

Self-organised Networks in the First Global Age:

The Jesuits in Japan

Amélia POLÓNIA

最初の黄金時代の自己組織的なネットワーク

——日本におけるイエズス会——

アメリア・ポローニア

Abstract

The paper intends to explore the strength of individual and group agency in the scope of Portuguese overseas expansion at a global level. It further seeks to emphasise the mechanisms of cooperation, both between European agents and between those and local agents and authorities, sometimes led even against the interests of the Portuguese crown. Finally it argues that the success of these contacts depended more often than not on an active process of acculturation and miscegenation, rather than on imposition mechanisms, traditionally regarded as the lever of colonial and empire building processes.

To discuss the evidence underlying these assumptions, it focus on the Portuguese case, first at a general level, then from a micro-approach centred on the Jesuit enactments in Japan and their interaction with trade networks in the Pacific Ocean.

Key words: Self-organisation, informal networks, Portuguese expansion, Jesuits, trade networks, cross-cultural networks, Japan

1. Theoretical Framework. New theories on empire building

European historiography usually associates the analysis of globalisation in the Early Modern Period (1500–1800) with “empire building” processes, considering overseas expansionism led by the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, British and French as the main lever in the process, disregarding proposals that argue in favour of an increasing pre-globalisation dynamics in the Indian Ocean¹⁾, long before the arrival of Europeans.

Furthermore, the study of the historical outcomes of early modern empires is usually focused on central power strategies and imperial rivalries, monopolies, warfare strategies and political disputes between colonisers. This perspective leads to three main consequences:

1. Focusing on central power strategies, they exclude the perception of how individuals and groups of indi-

viduals contributed to those historical dynamics, at times to an even greater extent than the central power itself.

2. The few existing analyses based on networks deal mostly with institutionalised, formal connections, whether they were political, religious or economic, excluding those acting within an informal and non-institutionalised scope.
3. They disregard the active influence of the agents, societies and civilizations of contact, in Africa, Asia and America, ignoring local inputs to colonial dynamics.

Even though a relevant number of studies may have already gone beyond this perception with regard to Asia, and particularly the Indian Ocean, among which we can mention the works of Sanjay Subrahmanyam²⁾, Michael Pearson³⁾, or James Boyajian⁴⁾, much has yet to be done. Such perspectives⁵⁾ are in fact under review in more recent times, through the lens of a dynamic historiography, both European and non-European. The expression “informal empires”⁶⁾ has even arisen, as a means to point out the informal ways in which the European overseas dominium was built in the First Global Age.

Simultaneously, networks became a central concept, and network reconstitution methods a core procedure in the analysis of Early Modern globalisation. More than formal networks, researchers focus their attention on informal, trans-imperial and cross-border networks, rather than on those resulting from the enactments of central power strategies, which are, by nature, national, and promote rivalry rather than cooperation. The reasoning to this is clear and can be checked in a panel proposal to the ESSHC of Glasgow (April 2012), according to which: “... there is a growing consensus that most of the European empires overseas were profitable and successful due to the intervention of individuals or groups of individuals engaged in the common good of the social and economic networks they served. More often than not, these self-organized, trans-imperial, cross-cultural networks imposed serious challenges to State, Church and Monopolistic institutions, since they were the source of most of the illegal and contraband transactions world-wide, but they were also the ones that within, or in collaboration with the institutions actually became agents of empire building”⁷⁾.

This paper falls in line with this developing tendency of historiographical revision, in which Francesca Trivellato’s *The Familiarity of Strangers*⁸⁾; Studnický’s work on *Portugal’s Atlantic Diaspora*⁹⁾ or Lamikiz’s research on Spanish merchants and overseas networks¹⁰⁾, set the tone.

Our study also follows the path set in a recent historiographical approach, deriving from inputs from theories on cooperation when applied to History, currently developed by an international and interdisciplinary research project—DynCoopNet, submitted to the European Science Foundation’s TECT (The Evolution of Cooperation and Trade) programme. As for the theoretical background, DynCoopNet (“Dynamic Complexity of Cooperation-Based Self-Organizing Commercial Networks in the First Global Age”)¹¹⁾ applies the evolutionary models and theories of cooperation to historical studies. From a methodological point of view, it is based on the operative principles of network analysis and agent-based modelling.

This project sustains that, in the period between the 15th and 18th centuries, the world economy was increasingly characterised by widespread collaboration that went beyond the boundaries of countries and continents. It

further argues that it was made possible by new means of global communication and the building not only of formal but also informal networks, frequently multinational. Among the primary assumptions of this project, some can be highlighted:

1. Cooperation tied together several self-organizing networks;
2. The world economy became, at this period, a dynamic, open, complex, non-linear system;
3. The history of any place within this world cannot be understood without examining how it was connected to other locations and to the system as a whole¹².

These connections, at a global level, were mainly sustained by the agency of informal and self-organised networks, rather than by the official operations of formal agents of empire building, whether monopolistic trade companies or state institutions and representatives.

According to DynCoopNet, cooperation-based self-organising networks were characterised by a diffusion of authority; these cooperation-based networks served as a source for the creativity and innovation necessary to respond in a flexible manner to the disruptions in commodity, information, and capital flows; there were significant variations in cooperative behaviour, and these were shaped by cultural information, institutions and individual agents, that can be specific to place and that vary according to the circuits used by political, commercial and social networks¹³.

The strategy and work plan of this research programme, aiming to ascertain the agency of self-organising commercial networks over various temporal scales, presents itself as a major tool to re-evaluate worldwide dynamics from a new perspective, centred on individuals. However, to fully understand the mechanisms of cooperation, it is important to acknowledge that cooperation does not take place only among individuals or informal networks. Individual actors and informal networks do not always act against formal powers, against the crown or the state. Cooperation between individuals and the state is often a decisive means of empire building. Summarising our point of view, the role of the Modern State in the construction of European empires is undeniable. The constitution of overseas empires, in terms of administrative control and military organisation, required complex logistics and substantial financial capacity, which was inaccessible to individuals or isolated groups. However, the complex systems produced and coordinated by the central powers often depended on cooperation from individuals.

The construction of global interactions, based on self-organising networks becomes, thus, essential to the understanding of some dynamics that transcended political, religious and economic frontiers, which are in fact, those which sustain globalisation processes. Furthermore, cooperative behaviours among individuals and the state did not exclude reciprocal behaviours of cheating and desertion. Understanding the mechanisms of cooperation implies realising that cooperation patterns include different degrees of involvement that go from positive to negative inputs, from active cooperation to simple collaborations, from dialogue to deception, desertion and active competition, the latter often regarded as the opposite of cooperation.

According to theoreticians of cooperation, cooperation is described as “a behavior which provides a benefit to another individual and which is selected for because of its beneficial effect on the recipient”¹⁴. Economists’ definitions of cooperation focus on two fundamental characteristics. One defines cooperation as a collective action

of individuals who aim to share a certain task, lucrative for all participants¹⁵). The other regards cooperation as a social process where individuals, groups and institutions act in a concerted way to reach common goals. Economic approaches, in this sense, focus not only on economic characteristics of cooperative relations (cost vs. benefit), but also on the social attributes of partners and their relations¹⁶). This behaviour is driven by goals, expectations and motivations which imply a collective or dyadic interaction between individuals¹⁷). Individual motives and beliefs are the basis of cooperation, even if the game established has inevitable social implications.

To discuss the evidence underlying these assumptions, we will focus on the Portuguese case, first at a general level, then from a micro-approach centred on the Jesuit enactments in Japan and their interaction with trade networks in the Pacific Ocean.

2. The role of state and individuals in the building of of the Portuguese overseas settlements

It is undeniable that the first global routes, involving all the oceans and continents, were made available by Portuguese and Spanish, as it is undeniable that the Portuguese were the first, in a European context, to initiate this movement and to create regular maritime routes which made global exchanges at a worldwide level possible.

The evidence and the trends of the Portuguese projection over the world are well known. What is rather unknown are the reasons, the rationale able to explain both the take-off and the performance of a small, peripheral country enabling it to take leading positions both in building and in maintaining long term colonial dynamics. Can all the answers be given by state policies?

It is assumed, with some historiographical consensus, that it was the Portuguese crown that lunched the overseas expansion, but is this actually a fact? The conquering of Ceuta, in 1415, for instance, taken by Portuguese historiography as the first step in Portuguese expansion, was in fact an initiative of King John I. But this episode is also seen, nowadays, by renowned Portuguese historians as the last episode in the process of the Christian Reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula, rather than as the first step towards modern geographical expansion and it depended, no doubt, on the contributions of individual agents, forced to commit financial, military and naval means to the operation¹⁸).

It has also been proved that some of the processes of geographical discovery, shipping and colonial settlements were not, in fact, led by central figures of the Portuguese monarchy, namely Prince Henry, the so called Navigator, but resulted from the multiplication of individual initiatives and casuistic achievements, which were to be incorporated later on in central power strategies. From the first moment, in terms of the models of juridical organisation of the colonial spaces, the Portuguese crown often relied on private individuals to whom powers of settlement, military defence and trade affairs were delegated. The model of hereditary captaincies first implemented in the Atlantic archipelagos and later in Brazil bears witness to this.

Even when the State sought to politically centralise the administration of overseas territories, as is the case from 1542, with the establishment of the “*Governo Geral*” (General Government) in Brazil, or the creation early on of the “*Estado da Índia*” (the State of India), it has been proved that these structures were never able to exclude, or avoid, the informal intervention of private parties.

The administrative model built up aimed both a monopolistic spice trade system and an effective central control of all agents travelling to the East—whether they were officials, military personnel, adventurers or members of religious orders. It should provide the State with control over the overall processes taking place from the East to the Far East. But it was not what actually took place. A definition of *Estado da Índia* given by Luis Filipe Reis Thomaz points clearly to the idea that the presence of the Portuguese in the East went far beyond the control of the *Estado da Índia*. According to this author, “The State of India in the 16th century designated not a well-defined geographical space, but a collection of territories, establishments, assets, individuals and interests that were administered, managed or governed by the Portuguese crown in the Indian Ocean and neighbouring seas, and the coastal territories from the Cape of Good Hope to Japan”¹⁹). In general terms, this concept points to the interests that were officially governed by the crown, but it does not coincide nor does it exhaust the much broader notion of “Portuguese Expansion in the Indian Ocean”, which also covers the non-official modes of settlement, which developed regardless of the State and, in some cases, even against the State.

The same author stresses the importance of the sub-colonisation phenomena, the creation of colonies from the main colonies, which escaped central power control, whether in administrative or economic terms. These colonies proliferated throughout the Indian Ocean, in places like, for example, Pattani (In Southern Siam); Nagapattinan; Saint Thomas of Mylapore (Coromandel Coast), and most particularly Macau.

It is widely acknowledged that, with regard to Japan, neither the crown nor the vice-royalty had any role in the expansion and consolidation of the Portuguese presence in that territory, as they did not interfere on the final outcomes of the process, which ultimately led to the expulsion of the Portuguese from Japan, in 1639, after previous expulsion edicts of the missionaries, in 1614²⁰). The Portuguese crown delegated complete authority to the Jesuits, on whom the achievement of successful or unsuccessful Portuguese relations with Japan mainly depended, whether in religious, political, cultural or commercial terms.

2.1. Portuguese in the East—the role of individuals and informal networks

The availability of contacts and interactions between Europe, particularly Portugal, and the East and Far East depended in fact on the regular operation of formal and informal networks connecting those worlds. Among the formal and institutional Portuguese networks in the East, there are, in the first place, all the administrative, financial and military structures which represented the State of India, which included a wide range of officers, from viceroys, judges, clerks, bailiffs, captains to tax collectors or notary officers. The institutional framework provided by the missionary activities of the Franciscans, Jesuits, Dominicans, and even Benedictines and, later on, Augustinians, shouldn't be forgotten either²¹). Those organisations, together with the ecclesiastical networks sustained by the structures of the bishoprics founded in the overseas territories—both integrated in the Portuguese *Padroado* in the East, ruled by the Portuguese crown, all provided flows of information and goods.

The municipalities, emulating the same model in Portugal, constituted other nodes within a structural network responsible for the organisation of the Portuguese presence overseas. Last, but not least, the framework provided by the *Misericórdia* Houses, present in the Portuguese colonial settlements, should also be considered²²). These

were civil confraternities which replicated the organization of their metropolitan counterparts. These institutions provided not only spiritual and social assistance to Portuguese settlers and their descendants, but also provided ways of transferring news, goods and money.

Besides this framework, providing formal and institutionalised networks, the individual connections among agents also have to be considered. It is certain that the Crown intended to control all departures from Lisbon to the East, keeping detailed records. Only individuals licensed by the crown were entitled to travel to India. The law further restricted European settlers by acknowledging only three categories of legal residents in Asia: soldiers, *casados* (married men, estimated at about two thousand circa 1600²³), and clergymen, including priests and missionaries. In addition, the law established further restrictions on certain groups. It barred all foreigners from Asia and any persons suspected of unorthodox beliefs, including the Portuguese New Christians, descendants from former Jews forcefully converted to Christianity. The women were also strictly forbidden from travelling to the East.

The reality was, however, far from that stipulated by the law. With regard to Jews and New Christians, their presence in the East, especially in Goa, has been well-documented, from the early decades of the sixteenth century onwards. The first known reference to flows of illegal immigration by New Christians to India dates from 1519 and this phenomenon resulted in the promulgation of crown legislation to control such immigration²⁴). These fluxes tended to increase from the 1530s onwards, and available documentation corroborates their geographic dispersal, including destinations such as Goa, Cochin and Hormuz, as well as Cambay, Bassein, Chaul, Cape Comorin, St. Thomas of Mylapur, Bengal, Pegu, Tenassarim, Malacca, Siam, the Moluccas and even Japan and China²⁵).

Their number, power and influence, especially in the business world, is corroborated by a letter to the king, dated 1539, from Goa, authored by Dr. Jerónimo Dias, in which he noted: “And they are here in no small numbers in this city and in Your Highness’ other settlements and fortresses and they are very harmful. Those who are here are involved in all sorts of contracts and trade and other activities because everything is in their hands. (...) (f.15v). All these carracks come over here full of those unauthorised and clandestine men. We do not believe that Your Highness is aware of this because they bribe everyone with gifts and money and bypass all the restrictions that might have been imposed in these matters by Your Highness”²⁶).

The same can be said about women. Among these women who departed overseas, a clear distinction has to be made between those who leave under royal orders, or even driven by the crown, and those who do it illegally, in a surreptitious way. Indeed, women boarding in ships, mostly to India, those from which we have more information, were targeted, both by civil and religious conviction. The legal constraints can be highlighted by the 1524 Vasco da Gama resolution, according to which, any woman who was found on board without royal permission, would be publicly flogged and banished to one of the hunting grounds of Africa, even if she was married. In that case, her husband would be in irons and forced to return to Portugal and the captains of the ships who did not surrender them to authorities or should be their accomplices would lose their salaries²⁷).

The restrictions mentioned aim, particularly, the so-called “suspicious women,” those of small virtue, associated, in the correspondence of the Jesuits, with the practice of concubinage on board, believed to be responsible for disturbances, lack of security, profligacy of manners, lack of discipline on board and, as such, subject to punish-

ment. According to such understanding, they were, when it was possible, landed on the scales of the trip. In a letter dated 1562, Father Sebastian Gonçalves explains: “The first day we seek to put out the poison that the devil often introduces to the destruction of the seafarers, so we put out two suspicious women”²⁸).

In this context it is also perceived the statement of Father João Baptista da Ribeira whereby on the journey that led him to India: “...other three women were on board without a breadwinner husband or anything of good, one of which in a habit of man (...) We imprisoned them under lock and key, making them a thick box for this purpose. And so we put it in work, giving the key to a faithful person and fearful of God, (...) that at certain times gave them something to eat and opened them for some needs...”²⁹).

Although it is not possible to measure, with any accuracy, their proportional presence on board on the different maritime runs, both due to the lack of sources, and because of the sub-register practice, being their presence mostly illegal and disguised, one is allowed to believe that the presence of women on board would be minority, taken as exceptional and counterproductive, but constant. More so, their performances as colonizers depended on their prior travel overseas.

Unauthorised individuals, besides those who were sanctioned by the crown, entered thus, the Eastern universe, cosmopolitan by nature, and the Portuguese authorities barely had control over these flows. They acted individually or in informal networks, often depending on active collaboration with local populations and trade agents. We can include within this group the “lançados” (so called because they were scattered all over Asia), individuals who left Portuguese-controlled settlements to trade freely, or who became mercenaries or renegade mercenaries and corsairs at the service of neighbouring Muslim states. According to an estimate by Anthony Disney, in the early seventeenth century, native princes from the Malabar Coast to Bengal employed as many as five thousand “lançados”³⁰).

This was a very mobile population, searching for new opportunities, facing risks and the unknown to achieve major profits. They had a very active role in the building of an active presence in the East and they were in fact responsible for some of the first contacts by the Portuguese with the last frontiers of the Eastern world, such as it was known to the Portuguese. One of them, Fernão Mendes Pinto, trader, soldier, pirate and adventurer³¹), is taken as being responsible for the first contacts with Japan, much as Jorge Álvares, with a very similar profile, is credited as the first Portuguese explorer to have reached China and Hong Kong. They emerge, thus, as active agents of first contacts, as much as they are responsible for the permanence of the Portuguese in Asia beyond the Portuguese empire failure.

Concurrently, it is urgent to recognise that the declining Portuguese dominion in the East was a result of strong competition from other European powers, as much as of developing local contexts, involving power equilibriums and economic priorities of Asian landlords. In fact, the interference of new European players was no more than a catalyst for the strong reaction of local landlords to Portuguese presence and action. The Dutch, French, and British were as critical to the failure the Portuguese State of India as were the Xá Safavid, the Nayaka kings of Tanjavur and Madurai³²) or the policies of Toyotomi Hidehoshi or Tokugawa Ieyasu, in Japan. Likewise, the taking of Malacca, Ceylon, Cranganor, Negapatam, Cochin, Coulan and Cannanore by the Dutch was no more decisive for the withdrawal of the Portuguese Estado da India than the loss of Ormuz, to the Xá Abbas, in 1622, or the loss of

Siriam (1612), Hugli (1632), or the Canara ports (1654), or, likewise, the loss of Nagasáki and the final expulsion of the Portuguese from Japan, in 1639.

Additionally, the Portuguese crown's loss of dominion in the East and Far East did not correspond to an equivalent loss of protagonism on the part of Portuguese agents: their presence was still resilient in the Malabar Coast, the Bay of Bengal and in the Far East. The Portuguese restored their presence in the Coromandel Coast, during the 17th century in Porto Novo (New Port), trying to circumvent the loss of Nagapattinan to the Dutch. In San Thomas of Millipore, a Portuguese community was officially reassembled, after the loss of the settlement, as well as in Hugli, where Portuguese presence is, again, noticed in 1660. The same pattern seems to have replicated, for instance, in Ayutthaya, in Siam, where in 1684 an organised community was still in place, maintaining their presence, and guidance by Jesuit priests, despite the successive ruling presence of the Dutch, British and French.

A statement by one of the administrators of VOC to the rulers of the United Provinces in 1658, upon the taking of Ceylon, summarises the Dutch perception of this resilience: "The greater number regard India as their fatherland, thinking no longer of Portugal; they trade thither little or not at all, living and enriching themselves out of the treasures of India, as though they were natives and knew no other fatherland."³³ This deserves a comment from Charles Corn, the author of "The Scents of Eden": "Despite having been ousted from the Spice Islands and losing their monopoly to the Dutch, the Portuguese were scattered in pockets throughout Asia. (...) the Portuguese (...) were unique among European colonizers of the Far East in their ability to involve themselves deeply in the social and cultural lives of the Asian peoples among whom they did retain a foothold (...). Ironically, if any European tongue was the language of merchant intercourse, even in Batavia, it was Portuguese, much to the displeasure of the Dutch, who had overridden the Portuguese in matters of trade but made little effort to regard local cultures sympathetically."³⁴

Regardless of the reasons, it is undeniable that disappearance of Portuguese official presence in the East in the 17th century did not apply, to the same extent, to the Portuguese agents. Their skills as intermediaries, as translators, and their knowledge of trade circuits, monetary systems, political systems and cultural backgrounds were, in fact, of significant value for local rulers and European invaders. The role of the Portuguese "casados", men who had been encouraged by official policies to marry local women, is widely acknowledged as an essential element of permanent settlement and as factor of rootedness.

The resilient presence of the Portuguese in Macau and in Timor throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, right in the core of Dutch and British influence, only provides additional proof of the availability of Portuguese agents, as individuals, to maintain their networks of trade and the capacity for cooperation, regardless of the rulers in place. This led us, again, to the discussion of the performance of self-organised networks. These networks were not created after the loss of Portuguese primacy in the Eastern world. They were already in place during the golden age of the State of India.

The difference between the power of the State of India, its institutions and representatives and that of private entrepreneurs can be sustained with financial indicators. Several financial contributions were repeatedly imposed on Portuguese municipalities and particularly on the Goa city council, in order to prepare royal armadas and armies

for the defence of the State of India, in the late 16th and the 17th centuries. Likewise, private loans were requested from and provided by local entrepreneurs and businessmen in Goa, at a time when the official budget of the State of India was depleted and the representatives of the Portuguese crown were unable to respond with military resources to the attacks, both from European competitors and local landlords³⁵). In fact, during the 17th century, in times of declared crisis, it seems clear that the depletion and bankruptcy of the royal treasury did not in any way correspond to the situation of the private entrepreneurs. As it seems, while the official presence of the Portuguese crown in the Indian and the Pacific Oceans was collapsing, from the end of the 16th century onwards, private business, even when led by crown representatives, kept running successfully, going as far as to deal with those who were formal enemies of the Portuguese crown. This led us to our main focus of discussion: the importance of individual initiatives and self-organised and informal networks as a main factor of globalisation.

2.2. Self-organised trade networks in the Portuguese Eastern *emporium*

Portuguese and European historiography describes Portugal's commercial expansion as based on monopolistic strategies led by the crown. It is, in fact, true that the Portuguese crown imposed some monopolies, as it is also true that monopolistic systems led to the primacy of state policies in detriment of individual initiatives. But in the Portuguese case in the 15th and 16th centuries, this monopolistic model can only be identified in what concerns the Mina gold trade and the spice trade on the Cape Run. "From the inception of the Cape trade—states James Boyajian—its architects—the king of Portugal and the Portuguese nobility—conceived the enterprise as a royal monopoly with concession to nobles who served the king in Asia and in other military posts. Private trade in Asia was an afterthought, and the king erected barriers to its growth. Portugal law strictly regulated embarkations in Lisbon, the only port authorized to launch vessels bound for India."³⁶) This being so, a huge area of participation remained open for business initiative. Only the spice trade and the silver and gold trade was a monopoly of the crown. Private entrepreneurs were able to act as intermediaries in the inter-Asian trade, and were authorised to carry in the carracks heading for Lisbon a considerable amount of products: silks, porcelain, furniture, textiles, tapestry, precious and semi-precious stones, perfumes, as well as slaves for personal service—with wide possibilities of profit.

Even the strict monopolistic policies regarding spices were not really able to totally exclude individual initiatives, and frequently coexisted with them. We are not referring only to smuggling, which is an illegal and parallel flow of merchandise and capitals, but also to internal mechanisms authorised by the state itself which allowed the presence of single agents in monopolistic circuits. In Portugal, in 1560, at the height the monopolistic spice trade, only 60% of the products was handled by the crown. The other 40% was traded by individual agents, with the crown's permission, as has long been proved by Vitorino Magalhães Godinho³⁷).

Something parallel seemed to happen to the ports of the Coromandel Coast in what concerns the Eastern and Far-Eastern traffic. It is important to keep in mind that, from the administration of Lopo Soares de Albergaria onwards, the Bay of Bengal was an area of opportunity for merchants, mercenaries and corsairs. Even when official missions were intensified and a fleet was instituted to patrol this maritime space, which ceased to operate in the 1530s, these individuals, interlopers and sometimes even outsiders were constantly active. Extortion, bribery,

deception and piracy emerged as by-products of the Portuguese presence in the Indian Ocean, particularly in the Bay of Bengal and the Coromandel Coast, where official Portuguese control was negligible if not non-existent and where important shipping and trading networks intersected, linking Mylapur and Nagapattinam with Malacca³⁸).

Observed and proved in the Coromandel Coast, these tendencies are all the more conspicuous in the case of trade routes in Insulindia (the maritime Southeast Asia) and the Far East. First acting as an extension of the Cape Route and as a means of provisioning the carracks waiting for spices in Cochin, these routes gradually achieved autonomy, the Portuguese playing a role of intermediaries in a vast and heterogeneous inter-Asian, regional trade. Intermediaries whose advantages included their capacity to transport large cargo loads and the heavy artillery they carried on board which provided them with an intimidating dominion of the seas.

These agents on the move included *casados* (the only term applied in the sources to merchants—who are not acknowledged as such in the East), officers and missionaries travelling through a network of posts spreading from the western coast of Africa to Japan, together with a considerable number of other informal agents, such as seafarers, soldiers and adventurers, among others. The long waiting period between the arrival and the departure of the Cape Route carracks, the fact that crews and garrisons were only paid by the time on board or during conflicts, in addition to the delay in paying wages, increased the rates of desertion. These men were also driven by a horizon of opportunities offered by privateering, by missions at the service of local rulers or by promising trade opportunities with unprecedented profit rates.

The nobleman/merchant, the clergyman/merchant³⁹), whether secular priest or missionary, or the sailor/merchant, are in this context dominant socio-types. The overlapping of administrative, military, fiscal, religious or sailing activities with overseas trade is a historically proven fact, with numerous implications. The ultimate example of this is the trade monopoly the Jesuits held in Japan, a matter to which we will return.

From these patterns arose the agency of powerful informal networks. Individual initiative and private interests are paramount to understand the real dynamics of the Portuguese presence in the East, and even to fully comprehend the evolution of the State of India and the Portuguese decline in the East. Luís Filipe Thomaz was one of the first Portuguese historians to stress the meaningful outputs of these dynamics, in studies complemented by analytical perspectives and empirical evidence provided, among others, by Anthony Disney⁴⁰) Sanjay Subrahmanyam or James Boyajian⁴¹).

In the East, the operation of trans-imperial and cross-border networks were undoubtedly in place. They were inevitable to the running of the Cape Route, for the provisioning of the Armadas, depending on local markets, even for labour force recruitment, and to guarantee what was to become even more important to the sustainability of Portuguese presence in the East: their role as intermediaries in inter-Asian trade. The complexity of this agency can be found by the number of routes that, circa 1570, radiated from Goa, Malacca and Macao: twenty seven. These included: from Goa to Hormuz, Mozambique, Ceylon, Moluccas, Coromandel, Bay of Bengal, and Malacca; from Malacca to Siam, Macau, Japan, Burma, Moluccas, and Bandas; from Macau to Japan, Indonesia, Siam, and Timor⁴²). In the quest for cinnamon, in Ceylon, cloves, in the Moluccas, nutmeg and mace from Bandas, or luxury goods such as sandalwood from Timor, silk from China, or lacquer from Pegu, or simply as transporters of textiles,

rice or wood, the Portuguese became mediators in a vast range of inter-cultural contacts.

3. The Portuguese in Japan. The role of the Jesuits

The presence of the Portuguese in Japan should be understood within this global framework and can be analysed according to these lines. The general evolution of Portuguese contact with the Japanese is well known. In 1543 the Portuguese arrived in Japan. Two Portuguese, one of them allegedly Fernão Mendes Pinto, a trader and an adventurer, were passengers on a Chinese ship that landed at Tanegashima Island. The Portuguese were keen to trade with the Japanese and they soon returned. At a time in which trade between Chinese and Japanese was affected by conflicts and warfare due to a number of incidents involving Wokou piracy in the South China Sea, the Portuguese soon assumed the role of intermediaries between the two territories⁴³). The protagonism of individual agents, the first contacts mediated by third parties, in this case a Chinese crew, and the role assumed by the Portuguese as brokers, adapting to the favourable conditions this particular juncture offered them, are all factors depicting the functioning of informal and self-organised networks.

Besides acting as traders in the Chinese/Japanese trade, the Portuguese brought some new products to the Japanese: tobacco, sweet potatoes, clocks and guns. The introduction of European guns was to play a major role in Japanese internal political evolution. In a context of generalised civil war within a feudal political structure, where power was being disputed among local landlords, expertise in handling European rifles offered some military leaders an obvious advantage. Geoffrey Parker⁴⁴) showed how this factor operated a profound military revolution, as armies rapidly established rifle corps, able to guarantee permanent shooting. This appropriation of European rifles by the Japanese is further proof of individually-based dynamics of cooperation. No confrontation strategy, led by a state, could provide the enemy with the military superiority such as that given to the Japanese through the use of the rifle. The drafting of treaties on how to handle the new weapon, the ability to learn how it worked and to mass produce it, and the development of new military tactics based on rifle brigades, comprise key elements of an acculturation process and technical transfer, based on individual exchanges, contributing to a dynamics of globalisation, not only of products and trade, but of technology and knowledge.

The *namban-jin* (the southern barbarians), as the Japanese called the Portuguese, centred their activity on the island of Kyūshū, creating a business settlement in Nagasaki by 1571. The Jesuits would later be in charge of the administration of the settlement, by decision of the local Christian landlord, Bartolomeu Sumitada. Kyūshū was a peripheral area of Japan, far from the capital, Miyako, and less affected by the internal wars.

Its position, in relation to the Portuguese empire in Asia, was similarly peripheral, both with regard to the headquarters of the State of India, Goa, and the major shipping routes led by the Portuguese. Located on the edge of Eastern Asia, where official Portuguese presence had not yet been established, except for Macau, the Portuguese presence in Japan could not survive but on the basis of individual contacts, and the performance of self-organised networks, involving Portuguese, Chinese and Japanese merchants. Informality and adaptation were the two main traits of the functioning of such networks, which involved the purchase of Chinese merchandise, mainly silk, at Cantonese fairs, their transportation to Macau and their final transfer to Japan.

Some formal structures were to be introduced in this framework by the Jesuit missions in the territory. In 1549 Jesuit missionaries led by Francis Xavier arrived in Japan, intent on founding missions and converting the Japanese to Christianity. Unlike the merchants, and given their mission of widespread evangelisation, their action would ultimately have a major impact on Japan. The Jesuits sought to establish permanent missions and to spread throughout the Japanese territory. In 1551 Francis Xavier travelled to the capital, Miyako, trying to gain a foothold in Japan's political centre⁴⁵), and in 1554, Fernão Mendes Pinto, a temporary member of the Jesuits, was sent by the Vice-Roy as an ambassador to the Daimyo of Bungo⁴⁶).

The Jesuits were led to engage in the political infighting of Japan, a fact from which they sought to obtain the benefit and support of local landlords. It seemed to work, at least in the first decades of the Jesuit presence, with Christianity being accepted or at least tolerated among other confessions, and the Jesuits being able to increase the number of their missions. The fact that by 1588 there were more than 150.000 baptised Japanese is clear as to the success of the Jesuits' strategy. They sought to implement in the Far East the same strategy they had followed in Europe and the East: the conversion of the elites, which resulted, in Japan, in the massive conversions of their subjects⁴⁷).

With the Jesuits, religion, politics and ultimately, trade, became a structural trend, emulating, again, a well-known shift in Portuguese overall expansion, which was meant to have a major expression in the Japanese missions.

If, at the beginning of their presence in Japan, the involvement of Jesuits in local political battles, the circumstance of a generalised civil war and the fragmentation of local powers, proved to be beneficial to their aims and goals, in the long run, the same strategy, added to some risky movements, taken as excessively invasive of the Japanese political balances and even classified as acts of duplicity and treason, ended up working against the Jesuit presence in Japan. They contributed to the first anti-Christian edict, signed by Toyotomi Hideyoshi in 1587, as well as to the edict of expulsion of the Jesuits from Japan, in 1614, and ultimately to the edict of expulsion of the Portuguese, in 1639. Again, behaviours of cooperation, deception and desertion have to be considered in order to understand the overall framework in which the statuses of the Jesuits evolved in Japan.

During the period of the Portuguese presence, Japanese warfare was radically changed by the introduction of handguns and cannons, as previously noted. The victories of Oda Nobunaga are well-known. After quickly learning how to use the new weapons, he captured the port of Sakai in 1569, and achieved a great victory at Nagashino in 1575. By the time he was assassinated, in 1582, Nobunaga controlled central Japan. Toyotomi Hideyoshi, continued the work of reuniting Japan. In 1587 he subdued the southern island of Kyushu and by 1590 he had also conquered eastern Japan. Tokugawa Ieyasu, his general, seized power and pursued the reunification of Japan under strong political and military power⁴⁸).

In this new context of unification, the Jesuits meant division, not only in religious terms, but also as a rising power, politically ingenious, intellectually skilled and oriented towards their own goals. It seems that their political manoeuvring was no longer to be tolerated by the new centralised power. Accusations of generalised persecutions by these agents of a new confession, the Christian faith, against bonze priests, the local populations and their cus-

toms, and the destruction of temples and idols, served as additional reasons to expel the Jesuits. The terms of their involvement in trade, to which we will return, only added to this animosity. Moreover, if they were useful to the local landlords as intermediaries and brokers since their arrival to the end of 16th century, their presence became less determinant at a time when other brokers attempted to infiltrate in Japan, offering the same services for less involvement. First the Spanish tried to circumvent the Portuguese; then the Dutch appeared as a serious alternative to the monopoly of the relations performed until then by the Portuguese, both as merchants and as missionaries, if the two statuses could ever be distinguished in the case of the Jesuits. This leads us to the analysis of the merchant networks in place and the role played by the Jesuits.

Introduced by local agents, namely Chinese pilots, exploiting traditional trade channels and opening new ones, the Portuguese, traders, adventurers, mercenaries and outsiders, penetrated a new region and contributed to consolidating, in the second half of the 16th century, one of the most profitable and rewarding trade routes of the time: that connecting Malacca to China and China to Japan. This traffic, at first maintained on a smuggling basis, provided the Portuguese with a very advantageous position in the inter-Asian trade drawn by the Europeans, which they occupied monopolistically for almost a century. Their cargo capacity and their weapons superiority, added to the internal political circumstances in the Far East, guaranteed the Portuguese wide universes of opportunities.

Cooperation was an essential feature of this process. In fact, from the beginning, the Portuguese crossed unknown waters with the assistance of native pilots. Let us just remember that the first time the Portuguese arrived in the Indian Ocean by sea, they were led from Sofala to Calicut by a local, Muslim pilot, Ahmad Ibn Madjid⁴⁹). Arab, Gujarati, Javanese and Malay pilots were also present on Portuguese voyages from Malabar to Ceylon, Malacca, the Sunda Islands, Java, the Moluccas, Sumatra and Siam, much as Chinese pilots were frequently used for the Malacca-Macau-Japan run⁵⁰).

Macau was a major hub in this traffic. Macau was, by the time of the first contacts with Japan, a merchant republic, still uncontrolled by the Portuguese State of India. The city went quickly from being an unknown and marginal place to a pivotal point in the maritime trade routes of the Far East, due to the agency of individual initiative. Trade dynamics were mainly created by self-organising networks led by marginal agents and outsiders of the Portuguese empire in the East. Beginning as a hub for smuggling, Macau evolved to a merchant republic, ruled by the *Leal Senado*⁵¹), the main municipal structure, and by the authority of the Captain who ran the Goa-Macau route. Indeed, Macau began as a territory in which the State was only represented by the Captains-General of the Goa Route to Japan, comprising a type of mercantile republic. Only in 1623 did Macau receive a resident captain of its own.

When Portuguese mediation between China and Japan, through Macau, gradually went beyond the status of an illegal, irregular, parallel circuit, to become a regular maritime trade business, the king appropriated this route by royal provision, assigning it to noblemen, as a reward for services rendered⁵²). Local merchants of Macau had to negotiate the freights of their merchandise with the carrack captains, according to pre-established rates, defined by the merchants' wealth. Taken as beneficial only to some of the richest traders, the ecclesiastic administrator of the territories of Macau, China and Japan, Melchior Carneiro, a Jesuit himself, tried to better organise the attribution

of freights, in the 1570's, including the Jesuits in this proposal, as supervisors of a new model of trade, based on a contract with fixed amounts (the *contrato de armação*), in which the participation of smaller traders, as well as the Misericordia houses and other non-lucrative institutions, like the Jesuits themselves, would be included.

Later on, identical patterns tended to be organised in Japan, in Nagasaki, to which the main cargos were shipped, where free trade was replaced by the 'pancada' contract, i.e., the overall cargo of silk would be sold at a single price, trying to avoid speculation. Again, the Jesuits, in the person of João Rodrigues Tçuzzu, became the main regulators of this system, being João Rodrigues nominated as representative of Tokugawa Ieyasu. Mediators between Portuguese and Japanese traders, they also acted as brokers and trade agents for the Japanese landlords. This position would allegedly benefit their own interests, since they were themselves involved in the trade, with significant amounts of cargos. These loads were integrated in their own shares, negotiated through third parties, and resulted from their position as brokers and trade agents for some of the more prominent daimyos, from which they received silver to buy merchandise at Cantonese fairs on their behalf. It should be noted that the silver trade was considered a crown monopoly, being illegal and totally forbidden by Portuguese royal edicts and treated as a matter of high treason in Macau, where religious excommunication was also imposed on the offenders. The prohibition intended precisely to avoid increasing opportunities for smuggling by trading directly, avoiding the monopolistic run from Macau to Japan. If we add that the Jesuits were also authorised to include extra portions of merchandise on the carracks, due to the 'armação' contract, and that their shares increased significantly over time, it is possible to understand the leading position the Jesuits had in this official trade.

Apart from this, in the correspondence sent to Rome and in reports by the Order's visitors, there are allegations of the Jesuits participating in a parallel trade, outside of both the yearly trade route and the 'pancada' system in Japan, and it was proven that they used to sell silk in parallel markets, outside of Nagasaki, where they could get better prices⁵³). Far from their formal status as representatives of the Portuguese crown and elements of the Portuguese 'Padroado', they performed, in these circumstances, as informal and self-organised networks, on the margins both of the Portuguese and the Japanese trade regulations.

With their extensive knowledge of the Japanese language, economy and markets, well connected with local traders, belonging to a network operating within the overall Portuguese 'Padroado', able to obtain credit as they did, to apply in financial and commercial speculation, the Jesuits were in fact in a privileged position as brokers, from which they took advantage, acting as traders as much as they did as missionaries.

It should be noted that their participation in this trade was both against the general principles of the ecclesiastic status, which required vows of poverty, and against their own internal regulations. Special edicts were required, both from the General of the Jesuit Order, in Rome, from the Pope, and from the King, in order to proceed with the subsequent legitimization of a practice in place, highly illegal and extremely profitable. The Jesuits were able to obtain them all, after a persistent intransigence from the General of the Order in the 1560s and 1570s. The Pope's sanction, which gave them formal authorization to trade between Macau and Japan, only dates from 1582, but it only formalised a practice that had already long been in place.

The justification for this apparently exceptional status was given on the basis of a practical theology, according

to which the benefits of trade were essential to their missionary activity, the official funding from the Church and from the Crown claimed not to be sufficient or not arriving in time to provide for the needs of an ever-growing number of foundations and Jesuit dependencies in Japan. Religion justified trade. Christianisation justified profit. Their religious status and apparently non-profitable intention justified all kind of privileges achieved by the Company, being the Jesuits the main silk traders in the Macau/Japan maritime trade route in the 1580s.

The parallel participation of Jesuits in illegal trade, as members of the Company or as individual agents, being involved in silver imports to Macau and China, and the delivery of cargos on illegal ships, in an underground trade that ran parallel to the crown's carracks, is likewise well-documented in numerous records. Besides the trade led by the Company, allegedly run to guarantee the missions in Japan, the agency of individual Jesuits, both European and Japanese, should be acknowledged, within the frame of a totally illegal flow of merchandise and money, moving significant amounts of merchandises.

Besides this trade, another domain deserves further consideration, being the reason for repeated discussion in the correspondence with Rome: the involvement of the Jesuits in the slave trade in Japan. A twofold perspective seems to be in place. On the one hand, the Jesuits condemned human traffic and even asked the Portuguese king to prohibit the slave trade in the Portuguese settlements in the Kiūshū area, which was conceded by King Sebastian in 1570; on the other hand, Gaspar Coelho, vice-Provincial of the Company in Japan, stated that the Jesuits were accused of colluding with the slave trade, through the issuing of selling licenses to slave traders, ensuring, allegedly with false statements, that the Japanese slaves they traded had been acquired according to the legal conditions required⁵⁴. Even if it is not proven that the Jesuits themselves were involved in human traffic, the Company seemed to have indirect responsibilities in the implementation and the organisation of slave trade networks, which came to have a wider impact on the local populations than the previous networks in place.

This intense involvement and the strong position achieved by the Jesuits in the trade circuits involving Japan was subject to active and heated debate at the time and was strongly criticised at several levels. They were, in fact, targeted by merchant's criticism, the latter being affected by the Jesuits' expertise and privileges, as much as by local landlords blame, who used them as trade intermediaries but suspected their duplicitous behaviours. It is in this context that the expulsion of João Rodrigues from Nagasaki in 1610, by order of the city's Governor, should be understood. Additionally, they had the disapproval of other ecclesiastic agents, namely other religious orders; and of the king himself. Philip III promulgated edicts, in 1607, 1609 and 1610, forbidding the agency of trade by the Jesuits in Japan. However, the prohibition never had any formal effect, and was revoked by July 1611, under the contention that the Jesuits were not provided with regular and sufficient funding, like the other missions in the East, being trade the main basis for the implementation of Christianisation and missionary activity in Japan⁵⁵.

Regardless of the reasons, it is impossible to separate religion from trade when considering the presence of the Jesuits in Japan⁵⁶, as much as it is difficult to separate formal and authorised from informal and unauthorised participation of Jesuits in trade circuits involving Japan. Fr. Sebastian of San Pedro, a Franciscan who wrote a defamatory treaty on the Jesuits, explains that the Jesuits' Nagasaki religious house was known as the customs house and compare it to the "House of Contratación", the same designation given in Seville to the House which

administered the entire Spanish trade to America under the crown ruling⁵⁷⁾.

The activities of the Jesuits in Japan shed light on another dimension of our discussion: the interference of trans-imperial networks in this overall framework. After the 1570s, with the regular arrival of the Manila galleons from America, and the reinforcement of the Spanish colonial presence in the Philippines, the boundaries between the action of Portuguese and Spanish colonisers and traders was more and more difficult to ascertain. If, under the law, no Spanish could interfere or set establishment in Portuguese settlements, the reality revealed to be quite different. In the first place, an active movement of ships was put in place connecting Manila and Macau. From Macau, the Spanish tried to reach China, Malacca and Japan, persistently. Even if the municipal power of Macau, the Loyal Senate, officially reacted against their presence, there are accounts according to which they refused to punish Spanish captains, shipmasters or traders who had disobeyed the law. Moreover, a Castilian man, Domingos Segurado, had obtained from a Portuguese, João da Gama, the captaincy of the carrack in charge of the Macau-Japan route, acquiring thus jurisdiction over Macau's subjects⁵⁸⁾.

From Macau to China and Japan, several trips were illegally organised together by Portuguese and Spanish subjects and provisioned with mixed capital. On their way to China, these ships were trailed by British vessels, in order to determine the maritime run to follow. Portuguese pilots were part of Japanese crews, attracted by the high wages paid, manoeuvring ships against a policy of enclosure of the Japanese ports and maritime trade, followed by the Japanese leaders. They did as much with Castilian ships, where they were not only sailors, but also pilots and captains. Multi-nationality is a permanent feature in the Asian crews and armadas, whether they were Japanese, Chinese or European.

Macau was a hub where merchants of diverse nationalities and confessions crossed activity and business. Repeated Castilian expeditions were organised from Manila to China and Japan, much as Portuguese expeditions were organised heading to Manila. One of them was even put together by the captain of Cochin himself. Indeed, this was not a marginal activity led only by outsiders of the system, but involved central personalities of the official scheme. The issue of loyalty to the Portuguese crown or the Portuguese interests is another topic under current revision. T'ien Tse Chang, in his work about *Sino-Portuguese trade...*⁵⁹⁾ shows how some Portuguese traders who lived in Japan married the daughters of prominent Japanese traders, being defenders of the Japanese trade interests rather than the Portuguese, in a trend which can be equally recognised in the West Coast of Africa, involving Portuguese and local traders settled in the coast adjacent to Cap Verde.

Last but not the least, it was not only lay agents who performed active roles in the constitution and maintenance of these trans-imperial and cross-border trade networks. The Castilian used mainly religious agents, able to penetrate Portuguese settlements in Malacca, China and even in Japan⁶⁰⁾. China is a case in point: from 1575 onwards, Augustinians, Dominicans, Franciscans, and Jesuits mediated systematic efforts by the Castilians to penetrate this territory, and to initiate trade relations, with immediate reactions from the Portuguese traders, Portuguese representatives and Portuguese clergy⁶¹⁾. We should not forget that the king was by that time the same one, under the dynastic union between Spain and Portugal, during the period between 1580 and 1640.

The analysis of the Jesuits performance in Japan has necessarily to consider a third relevant topic, besides poli-

tics and trade: the Jesuits' missionary activity and acculturation processes in Japan. We do not intend to thoroughly review the evangelisation strategies followed by the Jesuits, or analyse their acculturation processes⁶². However, we could not disregard another kind of networking: the individual interacts that took place between the European Jesuits and the Japanese Jesuits as brothers and as auxiliary personnel of the Jesuit missions. This leads to another area of research, interculturality, which is an additional dimension of globalisation.

The abovementioned specificity of the Jesuit mission in Japan, its uniqueness with regard to the main centres of authority of the Portuguese empire in the East; its sporadic contacts with the Portuguese merchants coming from Macau once a year; its marginality regarding the main epicentres of evangelisation, its peculiar status within the Portuguese 'Padroado' in the East—all worked together to make the Jesuits mainly dependent on the internal conditions provided by Japan itself. This circumstance raised a number of problems in the process, along with significant advantages, since the missionary activity of the Jesuits was not associated with a foreign political power intent on imposition over Japan.

The Jesuits depended thus, simultaneously, on the protection and welfare of the daimyos and on cooperation and assistance from local agents. In what concerns evangelisation there was a twofold strategy in place: the adoption of the Buddhist system of the "dógicos" or dojucus, who acted, not as priests, since they did not take vows, but as co-operators, as assistants even in the domain of catechisation; and the formation of an indigenous clergy, by the admission of Japanese as members to the Company. Their number, in both cases, increased over time, and the dependency of the European Jesuits on these elements became crucial to the mission's sustainability⁶³.

The decision to enforce the constitution of a local clergy was constantly under scrutiny and debate. From the correspondence and reports, it seems clear that, while European Jesuits in Japan defended actively that position, it had strong reaction from the institutionalised hierarchy in Europe, namely in Rome. The massive establishment of a local clergy was still exceptional in the overall framework of the Portuguese 'Padroado', mostly regarding the Jesuits, whose selection criteria was, even in Europe, very strict.

The need to follow a different policy in Japan increased from 1587 onwards and particularly in 1614, when the European missionaries were expelled. By then, the Jesuits understood that the maintenance of Christianity in Japan depended on the activity of the indigenous priests: the number of ordinations then increased, even though the Jesuits would often return, disguised as merchants and sailors, to their previous domain of activity⁶⁴.

Although the Jesuits admitted and implemented the ordinations of local priests, and depended on a significant number of "dógicos" or dojucus in their activity, it is however clear that a sense of criticism toward these members, a certain degree of incomprehension of their habits and a permanent claim as to their lack of discipline and obedience prevailed in the Jesuit letters. An unavoidable Eurocentric position and incomprehension of the daily habits and psychological profile of the local collaborators is present in the majority of the letters, mostly from 1580s onwards. However, there are other statements that project a sense of superiority on part of the Japanese, parallel to the clear admission that the European Jesuits depended on them, both for evangelisation, for cultural contacts and for political relations, because of their knowledge of the language, the culture and the local political balances.

In 1551 Cosme de Torres, in a letter to his confreres in Goa, stated enthusiastically that "The Japanese belong

to one of the most intelligent people in the world. They are superior to us because they respect reason with joy. [...] The Europeans consider themselves as educated people. However, when compared to the Japanese, we seem quite savage. I have to admit that the Japanese teach me many things everyday. I believe that there are no other people in the world with so many innate skills⁶⁵). In 1587 Pedro Ramon, another Jesuit priest, wrote, in a different context: "...I have dealt with them already for ten years and each day I am more surprised and I state (if one can make this comparison without being odious), that these people here are much better than in Europe, and this without a shadow of doubt⁶⁶). This is not, however, the prevalent vision at a time in which persecution of the Jesuits was already in place, even if still at a reversible stage.

The "acomodatio" concept, which expresses a policy toward the total integration of the Japanese indigenous priests in the Company, did not seem to really happen: on the contrary, a sense of superiority by the European priests, the difficulty of the local ones to accede to higher positions in the hierarchy, formal claims, and the use of political plays by the Japanese priests, in order to circumvent the difficulties felt in the missions, using political pressure to achieve their aims, serve to prove some internal tension. The repeated written testimonies reflect, once again, the overall mechanisms of cooperation at hand: behaviours of collaboration, deception and duplicity were in place on a daily basis. The frequent abandonment of the mission, both by *dojucus* and Japanese priests, is an evident sign of lack of accommodation⁶⁷.

Interculturality worked in fact in both ways, and seemed to be more effective with regard to the European Jesuits: acculturation was a major trend in the presence of the Jesuits in Japan, and it was inevitable. They tended to adapt to the local environment in ways incomprehensible to all of the Company's European visitors. The later were even to doubt who were the converted: if the Japanese to Christianity, or the Jesuits to the Japanese culture. Language, food regime, architectural models of the Jesuit houses and churches; clothes; daily schedules; the nature of self-punishment and corporal punishments toward third parties⁶⁸): all seemed to be more Japanese than European⁶⁹.

Summing up, some ideas could be highlighted.

In the first place, globalisation is a complex and multidimensional process, which, nevertheless, in its economic, cultural, ethnical, linguistic, and even environmental implications, has more to do with the activities of individual agents crossing all kind of frontiers: linguistic, cultural, geographical, political, religious, rather than with the functioning of national empires. Globalisation is based on cooperation, while formal empires present themselves more disposed to imposition mechanisms. Unless one accepts and acknowledges the persistent informal ways of empire building, which frequently ran against the empires themselves, empires had little to do with globalisation processes.

In the second place, mechanisms of globalisation can be much better apprehended and understood if one looks at the other side of the mirror, and searches for the functioning of mechanisms of cooperation (which involved also ways of deception, desertion and competition) operating among informal networks of individuals. In these networks, authority and verticality are much more fluid than in formal structures, and communication flows persisted, crossing frontiers, even against the formal and institutionalised rules that those agents were expected to

comply with.

Thirdly, the Portuguese overseas expansion as a whole is quite expressive of the ways in which individual agents and self-organised networks worked in favour of the building and maintenance of a polyhedral overseas empire. They were even essential to that construction, whose path sometimes followed crown policies and desideratum, sometimes reflected their own goals, aims and strategies. Understanding the Portuguese empire building and collapse implies understanding the manner in which those agents interacted within and outside the borders of the formal empire.

Last, but not the least, the case study of the Jesuits in Japan gives us the ultimate example of how these networks operated and interacted in the First Global Age. Official agents both of the church and the Portuguese crown, the Jesuits operated by themselves, in an adaptive process in which their decisions and strategies had more to do with Japanese and East Asian constraints, demands and opportunities, rather than with the official framework of a faraway Portuguese eastern empire or the Catholic ecumenism. Religion, politics and trade were inextricable domains of individual agency. With the Jesuits, missionary activities, as well as political and economic performances, have to be understood in the framework of different networks, including Portuguese, Japanese, and Chinese, both lay and ecclesiastical, intermingled in a disentangled way. Processes of imposition, negotiation, and adaptation weave a web of global interactions between European, Japanese and other Asian peoples, on which thorough reflection and research is essential to more fully understand the dynamic, open, complex, non-linear system which characterised the First Global Age.

Notes

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- 23) BOYAJIAN, James—*Portuguese trade in Asia under the Habsburgs, 1580–1640*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008, p. 32.
- 24) See the letter published by BAIÃO, António, in *A Inquisição de Goa. Tentativa de História da sua Origem, Evolução e Extinção*, I. Lisboa, 1949, pp. 17–18.
- 25) Quoted by CUNHA, A.—*A Inquisição no Estado da Índia: origens (1539–1560)*. Lisboa: Arquivos Nacionais-Torre do Tombo, 1995, p. 26.
- 26) 3 December 1539—Goa (TT. CC. I Parte, Mç. 66, doc. 47, fl. 15–16), published in A. CUNHA, *A Inquisição no Estado da Índia: origens (1539–1560)*. Lisboa: Arquivos Nacionais-Torre do Tombo, 1995, 253.
- 27) POLÓNIA, Amélia—*Mulheres que partem e mulheres que ficam—O protagonismo feminino na expansão ultramarina*. “O Estudo da História”, n°4 (2001), pp. 79–98. The bishop of Goa, Ferdinand, in a letter written to the king, at a later date to 1532, recognizing that many women are taken on the royal ships and vessels with the knowledge and consent of the commanders themselves, states: “And so his Majesty will be served if the captains do not bring in their ships and galleons, single women, as they do, as the matters of war and places where they are claim for virtuous works and for confessions rather than to get involved with them, which is the cause for some ships being lost, as they are”. Cf. REGO, A. da Silva, ed.—*Documentação para a história das missões do padroado português do Oriente: Índia*. Lisboa: Agência Geral das Colónias, 1949, Vol. II, Carta de Goa, 1532. For Vasco da Gama deliberations on the same topic, see CORREIA, Gaspar—*Lendas da Índia*. Lisboa: Academia Real das Ciências, 1858–1864, vol. II, p. 819/821.
- 28) Letter from P. Sebastião Gonçalves—Carta de Goa—10. Setembro. 1562 in WICKI, Joseph—*Documenta Indica*. Romae: Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, 1948–[1988], vol. 5, pp. 525–534.
- 29) Letter from P. João Baptista da Ribeira. in WICKI, Joseph—*Documenta Indica*. Romae: Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, 1948–[1988], vol. 6, pp. 537.
- 30) DISNEY, Anthony. R.—*Twilight of the pepper empire: Portuguese trade in southwest India in the early seventeenth century*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978, p. 21; BOYAJIAN, James—*Portuguese trade in Asia under the Habsburgs, 1580–1640*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008, p. 33.
- 31) Fernão Mendes Pinto (1509–1583) sailed from Portugal on March 11, 1537 bound for India. According to his own testimony in *Peregrinação*, Mendes Pinto claimed to have been shipwrecked, captured, and sold into slavery 16 or 17 times. The accuracy of his records are somewhat doubtful, the reality was a frequent mixture with fantastic and heroic narratives in his biography. He arrived in Malacca in 1539 and worked for the captain of the fortress there as an emissary to the kingdoms of Sumatra and Malaya. He then went to Patani on the east side of the Malay Peninsula and started a thriving business trading with the Thais in Bangkok. Robbed by pirates, he and his partners got revenge by becoming pirates themselves. He then traded along the coast of Indochina. He was shipwrecked on the coast of China and sold as a slave to work on the Great Wall of China. He became involved in the Burmese-Thai wars and wrote the first European account of Burmese politics and history. From Thailand Mendes Pinto made his second trip to Japan where he landed in the port of Kagoshima. On his departure, he brought back a Japanese stowaway whom he handed over to St. Francis Xavier in Malacca and thus inspired Xavier’s effort to travel to Japan and christianize the inhabitants. Sometime during these years in Asia, Mendes Pinto had accumulated a large fortune. He was a wealthy merchant when he made his third voyage to Japan in 1551, where Francis Xavier was installed at the court of one of the feudal lords of southern Japan. He gave Xavier the money to build the first Christian church in Japan. Cf. <http://www.bookrags.com/biography/fernao-mendes-pinto/>; “PINTO, Fernão Mendes” in *Dicionário da Expansão Portuguesa*. Lisboa: Círculo de Leitores, 1994, vol. 2, pp. 904–906 and ALMEIDA, António Fernando—*Fernão Mendes Pinto, um aventureiro português no Extremo Oriente: contribuição para o estudo da sua vida e obra*. Almada, Câmara Municipal de Almada, 2006.
- 32) As stressed by SUBRAHMANYAM, Sanjay—*O Império Asiático Português, 1500–1700: Uma História Política e Económica*. Lisboa: DIFEL, 1996, p. 205.
- 33) Quoted by CORN, Charles—*The Scents of Eden. A history of the Spice Trade*. New York; Tokyo, London: Kodansha International, 1997, p. 203.

- 34) CORN, Charles—*The Scents of Eden. A history of the Spice Trade*. New York; Tokyo, London: Kodansha International, 1997, p. 203.
- 35) MIRANDA, Susana Munch—“Élites urbanas, guerra y presión fiscal: el financiamiento extraordinario del Estado na Índia durante la Unión” in *CIUITAS. Cidades i Cidadania na Europa Moderna. V Curso de Historia Urbana* (Santander, 12/15 Septiembre 2011). [Proceedings forthcoming] and *A administração da Fazenda Real no Estado da Índia (1517–1640)*. Lisboa, 2007. [Unpublished PhD thesis]
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- 37) GODINHO, Vitorino Magalhães—*Os descobrimentos e a economia mundial*. Lisboa, Presença, [1987], vol. 3, pp. 43–80.
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- 42) RUSSELL-WOOD, A. J. R.—*A world on the move: the Portuguese in Africa, Asia, and America, 1415–1808*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993, p. 32.
- 43) This overview can be found in numerous books. See, for all, SUBHRAMANYAN, Sanjay—*O Império Asiático Português, 1500–1700: Uma História Política e Económica*. Lisboa, DIFEL, 1996, pp. 141–149; BOURDON, León—*Les Routes des Marchands portugais entre China et Japon au milieu du XVI^e. siècle*. Lisboa: Gráfica Lisbonense, 1949; HALL, John Ehitney, ed.—*The Cambridge History of Japan. Vol. IV: Early Modern Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, [2003], pp. 302–372; COSTA, João Paulo Oliveira e—*A descoberta da Civilização japonesa pelos Portugueses*, [Lisboa]: Instituto Cultural de Macau/ Instituto de História de Além Mar, 1995, pp. 119–130.
- 44) PARKER, Geoffrey—*The military revolution: military innovation and the rise of the West, 1500–1800*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 140, 210.
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- 46) COSTA, João Paulo Oliveira e—*O Japão e o Cristianismo no Século XVI. Ensaios de História Luso-Nipónica*. Lisboa: Sociedade da Independência de Portugal, 1989, pp. 110–111.
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- 51) *Leal Senado*—Portuguese for Loyal Senate, the seat of Macau’s government.
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- 54) SOUSA, Lúcio Manuel Rocha de—*O Japão e os Portugueses (1580–1641). Religião, Política e Comércio*. Porto, 2007 [Unpublished PhD thesis], vol. 2, p. 461.
- 55) SOUSA, Lúcio Manuel Rocha de—*O Japão e os Portugueses (1580–1641). Religião, Política e Comércio*. Porto, 2007 [Unpublished PhD thesis], vol. 2, pp. 413–414.
- 56) And not only in Japan. See, for additional developments, SOUZA, Teotónio R. de—“Gonçao Martins: a Jesuit procurator, businessman and diplomat in the *Estado da Índia*”. *Mare Liberum*, 5 (1993), pp. 119–128.
- 57) Sebastian de San Pedro—*Tratado* (1617). Biblioteca de la Real Academia de Historia. Cortes 566, fl. 31. Quote by SOUSA, Lúcio Manuel Rocha de—*O Japão e os Portugueses (1580–1641). Religião, Política e Comércio*. Porto, 2007 [Unpublished PhD thesis], vol. 2, p. 416, note 264.
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- 59) CHANG, T'ien Tse—*Sino-Portuguese trade from 1514 to 1644. A synthesis of Portuguese and Chinese sources*, Leyden, Brill, 1934, p. 104.
- 60) Philip II ended the monopoly of evangelisation of Jesuits in Japan, authorising the activity of other religious orders in Japan, through the Castilian “Padroado”. In 1600, Pope Clement VII, through the brief *Onerosa pastoralis* authorises the entrance of other religious orders in China and Japan through the Portuguese “Padroado”.
- 61) SOUSA, Lúcio Manuel Rocha de—*O Japão e os Portugueses (1580–1641). Religião, Política e Comércio*. Porto, 2007 [Unpublished PhD thesis], vol. 2, p. 344.
- 62) See, on these topics, BOURDON, Léon—*La Compagnie de Jésus et le Japon. 1547–1570*. Paris: FCG-CCP; CNCDP, 1993 and COSTA, João Paulo Oliveira e—*O Japão e o Cristianismo no Século XVI. Ensaio de História Luso-Nipônica*. Lisboa: Sociedade da Independência de Portugal, 1989; *A descoberta da Civilização japonesa pelos Portugueses*. [Lisboa]: Instituto Cultural de Macau/ Instituto de História de Além Mar, 1995.
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