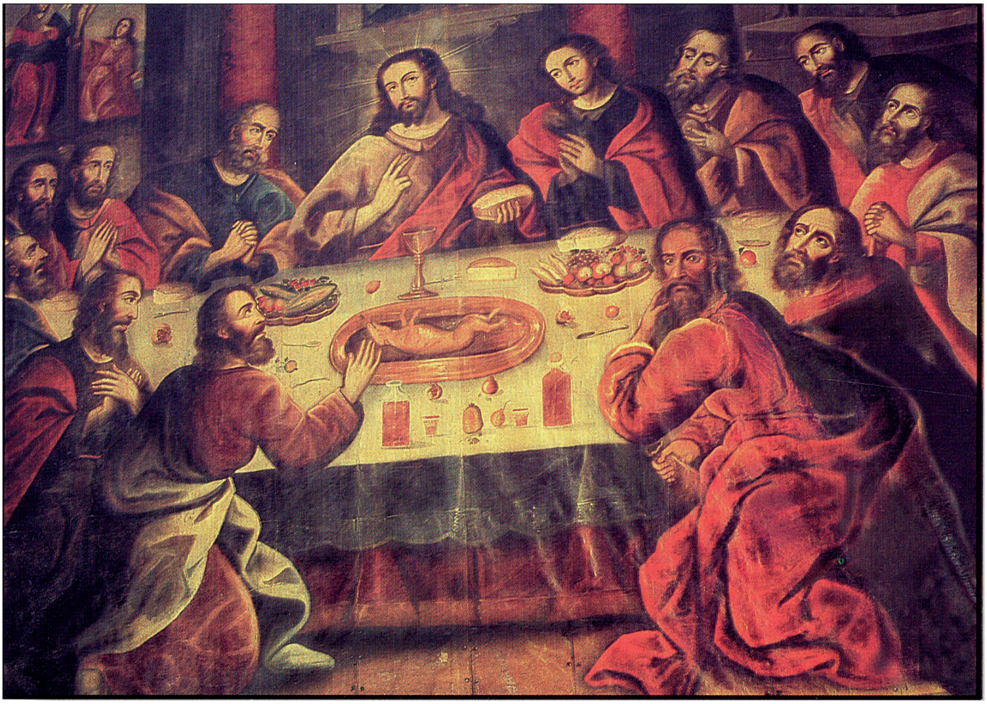

Fig. 2: Cuzco: Marcos Zapata (1710–1773) — “Cena ultima” / “Last Supper with guinea pig” (cuj)

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Fig. 3: Cuzco: Marcos Zapata (1710–1773) — Wedding of a Spanish captain (Martín García de Loyola) and an Inca princess (Beatriz Clara Coya)

Fig. 4: Cuzco: Marcos Zapata (1710–1773) — "Ignatius defeats the heretics" (Luther, Calvin, Oecololampad, Melanchthon, Wyclif and Hus)

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Fig. 5: Cuzco: Marcos Zapata (1710–1773) — “Ignatius defeats the heretics”

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Fig. 6: Ethiopia: Priest with Geez-Bible (Tana Lake)

Fig. 7: Ethiopia: Procession of monks at the monastery Debre Damo (6th/7th cent.) during Holy Week (2014)

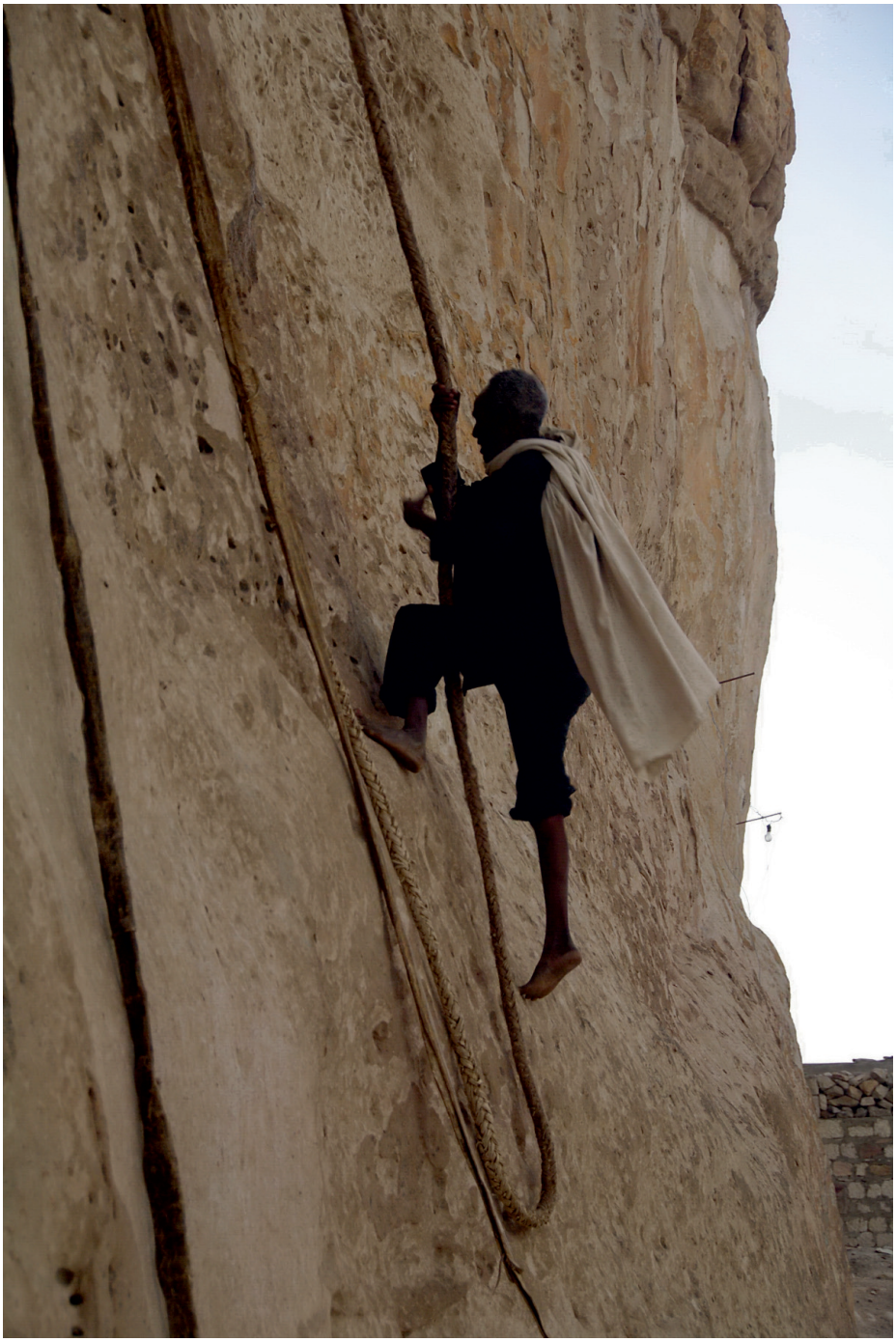

Fig. 8: Ethiopia: Ascent to the Debre Damo Monastery
(not without danger and reserved only for men)

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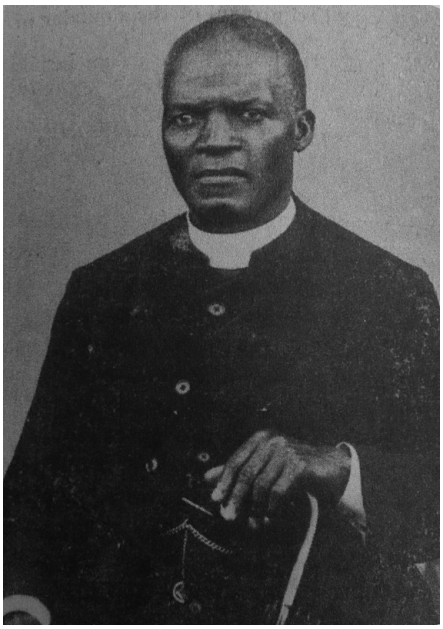

Fig. 9: South Africa: Mangena M. Mokone (1851–1931), founder of the African-led 'Ethiopian Church' in Pretoria in 1892, which served as a model for many black churches in southern Africa labelling themselves "Ethiopian"

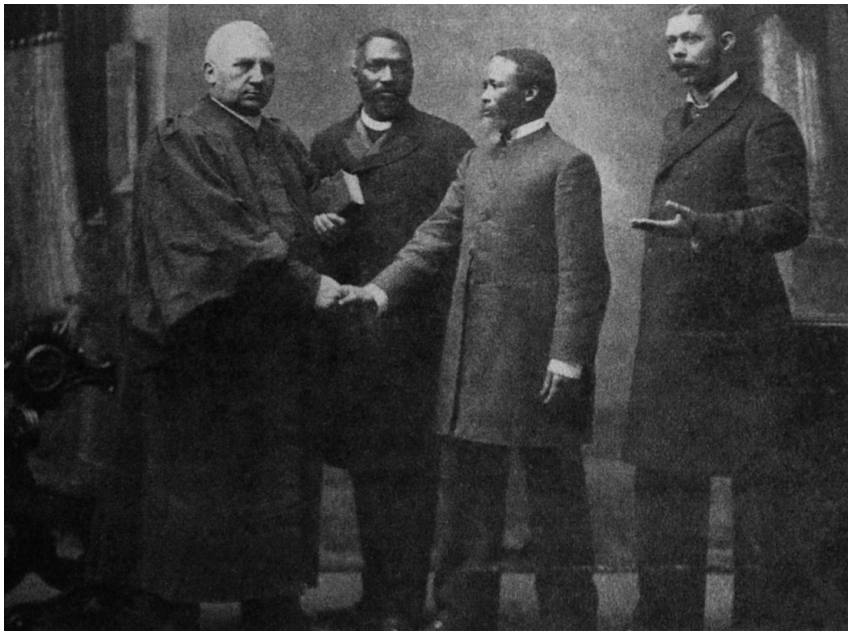

Fig. 10: Ethiopianism as a transatlantic movement: 1896 union of the South African 'Ethiopian Church' with the US-American 'African Methodist Episcopal Church' (AME) (founded in Philaldelphia in 1816) (on the left in the picture AME Bishop Henry Turner, with James Dwane as representative of the South Africans)

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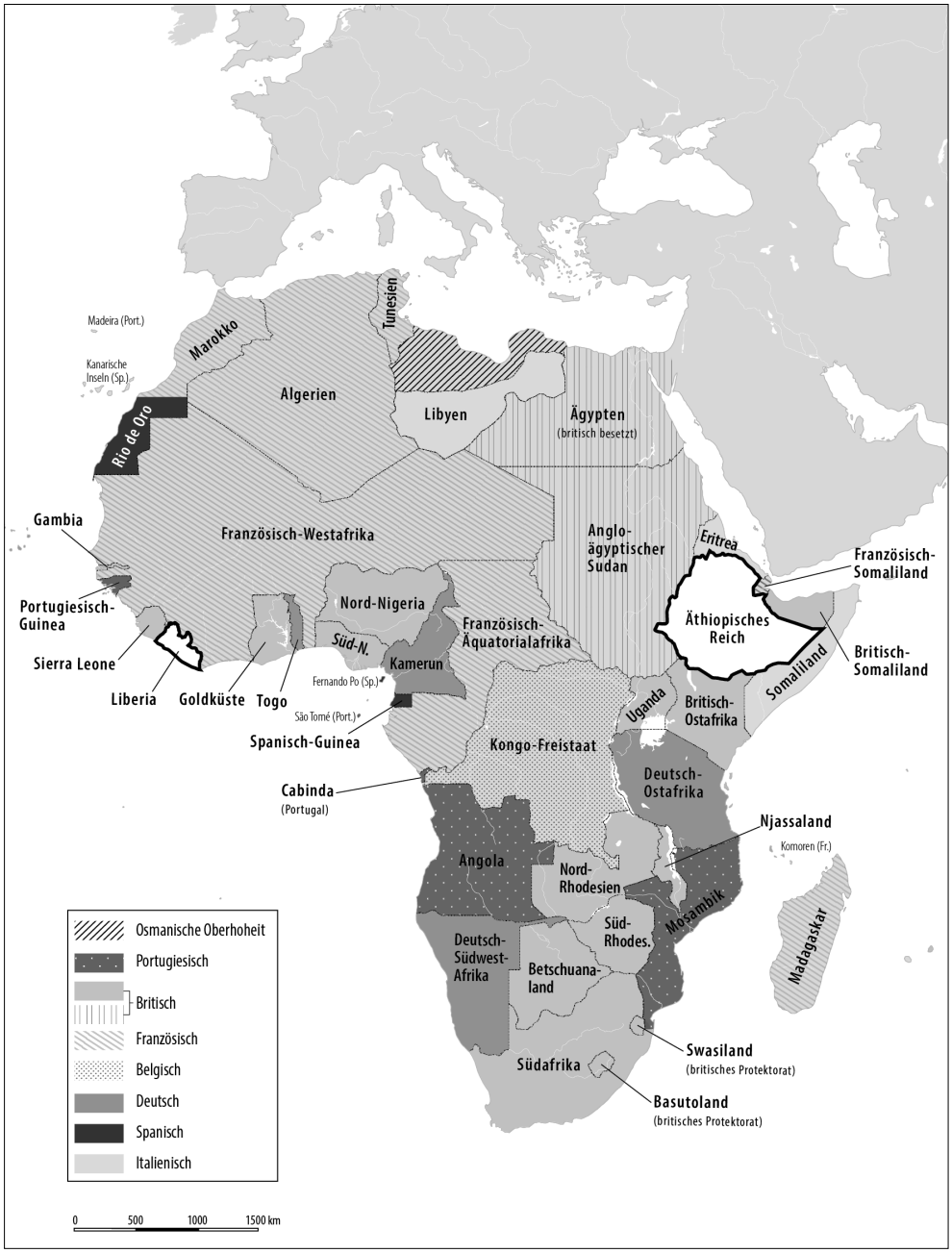

Fig. 11: Colonial Africa around 1900: Countries free of colonial rule marked in white (Christian Ethiopia, Liberia)

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Fig. 12: Jamaica, hotspot of Caribbean Ethiopianism: Entrance gate to the area of the 'True Divine Church of Salvation' and the 'Ethiopia Africa Black International Congress' in the Ethiopian national colours of red, yellow and green

Fig. 13: Jamaica, hotspot of Caribbean Ethiopianism and early centre of the "Back to Africa" movement

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Fig. 14: Jamaica: Priest of the Ethiopian Orthodox *Tehawedo* Church

Photos: Copyright Klaus Koschorke. Fig. 09 and 10 taken from: CAMPBELL, J.T. (1998), *Songs of Zion*. The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa (Oxford / New York), p. 138 C+D (with the kind permission of the author).

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Early Modern Christianities (Kulturen des Christentums/ Cultures of Christianity 1), Köln: Böhlau, 2023; (Ed., with Daniel Sidler, Samuel Weber and Christian Windler:) *Making Saints in a Glocal Religion:* Practices of Holiness in Early Modern Catholicism (Kulturen des Christentums/ Cultures of Christianity 3), Köln: Böhlau, 2024.

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