

PROPAGANDA FIDE IN CHINA
AND THE HISTORICAL ARCHIVES
Introductory Essay

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PROLOGUE

'Fresh News from China', Its Journey to Rome, and the Archives

During the month of December 1728, the Procurator of the Propaganda Fide missions in China and East Asia Domenico Perroni was busy completing at his desk in Canton a neatly handwritten series of reports for his superiors in Rome. The compilation of the "Memorie della Cina", one of the most comprehensive and continuative series of accounts ever produced on the history of Catholicism in pre-modern China, was his chief duty at the end of each year (see fig. 79).¹

Appendices invariably comprised a ledger of all expenses and income, and copies of important documents for the past year, including reports from missionaries in the interior, petitions by Christians, imperial edicts and memorials in Chinese relevant to Christian activities, and so on. The tedious job of handwriting two copies of the "Memorie" – to be sent for safety via different ships to Europe – and of checking the accounting, were just some of the many duties that kept Perroni up at night. "I must wake up very early in the morning, and often I have to go to bed without dinner, after working at the light of a lamp for many hours" – he wrote home.²

An apostolic missionary of Propaganda Fide and a member of the small Order of the Mother of God, Perroni was a studious and serious man, perfect for this faraway bureaucratic post. He had left his native Italy in 1707 and crossed the oceans to serve Charles Maillard de Tournon, papal envoy to the Chinese court, and bring him the cardinal's hat bestowed upon him by pope Clement XI.

¹ From 1712 on, almost every year the "Memorie della Cina" (Reports of China) also entitled "Notizie della Cina" (News of China) and "Memorie ed occorrenze della Cina" (Reports and happenings of China) reached Rome, offering a comprehensive summary of Catholic activities in China and East Asia. Unlike the Jesuit *Litterae annuae* and *Lettere edificantes et curieuses*, the "Memorie" have never been published, as they were intelligence reports not intended for public circulation, and they still await scholarly attention.

² Carlantonio Erra, *Memorie de' religiosi per pietà, e dottrina insigni della Congregazione della Madre di Dio*: Roma, Giuseppe e Niccolò Grossi nel Palazzo de' Massimi, 1760, vol. 2, p. 167; cf. Giovanni Pizzorusso, "Perroni, Domenico Giuseppe", in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, Roma: Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, vol. 82, 2015, pp. 466-468.

After the cardinal's death in Macao in 1710, Perroni moved to Canton, where he lived the rest of his life, until 1729. Like all missionaries in China, he acquired a Chinese name – Guo Zhongchuan 郭中傳 –, and in order to cement his Chinese identity and fulfill his administrative functions, he studied Chinese with a tutor, becoming sufficiently proficient in the local dialect, and in reading and translating Chinese texts. Thus equipped, from his base in Canton Perroni gathered intelligence and received information from fellow missionaries and Chinese Christians in the four corners of the Qing empire.

Perhaps to amuse himself and bolstered by the cultural confidence he had acquired in over two decades in China, in 1728 he deviated from the usual routine and format of the “Memorie”, and offered a special treat to his readers in Rome. He compiled an appendix of over twenty folios with a digest (*ristretto*) from recent issues of the Beijing gazette (*dibao* 邸報), including excerpts in Chinese characters and translation.³ He commented:

Before offering a translation of relevant materials gathered from the gazettes in order to satisfy European curiosity, it will be appropriate to summarize the news that the gazette compilers cram every two days into a book spread across China from Beijing. Last year I already wrote that all the news they publish is about the actions of their Emperor for the governance of the people. What he says, what he does about these matters, and all that happens in the provinces regarding the obedience or transgression of the laws is noted, and if it is in the interest of the Monarch, it is published in the gazettes. Here you will find a sample.⁴

Perroni's Chinese-language materials, neatly copied by his native secretaries, are today preserved in the Historical Archives of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples or ‘de Propaganda Fide’ and are just an example of the many Chinese-language documents described in this Catalogue. They are “fresh news from China” that the key agent of Propaganda Fide in China selected from a vast array of correspondence and materials he received. The 1728 “Ristretto” mentions Catholic pastoral activities in China, the persecu-

³ This document is preserved in APF, SC, *Indie Orientali e Cina*, vol. 19 (1727-1728), ff. 717r-731v, “Ristretto di varie notizie cavate dalle Gazzette impresse in Pekino nel 1728 in supplemento delle Memorie della Cina del medesimo anno per la S. Congregazione di Propaganda Fide.”

⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 718r. On the history of the court gazettes and the missionary “discovery” of the gazette in Canton in 1725, see Emily Mokros, *The Peking Gazette in Late Imperial China, State News and Political Authority*, Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2021, pp. 119-128; Nicolas Standaert, “The Chinese Gazette in European Sources from the Late Qianlong Period: The Case of the *Siku Quanshu*”, *T'oung Pao* 107 (2021): 133-187; Nicolas Standaert, *The Chinese Gazette in European Sources: Joining the Global Public in the Early and Mid-Qing Dynasty*, Leiden: Brill, 2022, esp. chapter 2, with an extensive treatment of Perroni's Gazette excerpts.

tion and arrest of several “Christian Princes” of the imperial clan at the Qing court, and the visit of the Portuguese Ambassador to Beijing in 1727. It also contains Italian paraphrases and Chinese originals of edicts on official sacrifices to the gods of the rivers and rain, on imperial celebrations for elderly men and women, on new laws forbidding the butchering of oxen and cows, references to natural prodigies, witchcraft and soothsaying, descriptions of war campaigns in Tibet, and so on.⁵

But the Procurators were not the only conduits of information from the China missions. Manuscript reports, letters, translations, and transcripts today preserved in the Historical Archives reached Rome from many parts of the Chinese empire, from many individual and collective senders, and in manifold ways. Most materials were in European languages, including Latin (used for official business), Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, French, but also in Chinese, as described in this Catalogue. They reflected the religious, administrative, and daily issues that Catholic missionaries and Chinese Christians faced at the time. The documents reached Rome because the writers needed answers to doubts on theological and pastoral matters; requested funds to support the missions; tried to resolve conflicts or enforce discipline; or simply wanted to inform Rome on local conditions. The scope of these materials is as vast as life itself.

These letters and reports had, of course, to reach Rome safely to fulfill their purpose of informing and eliciting decisions. Sometimes missionaries affiliated with Propaganda, traveling as procurators or returning to Rome for good, were the personal bearers of important documents. For the vast majority of correspondence, however, other courses were more common. Using commercial and official ships of various European powers, the superiors of the religious orders in Macao, Manila and India, and, increasingly in the eighteenth century, the Propaganda Procurators in Macao and Canton, forwarded the bulk of the dispatches from the China missions to the papal city via Madrid, Paris, Lisbon and elsewhere, using the network of the religious orders and papal nuncios.

Once in Rome, however, the documents had to land on the right desk, so that the appropriate official could read them, process them, and act upon them with a decision, to be sent back using the inverse route. Therefore, while the original documents themselves are reflections of the life of missionaries and Catholic communities in China, the different archival series of the Historical Archives in which they are today preserved reflect, rather, the organization of labor within the administrative machinery of the Congregation of Propaganda Fide in Rome. Perroni’s “Ristretto”, for example, is preserved in the series *Scritture riferite nei Congressi*, i.e. “Documents referred to in the Weekly Meetings.” What does this mean?

⁵ For a description of the Chinese materials in this “Ristretto”, see this Catalogue under SC, *Indie Orientali e Cina*, vol. 19 (1727-1728).

This should become clear after reading this essay. If we want to comprehend both why the documents inventoried in this Catalogue are housed in a certain archival series, and what is their historical context, we need to work on two levels, keeping them analytically distinct, but also conceptually connected. First, we have to gain some understanding of the general history of Propaganda as an administrative central organ of the Holy See, its organization, and its handling of documents and matters related to China. Second, we have to briefly survey the history of Catholicism in China, focusing in particular on the missions directly depending on papal authority through Propaganda, and their specificities. By doing so, we will not only learn tantalizing stories and details about local conditions in China and global connections across the world, but also discern who was the intended audience in the Church hierarchy and get attuned to the bureaucratic mechanisms that governed communication.⁶

PART 1 – THE CONGREGATION OF PROPAGANDA FIDE IN ROME: ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY AND STRUCTURE

The Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (*Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*), today officially called “Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples”, was established in 1622 by pope Gregory XV. Propaganda was a belated outcome of the institutionalization and bureaucratization of the papacy initiated by the reforms of the Council of Trent (1545-1563). Organizationally, Propaganda replicated the structure of older, more established “Sacred Congregations of Cardinals” (*Sacrae Cardinalium Congregationes*) also called “dicasteries” of the papal government (meaning ‘law-courts’ in Greek, and equivalent to ecclesiastical ‘ministries’), established at the end of the sixteenth century. The Congregations derive their name from the fact that they literally “congregate” cardinals as official collaborators of the sovereign pontiff. Some Congregations were established to assist the Pope in the administration

⁶ A fundamental resource to consult before arriving at the Archives for a correct understanding of the collections, and the best authoritative guide to official acronyms and *signaturae*, is Nikolaus Kowalsky & Josef Metzler, *Inventory of the Historical Archives of the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of the Peoples or ‘De Propaganda Fide’* (English-Italian edition), Rome, Urbaniana University Press, 1988; see also, more recently, Luis Manuel Cuña Ramos, “L’Archivio Storico de Propaganda Fide (Congregazione per l’Evangelizzazione dei Popoli): percorsi archivistici”, *Archiva Ecclesiae* 53-55 (2010-12; published in 2014), pp. 191-207. For a Chinese-language presentation of the collections regarding China, mostly based on Kowalsky & Metzler’s *Inventory*, see Liu Guopeng 刘国鹏, “Fandigan Yuan Chuanxinbu lishi dang’anguan suocang 1622-1938 nianjian youguan Zhongguo Tianzhujiaohui wenxian suoyin gouchen 梵蒂冈原传信部历史档案馆所藏1622-1938年间有关中国天主教会文献索引钩沉” (A summary inventory of China’s Catholic Church archival materials in the Archives of Propaganda Fide, 1622-1938), *Shijie zongjiao* 世界宗教 *Studies in World Religions* 143.5 (2013), pp. 100-113.

of the affairs of the entire Church (e.g., the Congregations of the Holy Office, of Sacraments, of Rites, of the Index of Forbidden Books etc.), while other assisted him in the administration of the temporal dominions of the Holy See. The general name for the papal government harks back to Roman times: *Curia*. This was the central government of the Holy See, made up of career officials, organized in several central judiciary and administrative bodies, such as the *Signatura* of Justice and Grace (the courts of justice), the tribunal of the *Sacra Romana Rota* (a civil and ecclesiastical judiciary), the *Dataria* (charged with the administration of benefices and graces), and the Congregations of Cardinals, including Propaganda.⁷ This structure guaranteed a relatively high degree of continuity in spite of changes in popes, and the turnover at the top was rather limited. A more ‘fluid’ Curia was formed and undone at the election of each new pope, and consisted of his clients, starting with the “Cardinal Nepote” (literally a cardinal that was a relative of the reigning pope). Often, the Cardinal Nepote had also important roles in several Congregations, including Propaganda Fide.⁸

After a period of experimentation during the first decades of the seventeenth century, the Holy See decided to establish the Congregation of Propaganda to exercise universal jurisdiction on Catholic missions across the world.⁹ The delay in the foundation of the Congregation was in part due to the role played by the Spanish Crown, and to a lesser degree by the Portuguese Crown, in defending the rights of royal patronage over missionary work in the colonies, as well as by the resistance of religious orders laboring in mission lands.¹⁰ Nominally, the pope was Propaganda’s supreme spiritual and admin-

⁷ The institutional term “Congregation” as used here (a ministry or dicastery, ruled by cardinals) should not be confused with the more common usage of that word, indicating a Catholic religious grouping of men or women following a common rule and living in communities, and used in modern times. By the late seventeenth century, the stable Curia counted around 600 main administrators of different ranks in so-called ‘venial’, i.e. purchased posts in canon or civil law within the Papal States’ administrative bodies. The positions in papal Congregations, however, were not ‘venial’, but staffed by papal decision with permanent members of the Curia. In total, the papal stable bureaucracy counted by the late seventeenth century over 900 members, with some overlaps with the ‘venial’ careers. See Peter Partner, “Il mondo della Curia e i suoi rapporti con la città”, in *Roma la città del papa. Vita civile e religiosa dal Giubileo di Bonifacio VIII al Giubileo di Papa Wojtyła*, edited by Luigi Fiorani & Adriano Prosperi, Torino: Einaudi, 2000, pp. 203-238.

⁸ This summary of the organization of the Curia and papal court is based on the essays in the just quoted Luigi Fiorani and Adriano Prosperi, *Roma, la città del papa*.

⁹ On the organization of Propaganda in Rome, see Giovanni Pizzorusso, “Agli antipodi di Babele: Propaganda Fide tra immagine cosmopolita e orizzonti romani (XVII-XIX secolo)”, in *Roma: la città del papa*, pp. 478-518; Giovanni Pizzorusso, *Governare le missioni, conoscere il mondo nel XVII secolo: la Congregazione Pontificia de Propaganda Fide*, Viterbo: Sette Città, 2018.

¹⁰ Jean [Johannes] Beckmann, “La Congrégation de la Propagation de la Foi face à la politique internationale.” *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 19 (1963), pp. 241-271; Pizzorusso, *Governare le missioni*, pp. 106-114.

istrative leader, although in fact he only officially intervened on special occasions, during general meetings called *coram Sanctissimo* (“in the presence of His Holiness”), discontinued after 1657. A *Cardinal Prefect* presided the organization, and the Congregation’s highest decisional body was a committee composed of a variable number of cardinals, never less than twelve. Its ecclesiastical *Secretary*, however, shouldered the actual administrative work of the Congregation, and he was in fact the true leader, who organized the bureaucratic structure and maintained communications with the pope and the cardinals. Propaganda’s Secretaries, especially in the early history of the Congregation, served in that position for many years: the first Secretary, Francesco Ingoli (1578-1649), whose tenure was fundamental in setting the future course of Propaganda, for example, occupied the post for 27 years.¹¹ The Secretary analyzed a great amount of correspondence arriving from all corners of the world; prepared minutes of all meetings and briefed the cardinals on the matters at hand; kept direct contacts with the pontiff and the pontifical secretariat; and worked closely with the Cardinal Prefect on all matters of importance. He also coordinated the work of the clerical employees, including an archivist (a position established in 1660) and several *minutanti* (administrative officers) and *scrittori* (scribes) in charge of copying and filing documents.¹² With time, Propaganda acquired properties in Rome, Italy, and abroad to support its operations, and required all kinds of legal and administrative help from the papal Curia, while also hiring its own employees.¹³

Propaganda followed existing institutional models, but given its global scope, it also developed its specific *modus operandi*, in symbiosis and competition with other papal institutions, such as the Secretariat of State (*Secreteria Apostolica*) in charge of diplomacy, the Holy Office in charge of doctrinal matters, and the pope himself. A complex network of informants and agents kept the Secretary, the Prefect, and the Congregation informed about religious, political and economic matters in European courts and across the world. The papal nuncios, strategically posted in many European capitals, were the most im-

¹¹ Ingoli was also the author of the famous 1616 letter to Galileo, indicting his cosmological system based on Copernicanism; for a biography, see Giovanni Pizzorusso, “Ingoli, Francesco”, in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, Roma: Istituto dell’Enciclopedia Italiana, vol. 62, 2004, pp. 388-391; on his missionary thought while Secretary of Propaganda, see also Francesco Ingoli, *Relazione delle quattro parti del mondo*, edited by Fabio Tosi, Roma: Urbaniana University Press, 1999, which refers to further literature.

¹² Nikolaus Kowalsky, “L’archivio della Sacra Congregazione ‘de Propaganda Fide’ e i suoi archivisti”, *Pontificia Università Urbaniana – Annales* (1963-1964), pp. 38-53; Pizzorusso, *Governare le missioni*, pp. 74-77.

¹³ See Giovanni Pizzorusso, “Lo ‘Stato temporale’ della Congregazione de Propaganda Fide nel XVII secolo”, in *Ad ultimos usque terrarum terminos in fide propaganda. Roma fra promozione e difesa della fede in età moderna*, edited by Massimiliano Ghilardi, Gaetano Sabatini, Matteo Sanfilippo, e Donatella Stranio, Viterbo: Sette Città, 2014, pp. 51-66.

portant cogs in this machine in Catholic lands, helped by local bishops, who occasionally assisted transiting missionaries.¹⁴ The new figures of the Vicars Apostolic were instead the central agents in the missionary territories and had pastoral, ecclesiastical and administrative roles comparable to those of bishops. We will deal with them and with the figure of the General Procurator in East Asia in the section on the history of the Propaganda missions in China.

The Historical Archives as a Reflection of Propaganda's Organization

The previous sketch offers a background to understand the structure of the Archives, since the organization of the archival records up to 1893 closely reflects the original bureaucratic functions dating to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. What follows is a concise description of the main archival series as they relate to China, indicating in what series Chinese-language materials inventoried in this Catalogue are present. Almost all the documentation for the period between the seventeenth and the mid-nineteenth century is available as original manuscripts, in thick bound vellum volumes. Although occasional copies might exist in duplicate elsewhere within the Archives or in other archives, these documents are usually unique and irreplaceable. The volumes chronologically cover the time when the different administrative bodies of the Congregation discussed the documents. They generally bear a modern folio numbering, making them easily traceable and citable in scholarly publications. Since correspondence from Asia took a long time to reach Rome, documents dating from one to three or more years *before* the dates covered in a certain volume can usually be found within a volume.

Researchers should be aware that while only certain archival series contain documents in Chinese language, those and other series also contain documentation related to China and its missions in Italian, Spanish, Latin, Portuguese, and French. Working knowledge of Italian and other Romance languages is thus necessary to navigate the codices of Propaganda and trace all the documents connected to a certain matter, case, or individual.

A further caveat is necessary about the Chinese documents. Missionaries sent them as attachments to reports and letters in European languages, as Peroni did in his "Memorie", and they are usually found immediately before or after those reports and letters within the volumes. Some of the Chinese-language documents are copies of Qing official documents, occasionally available in standard collections or archives in China and Taiwan (besides several copies in European archives). Other materials, however, especially those produced by

¹⁴ Giovanni Pizzorusso, "Per servizio della Sacra Congregazione de Propaganda Fide': i nunzi apostolici e le missioni tra centralità romana e Chiesa universale (1622-1660)", *Cheiron* 30 (1998), pp. 201-227; Pizzorusso, *Governare le missioni*, pp. 63-65.

Chinese Christians and by Western and Chinese priests, are unique or very rare, and the objective of this Catalogue is to list and make them known to sinologists all over the world. The Chinese documents are historically important in themselves to understand specific aspects of the history of Christianity in China, and the history of Sino-Western cultural, economic, and political relations. However, to read those documents in isolation from their archival context and other contemporary documents might create misunderstandings about their overall meaning and purpose. To obviate this problem, and offer researchers initial clues for further research, this Catalogue supplies some of the needed historical references, although, for reasons of space and time, it has not always been possible to do so for each document. In order to contextualize properly these documents, it is still necessary for a researcher to study the materials surrounding them in chronological order, and to understand the bureaucratic and ecclesiastical structure of Propaganda Fide in Rome and China. Thus, a researcher should become familiar with the history and the bureaucratic organization of the Congregation, as well as the history of the Propaganda missions in China, to place correctly the documents within the existing archival system.

Below, through a parallel description of the main administrative functions of the Congregation and of the documentary series those functions produced, I will concurrently explicate the workings of the bureaucratic machine, and how to navigate the Archives. With few exceptions, I will use Italian nomenclature throughout, as it is the one employed at the Archives, and provide English renderings as necessary. While Chinese documents catalogued in this volume are only a small portion of these documentary series, a full explanation of the entire structure and contents of the Archives pertaining to the China missions remains necessary to provide researchers with a comprehensive yet concise overview, as a platform for further research.

General Meetings (Congregazioni Generali)

The main official business of the Congregation was handled at the “General Meetings” (*Congregazioni Generali*) of the commission of cardinals and other invited consultants (*consultori*) who formed the core of the Congregation.¹⁵ These monthly gatherings were coordinated by the Secretary and his staff and presided by the Cardinal Prefect. Until the new Palace of Propaganda in Piazza di Spagna became the primary seat for administrative activities in 1657,

¹⁵ The following section is based on Kowalsky & Metzler, *Inventory*; Luca Codignola, National Archives of Canada & Congregatio pro Gentium Evangelizatione, eds., *Guide to Documents Relating to French and British North America in the Archives of the Sacred Congregation “de Propaganda Fide” in Rome, 1622-1799*, Ottawa: National Archives of Canada, 1991, “III. The Archives of Propaganda”, pp. 29-39.

these meetings happened in several locations, including the Palazzo della Cancelleria (Chancery), the papal palaces, and the residences of cardinals. A deputized cardinal (called *Cardinal ponente*) offered a report (*ponenza*) about the issues on the agenda, and the Secretary supplied a summary of the original documents (*scritture originali*) received from the missions or elsewhere on a specific issue. From a legislative point of view, these meetings were the most important, as they resulted in formal and binding decisions, later prepared as letters of instructions for the missions (*lettere della S. Congregazione*; letters of the Sacred Congregation). These instructions are contained in the series *Lettere e Decreti della Sacra Congregazione e Biglietti di Monsignor Segretario* (Letters and decrees of the Sacred Congregation and memoranda of Mgr. Secretary; acronym, *Lettere*, 1622-1892, 388 volumes), where some volumes are specifically dedicated to the East Indies.¹⁶ These meetings produced three series of documents, described below.

The first series is the *Acta S. Congregationis* (abbreviation: *Acta*), i.e. “Proceedings of the Sacred Congregation.” The *Acta*, compiled by the Secretary and other clerks in Latin until 1657, then mainly in Italian, were the minutes of the General Meetings. They contain the summary report (*ristretto*) by the *Cardinal ponente* or the Secretary, the list and notes on original documents referred to during the proceedings by the Secretary (*sommario*), and the decisions (*rescritti* or *decreti*) reached at them. The *Acta* are arranged in strict chronological order and discussions of missionary matters on China (none in Chinese language) are included in this series, and can be traced through indexes in each volume, and some general indexes available in situ.¹⁷

Connected to the *Acta* is a second archival series, the *Scritture originali riferite nelle Congregazioni Generali* (SOCG), i.e. “Original documents referred to at the General Meetings”, in two sub-series. These are the original documents on which the cardinals’ decisions were based, and they cover the entire world. There are also occasional materials on China, especially when issues of general import for global missionary policy were at stake (e.g. royal patronage of missions; liturgy). Even if they contain *no materials in Chinese language*, and thus are not included in this Catalogue, they are worth exploring, as they

¹⁶ See Kowalski & Metzler, *Inventory*, pp. 63-66; on the East Indies: APF, *Lettere, Indie orientali*, vol. 4 (1657-1664); vol. 52 (1665-1668); vol. 116 (1723-1726); vol. 125 (1727-1730); vol. 134 (1731-1735); vol. 145 (1736-1738); vol. 152 (1739-1742); vol. 161 (1743-1746), vol. 170 (1747-1754); vol. 187 (1755-1759).

¹⁷ Researchers are advised to consult this essential article about the ancient indexes: Giuseppe [= Josef] Metzler, “Indici dell’Archivio Storico della Sacra Congregazione *De Propaganda Fide*”, *Euntes Docete* (Special Issue: *De Archivis et Bibliothecis Missionibus atque Missionis Scientiae Inservientibus*) 21 (1968), pp. 109-130. Some recent typed inventories for the ancient series are also available in situ in the APF reading room, and on the website of the Archives [<http://www.archivistoricopropaganda.va/content/archivistoricopropagandafide/it/archivistorico/fondi-archivistici.html>]; <https://archive.is/0rXXN>].

do occasionally refer to the Chinese missions. The *First Series* of SOCG (until 1669; vols. 1-417) is loosely organized by place, has some partial indexes, but contains relatively little on China.¹⁸ The *Second Series* of SOCG, or “Collezione Moderna” (1669 to 1893; vols. 418-1044), is instead ordered in strict chronological order of meetings, and closely follows the ordering of the *Acta*; it contains a higher number of documents on China that can be traced, albeit imperfectly, through mentions in the chronological *Acta* and their indexes.

Weekly Meetings (Congressi)

Most of the routine work of the Congregation was accomplished in smaller Weekly Meetings (*Congressi*) of the Cardinal Prefect and the Secretary with the *minutanti* who would assist in the presentation and drafting of correspondence and documents. After consultations in these weekly meetings, the Prefect would decide whether to act upon an issue or defer it, or whether it warranted presentation in the General Meetings. Many routine matters were actually decided, and quite often deferred, at this stage; the labors of these meetings are reflected in the series *Scritture riferite nei Congressi* (“Documents referred to in the Weekly Meetings”; acronym SC; 1622-1892; 1451 vols.).

This extensive series contains all the original documents of the weekly meetings, materials usually not discussed in General Meetings. The *Scritture riferite nei Congressi* is further divided in two main sub-series: the *first series* contains letters and documents sent from the missions; the *second series*, materials on various institutions managed by the Congregation in Italy and Rome, such as the Urbanian College and the polyglot printing press in Rome, some of the missionary colleges in Italy, and so on. Here we are concerned only with the *first series*, not the second.

The *first series*, as a whole, consists of multi-lingual original letters and reports from Europe and missionary territories across the world. In the words of the late Josef Metzler, archivist of Propaganda in the 1960s-80s, the documents in this series are “most precious from a historical point of view because [they]

¹⁸ Kowalsky & Metzler, *Inventory*, pp. 29-39, provides a complete list of the 417 volumes of the first series, which was organized geographically. China researchers will naturally pay attention to the two volumes entitled “Cina”, vol. 192 (1648), vol. 193 (1654), but also several volumes labelled “Asia”, “Macao”, and “Indie”; in fact, also volumes on Spain, Portugal and Italy contain scattered materials related to China and Asia; see e.g. Hugh Fenning, “The Dominicans and Propaganda Fide, 1622-1668. A Catalogue of the First Series of the SOCG, volumes 1 to 30 [Part 1]”, *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 41 (1971), pp. 241-323; and “The Dominicans and Propaganda Fide, 1622-1668. A Catalogue of the First Series of the SOCG, volumes 31 to 55 [Part 2]”, *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 43 (1973), pp. 137-213, cf. pp. 192 and 194, on Vittorio Ricci O.P. and Ingoli; Francesco D’Arelli, “La Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide e la Cina nei secoli XVII-XVIII: le missioni, la Procura ed i Procuratori nella documentazione dell’Archivio storico di Roma”, *Annali dell’Istituto Universitario Orientale* 55 (1995), 2, p. 4.

reflect in a certain way the daily life of the missions.”¹⁹ Rich materials on the Chinese missions, some in Chinese language, can be found in the ninety volumes on China and East Asia, in the two sub-series entitled *Indie Orientali e Cina* [East Indies and China] (1623-1799), and *Cina e Regni Adiacenti* [China and Adjacent Kingdoms] (1798-1892). Perroni’s “Ristretto” discussed in the opening part of this essay, for example, is contained in this series, as well as many of the “Memorie della Cina” and annual accounting reports (“Stato della cassa”) of the Propaganda missions in East Asia, together with hundreds of letters from Vicars Apostolic, common missionaries, and Chinese Christians. The materials are arranged chronologically, according to the time when they were discussed in Rome. Both series also include several volumes of *Miscellanea* (69 vols. for *Indie Orientali e Cina*; 18 vols. for *Cina e Regni Adiacenti*) that entered the collection when archivists found materials in unexpected places within the Archives, or individuals, families, and institutions donated them. These volumes consist of a variety of documents (treatises, catechisms, dictionaries, memoirs etc.), not necessarily in chronological order, and contain some unique documents in Chinese, as this Catalogue shows.

Special Commissions on the East Indies and China
(*Congregazione particolare dell’Indie Orientali e Cina*)

In order to deal with specific issues, Propaganda also established *ad hoc* committees, called “Special Meetings” (*Congregazioni Particolari*), and better translated as “Special Commissions.” These Special Commissions included cardinals from the Congregation, but also outside consultants as needed, and ceased to exist when they accomplished their task. There were exceptions, though, and some became permanent commissions.²⁰ For our purpose, the most important of the permanent commissions was the *Congregazione Particolare dell’Indie Orientali e Cina* (“Special Commission on the East Indies and China”), also known in Latin as *Congregatio Particularis de rebus Sinarum et Indiarum Orientalium* (“Special Commission for Chinese and East Indian Matters”), active between 1664 and 1856. The volumes of this commission are a veritable treasure-trove of sources on the daily life of the Chinese missions.²¹

¹⁹ Kowalsky & Metzler, *Inventory*, p. 49.

²⁰ Permanent commissions were, for example, the *Congregazione particolare Stato Temporale* (i.e. on the Temporal Matters of Propaganda; from 1638 onwards) or the *Congregazione particolare Stamperia* (i.e. on the Printing Press; from 1655 onwards).

²¹ Some materials on China can also be found scattered in the general series called *Congregazioni particolari* (CP). Some of its volumes contain concentrated materials on China, as revealed by their titles: *Cina*: vol. 20 (1664-1666); vol. 160 (1864); *S. Famiglia di Napoli* [Collegio dei Cinesi]: vol. 111 (1731-1751); vol. 125 (1754-1760); *Indie Orientali*: vol. 20 (1664-1666); vol. 23 (1674); vol. 30 (1682-1709); vol. 142 (1784-1796); vol. 155 (1833-1838); vol.

This series is divided in two parts, mirroring the organization of the *Congregazioni Generali* series: *Acta* and *Scritture originali*.

The *Acta Congregationis Particularis super rebus Sinarum et Indiarum Orientalium* (Proceedings of the Special Commission on China and the East Indies; acronym Acta CP; 1667-1856; 24 vols.) contain in compact volumes, mainly in Italian and Latin, the minutes of the meetings, the summaries of the original documents received from the missions, and the decisions taken. The series is accompanied by six volumes of ancient indexes (*Indice degli Atti per la Cina*, “Indexes for the Acta of China”), three by topics, and three by places, available in the reading room.²²

The *Scritture Originali della Congregazione Particolare dell’Indie Orientali e Cina* (Original Documents from the Special Commission on the East Indies and China; acronym SOCP; 1667-1856; 81 vols.) are the original letters, reports and official documents on which the commission’s decisions were taken. Similar in scope to the SC series, this series contains extremely detailed and micro-historical materials on a myriad topic. The documents are arranged chronologically according to the date of the meeting during which the matter at hand was discussed, and not according to the date of the original documents. These volumes are chronologically linked to the *Acta CP*, which can thus be used as a sort of rough index. Its Chinese-language materials have been inventoried in the present Catalogue. Here I offer only a sampling of the topics contained in this series:

- Documents on the controversies about the establishment of Vicariates Apostolic in China and East Asia;
- Materials about the organization of the papal legations of Tournon (1704-1706) and Mezzabarba (1720-1721);²³
- Policy papers on China by the Propaganda Prefects and Secretaries;
- Correspondence from members of the Legations in China;
- Reports by the Propaganda Procurators in East Asia (including their letters to the Secretary, the Prefect, and the cardinals of the Congregation; and copies of the “Memorie del Procuratore”);

160 (1864); cf. Kowalsky & Metzler, *Inventory*, pp. 43-44. In the *Fondo di Vienna* (a collection of 74 volumes taken by Napoleon and returned from Wien only in 1925), a volume initially belonging to the SOCP is in section II, vol. 21, *Cina* (1678-1679); two volumes originally in SC are in section III, vol. 29, *Indie Orientali*, 1788-1790 and vol. 30, *Indie Orientali*, 1791-1798; and in section VIII, *Varia*, vol. 72, *Miscellanea Irlanda e Cina*; see Kowalsky & Metzler, *Inventory*, pp. 69, 71.

²² For a list of the *Acta CP*, see *ibid.*, pp. 47-48.

²³ Based on the administrative materials of the Legations in SOCP, see Eugenio Menegon, “A Clash of Court Cultures: Papal Envoys in Early Eighteenth Century Beijing”, in *Europe-China. Intercultural Encounters (16th-18th Centuries)*, edited by Luís Filipe Barreto, Lisbon: Centro Científico e Cultural de Macau, 2012, pp. 139-178.

- Reports and letters from the Propaganda missionaries in Beijing (including Matteo Ripa, Teodorico Pedrini and many others, 1712-1811);
- Reports and letters from the Vicars Apostolic and the Propaganda missionaries of various religious orders and congregations (Franciscans, Dominicans, Missions Étrangères de Paris, Lazarists) in Sichuan, Fujian, Shandong, Shanxi-Shaanxi and other areas;²⁴
- Chinese-language materials, including official memorials in original language and translation; catechisms; petitions by Chinese Christians; inscriptions and prints, etc.;
- Blueprints of residences, churches, cemeteries; drawings of buildings.

The list of topics above is hardly comprehensive, as this is one of the richest series at the Archives, and one of the most rewarding to explore for the study of the Chinese missions and European presence in China. Since materials are mostly in Italian, working knowledge of that language is necessary to fully profit from its contents.

Procurator in East Asia

Another important and mostly unexplored collection is the Archive of the General Procurator of Propaganda Fide in East Asia (*Archivio della Procura*), a peripheral archive of the Congregation of Propaganda, successively located in Canton, Macao, and Hong Kong. Transported to Rome after the position of Procurator was abolished in 1923, its survival across time and space is truly miraculous. The documentation consists of 47 containers of letters by missionaries and Chinese priests, and all kinds of administrative materials related to the financial and disciplinary functions of the Procurator, totaling around 20,000 documents.²⁵ The Procurator – one of them was Domenico Perroni, with whom we opened this essay – had responsibility for the missions of East and Southeast Asia, including China, Tunkin (Northern Vietnam), Cochinchina (Southern Vietnam), Ava and Pegú (Burma, now Myanmar), Siam (Thai-

²⁴ Recent books based on SC and SOCP reports about the Chinese missions are: for Northern China, Lars Peter Laamann, *Christian Heretics in Late Imperial China: Christian Inculturation and State Control, 1720-1850*, London – New York, NY: Routledge, 2006; for Fujian province, Eugenio Menegon, *Ancestors, Virgins, & Friars: Christianity as a Local Religion in Late Imperial China*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center and Harvard University Press, 2009; for Shanxi province, Henrietta Harrison, *The Missionary's Curse and Other Tales from a Chinese Catholic Village*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2013.

²⁵ A presentation and summary inventory of the archive with biographies of the Procurators is Josef Metzler, "Das Archiv der Missionsprokur der Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide in Canton, Macao und Hong Kong", in Ugo Marazzi et al., eds., *La conoscenza dell'Asia e dell'Africa in Italia nei secoli XVIII e XIX*, Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1985, vol. 2, pp. 75-139; see also Kowalsky & Metzler, *Inventory*, pp. 82-86.

land), Tibet, and, at least nominally, Japan and Korea. He forwarded reports, letters and documents sent by Vicars Apostolic, missionaries and Christians from the field; composed annual reports on missionary activities and sent annual account books; and employed or paid Chinese scribes in Macao and Canton to copy or compile Chinese materials relevant to the missionary enterprise. The Procurator supported the inner missions in China partly thanks to intelligence and indirect patronage at the Qing court, gained through the long-term presence of Propaganda Fide missionaries at the imperial service as technicians (clockmakers, painters, musicians etc.). He also managed the financial administration and distribution of funds and materials sent from Europe. This position was crucial for the logistical and economic survival of the Propaganda missions in Asia. The Procurator acted as *de facto* superior of all Propaganda missionaries under his territorial sway and acted as an information hub between Rome and the missionaries on the ground, and vice-versa. A great portion of the Chinese materials inventoried in this Catalogue reached Rome via the office of the Procurator. The *Archivio della Procura* itself, however, only contains few Chinese materials, mostly dating to the mid- to late nineteenth century, thus not included in this Catalogue. Only a small part of the collection is open to the public, due to the very fragile state of its documents, and full access will become possible only after restoration and the compilation of a full inventory. A fuller description of the functions of this office can be found below in this essay.

After presenting the main series of the Historical Archives as a reflection of Propaganda's organization in Rome and East Asia, it is time to mentally journey through the oceans from Europe to Asia, and present a picture of the situation in China, including a brief history of the Propaganda missions there.

PART 2 – PROPAGANDA FIDE IN EAST ASIA AND CHINA

Royal Patronage and the Role of Religious Orders, Congregations and Secular Priests (16th-17th Centuries)

The Chinese missions had been firmly in the hands of the Jesuit order since the establishment of Macao and the first arrival in Ming territory of Michele Ruggieri and Matteo Ricci in the 1580s under Portuguese royal patronage (*padroado*). The Jesuits, however, were not the only religious order trying to enter China. Dominicans and Franciscans based in Manila and under Spanish royal patronage relentlessly and unsuccessfully continued to aim at China as a missionary field, rebuffed by Portuguese authorities and the Jesuits. Since 1585, thanks to a secret papal brief that Gregory XIII issued to the Jesuits, secular clergy and regulars (i.e. members of traditional religious orders under a *regula*, technically not the Jesuits) were forbidden from entering the Por-

tuguese missionary fields in East Asia. Spanish Franciscans in the late sixteenth century challenged nonetheless the Jesuit monopoly, facing arrest and death with some converts in Nagasaki, Japan, in 1597. Under pressure from the mendicant orders and the Spanish king, pope Clement VIII opened both China and Japan to all newcomers in 1600 but reached a compromise with Portuguese authorities (at the time in a dynastic union with Spain) requiring with the bull *Onerosa Pastoralis* (1600) that all missionaries directed to Africa and Asia sail through Lisbon and Goa. Spanish pressure eventually resulted in pope Paul V abolishing the bull's restrictions in 1608, and this encouraged more attempts by Franciscans and others to enter China and Japan in defiance of the Portuguese missionary *padroado*.²⁶

Until the 1630s, however, when Dominicans and Franciscans first entered Fujian province from Manila and Taiwan, bypassing Macao, the Jesuits alone continued working in the Chinese missions. The first phase of Jesuit evangelizing (1580s-1610s) was characterized by the pioneering efforts of Ruggieri, Ricci, and their contemporaries. It entailed the recruitment of Confucian elites and officials, accommodation to the Chinese lifestyle and rituals, and indirect religious propaganda, which combined Christian teachings with European sciences and arts to attract and hold the attention of educated Chinese. During this first phase, the Jesuits attached themselves to literati in official positions, who regularly moved from one administrative post to the next. In the process the missionaries visited a number of prefectures and counties, and, thanks to the protection or the influence of their patrons, they finally found places suitable for the establishment of residences, well positioned administratively and geographically. After the first few decades of missionary work, the second phase of missionary diffusion began, between 1621 and 1630. Christian literati baptized by the Jesuits in important administrative centers started returning to their native places for a variety of reasons and established small communities at the subprefecture or county level, inviting the priests to visit and sometimes building a residence for them in their locale. By the end of the Ming dynasty, small Catholic communities dotted the main economic macro-regions of China, mainly in Zhejiang and Jiangsu (Jiangnan); Fujian; the region of Beijing (Bei Zhili) and Shandong; Shanxi-Shaanxi; and scattered communities in Sichuan, Guangxi, and Huguang.²⁷ All these activities depended on support from the new converts, but also heavily relied on the role of the commercial entrepôt of Macao, and Portuguese royal patronage.

²⁶ On the history of conflicts between Portugal and Propaganda over royal patronage of the missions, see e.g. Giuseppe Sorge, *Il padroado regio e la Congregazione de Propaganda Fide*, Bologna: CLUEB, 1985.

²⁷ Nicolas Standaert, "The Creation of Christian Communities", in *Handbook of Christianity in China. Volume One: 635-1800*, Leiden: Brill, 2001, especially pp. 534-555 on the Ming period.

For many years, Portuguese obstruction and Chinese policing frustrated many attempts by Spanish friars to settle in China using the 1608 papal permissions to missionize. The establishment of Propaganda in 1622 was yet another direct assault against the monopoly of Portugal, and an attempt to sidestep the *padroado*.²⁸ Nevertheless, Propaganda did not immediately focus its full attention on China and East Asia, and its activities there remained on paper for several years. The Congregation did not have its own missionary personnel, and thus had to rely on members of the religious orders to fulfill its mission. Propaganda, however, in its early years acted rather prudently, avoiding entanglements with religious orders under Portuguese and Spanish patronage, because these had been very litigious about jurisdictional issues. In the period 1641-1645, the Jesuit Álvaro Semedo (1585-1658), and the Dominicans Juan Bautista de Morales (1597?-1654) and Vittorio Ricci (1621-1685), informed Propaganda's Secretary Francesco Ingoli about pastoral differences between the orders in China, including the initial incidents of the notorious Chinese Rites Controversy over the permissibility of ancestral rites and rituals to Confucius for Chinese converts. Propaganda's solution to impose some control was to employ members of religious orders to form a first hierarchy in China, naming them Apostolic Prefects, a new dignity.²⁹ In 1643, Propaganda selected as China's first Apostolic Prefects the Dominican Juan Bautista de Morales and the Franciscan Antonio de Santa Maria Caballero (1602-1669), both under Spanish royal patronage. After their deaths, the title passed on to their confrères in China (the Dominicans Juan Garcia, Domingo Coronado, Francisco Varo, Raymundo del Valle; and the Franciscan Agustín de S. Pascual); the Dominican Vittorio Ricci was named Prefect of Formosa (Taiwan), and later Prefect of Terra Australis. These missionaries used the title "apostolic missionary" and were also the first to use a Chinese rendering for the Propaganda Fide Congregation: *Chuan jiao hui* 傳教會, literally, "Society/Congregation for the Propagation of [Catholic] Teachings."³⁰ Today, Propaganda Fide is instead called *Chuan xin bu* 傳信部, more literally "Dicastery [= Ministry] for the Propagation of the Faith."

In the following decades, missionaries belonging to other religious societies, besides Dominicans and Franciscans, joined the Propaganda missions in Chi-

²⁸ This section is based on Fortunato Margiotti, "La Cina, ginepraio di questioni secolari", in *MR*, vol. I/2 (1972), pp. 597-631.

²⁹ See Francesco Pavese, *Prima forma di gerarchia missionaria alle origini di Propaganda Fide. Il prefetto apostolico delle missioni*, Romae, Editiones Urbanianae, 1963; Pizzorusso, *Governare le missioni*, pp. 67-69.

³⁰ See for example the Dominican Vittorio Ricci's Chinese signature (Tai Xi chuanjiaohui shi Li Sheng 泰西傳教會士利勝: Li Sheng from the West, member of the Society for the Propagation of [Catholic] Teachings) in a leaflet printed in Quanzhou in 1664; ARSI Jap. Sin. 162, f. 85r; cf. *Xi chao chong zheng ji. Xi chao ding an (wai san zhong)* 熙朝崇正集. 熙朝定案 (外三種), edited by Han Qi 韓琦 & Wu Min 吳旻, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006, p. 437.

na as Apostolic Missionaries, and sometimes were elevated to the position of Vicars Apostolic (see next section). This occurred within complex arrangements that included Spanish royal patronage for some (e.g. the Dominicans and Franciscan Alcantarines), charitable support from specific religious societies and donors for others (e.g. the Missions Étrangères de Paris), and direct – and paltry – support from Propaganda for most. A handful of secular priests also joined the mission as part of the papal legations. Below I offer a list of the orders, congregations and societies considered part of the Propaganda missionary efforts in China between 1630 and 1830, in the broad sense specified above, so that researchers can better navigate the documents and clarify the writers' corporate identity.³¹

- Order of Preachers or Dominicans (O.P. = Ordo Praedicatorum)
- Order of Friars Minor or Franciscans (O.F.M. = Ordo Fratrum Minorum), including the following orders within the Franciscan family:
 - Reformed Friars Minor (O.F.M.Ref. = Ordo Fratrum Minorum Reformatorem)
 - Observant Friars Minor (O.F.M.Obs. = Ordo Fratrum Minorum Regularis Observantiae / de Observantia)
 - Discalced Friars Minor Alcantarines (O.F.M.Alc. = Ordo Fratrum Minorum Alcantarinorum; Ordo Fratrum Minorum Strictoris Observantiae Discalceatorum)
- Order of Discalced Augustinians (O.S.A.D.; O.E.D.S.A.; now O.A.D. = Ordo Fratrum Eremitarum Discalceatorum Sancti Augustini or Ordo Augustinorum Discalceatorum)
- Order of Discalced Carmelites (O.C.D. = Ordo Carmelitarum Discalceatorum)
- Congregation of the Mission (C.M. = Congregatio Missionis, also known as Lazarists or Vincentians)
- Congregation of the Holy Family of Jesus Christ (S.F.I.C. = Congregatio Sacrae Familiae Iesu Christi; Congregazione della Sacra Famiglia di Gesù Cristo)
- Society of Foreign Missions of Paris (M.E.P = Societas Parisiensis Missionum ad Exteros; Société des Missions Étrangères de Paris)
- Order of Hermits of St. Augustine (O.E.S.A.; now O.S.A = Ordo Eremitarum Sancti Augustini; Ordo Sancti Augustini)
- Order of Clerks Regular Minor (C.C.R.R.M.M.= Ordo Clericorum Regularium Minorum; also known as Caracciolini)

³¹ This list, with some corrections, is partly based on R. G. Tiedemann, *Reference Guide to Christian Missionary Societies in China: From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century*, Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2009, which can be consulted for further information.

- Order of Clerks Regular of St. Paul (C.R.S.P.; C.Barn; O.Barn; B. = Clerici Regulares Sancti Pauli; Congregatio Clericorum Regularium Sancti Pauli; also known as Barnabites or Paulines)
- Congregation of St. John the Baptist (Battistini = Congregatio Sacerdotum saecularium missionariorum de Sancto Ioanne Baptista, also known as Baptistines)
- Ministers of the Sick (M.I.; O.Cam; O.S.C.; C.R.M.I.; O.S.Cam = Ordo Clericorum Regularium Ministrantium Infirmis; Chierici Regolari Ministri degli Infermi di S. Camillo, also known as Camillians)
- Order of Poor Clerics Regular of the Mother of God of the Pious Schools (S.P. or Sch. P. = Ordo Clericorum Regularium Pauperum Matris Dei Scholarum Piarum; also knowns as Scolopi Fathers or Piarists).³²
- Order of Clerks Regular of the Mother of God (O.M.D. = Ordo Clericorum Regularium Matris Dei; also known as Leonardini).³³
- Servites or Servants of Mary (O.S.M. = Ordo Servorum Beatae Mariae Virginis).³⁴

The Vicars Apostolic

In the late 1650s, after the fall of the Ming dynasty and the consolidation of the new Manchu Qing dynasty, Propaganda proceeded with its plans to establish an episcopal network in Asia and China, partly overlapping with competing colonial ecclesiastical structures, staffing it with the new figure of the “Vicar Apostolic.” Canonically speaking, Vicars Apostolic were delegates who had received episcopal consecration to some titular see,³⁵ had the same powers of bishops and received extraordinary faculties from Propaganda Fide to operate in remote parts of the world, where they did not have a cathedral and chap-

³² See Goffredo Cianfrocca, “Il dossier di padre Cassio Brandolisi missionario in Cina con la Legazione Apostolica del card. [sic] Mezzabarba (1720-1721)”, *Archivum Scholarum Piarum* 27.53 (2003), pp. 3-80. This religious order is not mentioned in Tiedemann, *Reference Guide*.

³³ This order is not mentioned in Tiedemann, *Reference Guide*. The Procurator Domenico Perroni was a member of the OMD.

³⁴ This order is not mentioned in Tiedemann, *Reference Guide*. Three China missionaries belonged to the order of the Servites: the members of the Mezzabarba legation, Sostegno Viani and Domenico Fabris; and Filippo Maria Serrati, active in Beijing and Northern China between 1737-1742, when he left for Macao and then Madras, see APF, SOCP vol. 45 (1742-1745), Tomo II, f. 305v.

³⁵ These “titular sees” did not correspond to any existing Catholic dioceses and were usually named after ancient Christian communities of the Eastern Mediterranean, at the time no longer under Christian rulers and certainly no longer Catholic. This was a symbolic choice, recalling the glories of primitive Christianity and its missionary traditions. Giovanni Francesco Nicolai (?-1737), for example, was appointed Vicar Apostolic of Huguang in 1696, with the title of Titular Bishop of Berytus, an ancient city of Lebanon (Phoenicia), and later on, while retired in Rome in 1712, became Titular Archbishop of Myra, another ancient city in Lycia, Anatolia.

ter. Through them, the Holy See governed missionary regions where the Church had not yet established its ordinary hierarchy. This attempt, preceded by many false starts, was only partially successful and encountered fierce resistance from the secular governments of Spain and Portugal, taking almost twenty years to finally succeed in China.³⁶ Three groups of missionaries sent by Propaganda, nine men in all, reached China from Siam in 1684. Two groups from the Missions Étrangères de Paris (M.E.P.) reached Xiamen, Fujian, and among them was the first Vicar Apostolic residing in China, François Pallu M.E.P. (1626-1684). A group of Italian Reformed Franciscans landed in Guangzhou, comprising Bernardino Della Chiesa (1644-1721) and Giovanni Francesco Nicolai a Leonissa (1656-1737), later both named Vicars Apostolic. This first group of missionaries established small missions or joined existing ones staffed by Spanish Dominicans and Alcantarine Discalced Franciscans in Southern China, and only in 1700 another contingent of 17 Propaganda missionaries came as reinforcement. The Vicars Apostolic in China, however, continued to experience jurisdictional problems with the religious orders and Portuguese authorities. It thus took several decades for the papacy to establish a semblance of episcopate in Asia and create a support structure for “apostolic missionaries” there. The needed assistance came from the French Crown, although at the price of allowing a third *de facto* religious protectorate, besides those of Spain and Portugal. Louis XIV saw Propaganda Fide’s efforts as an opportunity to extend the reach of French influence into the colonial possessions of his competitors, while earning prestige for France as protector of Catholic missions. The first Vicar Apostolic for China, François Pallu, was indeed a Frenchman.³⁷

European Controversies and Propaganda’s Responses (1640s-1700s)

For several decades, the Congregation continued to spend most of its energy on theological and jurisdictional battles fought in Rome and Europe over the East Asian missions, with its few missionaries in China working in precarious situations. The Chinese Rites Controversy had a first flaring in Rome in 1641-45, with the Holy Office competing with Propaganda on who should issue theological opinions on the contested rites. Several procurators, both Jesuits and their opponents, presented their case to Propaganda in Rome in the 1640s, 1650s, and 1670s, obtaining contradictory responses from the Holy See, until

³⁶ Nikolaus Kowalsky, “Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Apostolischen Vikare”, *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 4 (1957), pp. 271-86; Margiotti, “La Cina, ginepraio”, pp. 601-602.

³⁷ Georges Mensaert, “L’établissement de la hierarchie catholique en Chine de 1684 à 1721”, *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 46 (1935), pp. 369-416; Pizzorusso, *Governare le missioni*, pp. 114-117.

the Vicar Apostolic of Fujian, Charles Maigrot M.E.P., appealed directly to the pope in 1693.³⁸ This led to a debate and condemnation of the rites at the Theological Faculty of the Sorbonne in Paris, and the involvement of the Kangxi emperor himself on the side of the Jesuits in 1700 with an official pronouncement. These highly charged interventions forced the Holy See to plan a legation to the Qing imperial court, which I discuss below separately.

Intertwined with the Rites Controversy was another long-drawn battle with Portuguese authorities over the authority of the Vicars Apostolic in Asia. Between 1632 and 1657 multiple attempts to offer a solid legal and economic foundation to the new institution did not yield positive results. In 1659, a famous Instruction for the Vicars Apostolic departing for the kingdoms of China, Tunkin and Cochinchina was privately issued to the Vicars, with prohibition to publish it, confirming the apolitical and pacific approach to evangelization already recommended by Ingoli.³⁹

When the first French Vicars Apostolic finally reached Asia between 1660-1662 with financial backing from France, they faced practical organizational obstacles and Portuguese obstruction. Twenty years would pass before Pallu could reach his Vicariate in China, only to die a few months after his arrival in Fujian. Reacting to Propaganda's initiative, between 1681-1688 the Portuguese ecclesiastical and royal authorities, backed by the decision of newly established *Juntas das Missões* (Committees on Missions) in Lisbon and Goa, forbade the Jesuits, Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustinians in Asia and Macao from taking an oath of obedience to the Congregation, imposing instead a loyalty oath to the *padroado*. In 1689, the pliable pope Alexander VIII issued a decree favorable to Portugal, establishing, besides the already existing diocese of Macao, two new *padroado* dioceses in Nanjing and Beijing, covering most of China's territory. These religious territories were assigned to bishops affiliated with Propaganda, i.e. Gregorio Lopez O.P. (Luo Wenzhao 羅文炤, commonly but erroneously known as Luo Wenzao 羅文藻, 1616-91, the first

³⁸ For details, see Margiotti, "La Cina, ginepraio", pp. 604-610; Margiotti, "L'atteggiamento dei francescani spagnoli nella questione dei riti cinesi", *Archivo Ibero-Americano*, Segunda epoca, 38 (1978), pp. 125-80; Margiotti, "I riti cinesi davanti alla S.C. de Propaganda Fide prima del 1643", *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 35 (1979), pp. 133-53; 192-211.

³⁹ Jean Guennou, "Istruzione per i vicari apostolici della Cocinchina, del Tonchino e della Cina (1659) [Latin text]", in MR vol. III/2 (1976), pp. 696-704; Massimo Marcocchi, *Colonialismo, cristianesimo e culture extraeuropee: l'Istruzione di Propaganda Fide ai vicari apostolici dell'Asia orientale (1659)* [Italian translation], Milano: Jaka Books, 1981; *Instructions aux vicaires apostoliques des royaumes du Tonkin et de la Cochinchine (1659) Suivi de Instructions pour ceux qui iront fonder une mission dans les royaumes du Laos et d'autres pays (1682)* [French translation], Paris: Archives des Missions Étrangères, 2008; Jacques Dupuis & Josef Neuner, eds., *The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church*, New York, NY: Alba House, 2001, pp. 468-470 [partial English translation].

Chinese bishop) and Bernardino Della Chiesa O.F.M., but with the plan to substitute them soon with Jesuits faithful to Portugal.⁴⁰

The remaining Vicars Apostolic resisted the new order and deportation, and under the new pope Innocent XII the entire Chinese hierarchy was reshuffled in 1696, with the naming of three Italians, two French, and two Spanish Vicars, and the creation of the new dignity of Visitor General as superior of all Vicars. Not all candidates could or would accept the posts, and the Visitor, although planned, could not be sent to China. Moreover, Propaganda showed a great rigidity in exacting an oath of loyalty from missionaries, a measure that was going to endanger financial support from the secular governments of Spain and France. Eventually, the oath was abolished, but obligations for the members of religious orders to accept visitations and correction from the Vicars continued to be an irritant for years.⁴¹

The situation eventually stabilized and remained unchanged until 1842. The three Portuguese dioceses continued to cover, at least theoretically, much of China. Macao extended its jurisdiction to the provinces of Guangdong, Guangxi and the island of Hainan; Beijing embraced the provinces of Zhili, Shandong and Liaodong; and Nanjing, included Jiangnan (i.e. Jiangsu and Anhui) and Henan. The three Propaganda Apostolic Vicariates were named after Sichuan, Fujian and Shanxi-Shaanxi. The first, in addition to Sichuan, included Guizhou and Yunnan; the second stretched from Shaanxi to Gansu, Oriental Tartary (i.e. Inner Mongolia), and Huguang; and the third included, in addition to Fujian, also Zhejiang, Jiangxi and the island of Taiwan.

Another long-standing controversy was the training and ordaining of native clergy. Proposals by Dominicans and Jesuits to establish a seminary for Propaganda in Formosa, Macao or Manila did not materialize, in part because the knowledge of Latin to celebrate the liturgy and the age of the candidates were controversial issues. With special dispensation for a reduced Latin education, the French Vicars established in 1666 a seminary in Ayuthia [Ayutthaya] in Siam with some financial support from Propaganda, while similar initiatives within China by the *padroado* bishops Lopez-Luo and Della Chiesa were repeatedly stymied by Rome. The request to translate the liturgy in Chinese, first advanced by the Jesuits in 1615, was endlessly debated at Propaganda and the Holy Office, but never allowed.⁴²

⁴⁰ See Song Liming 宋黎明, "Luo Wenzhao hai shi Luo Wenzao? Wei Zhongguo shouwei guoji zhujiào Luo zhujiào zhengming 罗文韶还是罗文藻?——为中国首位国籍主教罗主教正名——Luo Wenzhao (罗文韶) or Luo Wenzao (罗文藻)? A Study on the Chinese Name of the First Chinese Bishop Gregorio Lopez (1617-1691)", *Haijiao shi yanjiu* 海交史研究 – *Journal of Maritime History Studies*, 3 (2019): 40-51.

⁴¹ Margiotti, "La Cina, ginepraio", pp. 610-625.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 625-631.

Apostolic Visitors and Papal Legates (1705-1721)

By 1700, to respond to the polarization in the Chinese Rites Controversy and defuse the jurisdictional discord in the missions of Cochinchina, China and elsewhere in Asia, the Holy See and Propaganda resurrected the idea of an Apostolic Visitor of all Asian Missions.⁴³ This notion developed over several years. The Italian Franciscan Bernardino Della Chiesa, Vicar Apostolic in Northern China and later named *padroado* Bishop of Beijing, repeatedly suggested the idea of sending an apostolic visitor to China starting in 1693.⁴⁴ The hope was that such high representative of the pope could act as superior of all missionaries in China, including the Jesuits and the other orders under the patronage of the Portuguese and Spanish crowns; help solve the internal dissensions and the theological disputes of the Chinese Rites Controversy; and permanently reside at the Qing court as a papal representative. With the election on November 23, 1700 of a new pope, Clement XI (1649-1721), a relatively young and ambitious man, the situation became suddenly propitious for such initiative. The Visitor's profile was expanded to include also the role of envoy to Beijing, with the title of *legatus a latere* (literally, a legate "from the (pope's) side", i.e. intimately trusted), with full powers to establish diplomatic relations with the Qing court. In September 1701, Propaganda Fide advised the pope to launch the legation, suggesting the name of Carlo Tommaso Maillard de Tournon (1668-1710), a member of the Roman Curia.⁴⁵ Pontifical authorities hoped that Tournon, who was also ordained as bishop and given the titular title of Patriarch of Antioch, could remain in Beijing, or perhaps Canton, and help coordinate all missionary work, supervising also some of its financial di-

⁴³ On the legations see Antonio Sisto Rosso, *Apostolic Legations to China of the Eighteenth Century*, South Pasadena, CA: Ione & Perkins, 1948; Fortunato Margiotti, "Le missioni cinesi nella tormenta", in *MR*, vol. II (1973), pp. 998-1002; Giacomo Di Fiore, *La Legazione Mezzabarba in Cina (1720-1721)*, Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1989; Kilian Stumpf SJ, *The Acta Pekinensia or Historical Records of the Maillard de Tournon Legation, Volume I December 1705-August 1706*, edited by Claudia von Collani and Paul Rule, Rome – Macau: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu – Macau Ricci Institute, 2015, and Kilian Stumpf SJ, *The Acta Pekinensia or Historical Records of the Maillard de Tournon Legation: Volume II: September 1706-December 1707*, edited by Paul Rule and Claudia von Collani, Leiden: Brill, 2019.

⁴⁴ On Della Chiesa, see Giuliano Bertuccioli, "Della Chiesa, Bernardino", in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, Roma: Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, vol. 36, 1988, pp. 742-745; and Introduction to Anastasius van den Wyngaert & Georgius Mensaert, eds., *Sinica Franciscana. Relationes et Epistolae Illmi. D. Fr. Bernardini Della Chiesa*, Roma: Edizioni Sinica Franciscana, 1954, vol. V, pp. XXXIII-LXII. Information on the discussions about the creation of the post of Apostolic Visitor for East Asia, held at Propaganda between 1693 and 1701, can be found in Anastasius van den Wyngaert, "Mgr. B. Della Chiesa, Evêque de Pékin et Mgr. C. Th. Maillard De Tournon, Patriarche d'Antioche", *Antonianum* 22 (1947), pp. 65-91, especially pp. 70-72; and Margiotti, "La Cina, ginepraio", pp. 618-619.

⁴⁵ For details on the role of Propaganda Fide in selecting the legation's personnel, see Menegon, "A Clash of Court Cultures", pp. 139-178.

mensions. Propaganda coordinated the selection of the legation's personnel and paid for part of the expenses. The legate and a small retinue of officials and Propaganda missionaries took three years to reach China, and in order to avoid Portuguese interference as much as possible, used French vessels. The audiences with the emperor in 1705-1706 were disastrous, and eventually the Portuguese imprisoned Tournon in Macao by imperial order while on his way back to Europe and made life difficult for his retinue. Named a cardinal, and today buried at the center of Borromini's chapel in the palace of Propaganda at Piazza di Spagna, Tournon failed in his diplomatic enterprise, but left behind some financial and administrative foundations for the enterprise of Propaganda, including the new position of procurator, and facilitated the acceptance in 1711 as artistic and technical experts at the Qing court of the first apostolic missionaries.

In the meanwhile, the Kangxi Emperor sent to Rome as imperial legates some Jesuits, carrying copious documentation on the imperial opinion about the Rites, and the imperial version of the proceedings of the Tournon legation in Beijing. Kangxi suspected that the pope had not been correctly informed by his men in China and wished to circumvent the legate, sending his own trusted agents directly to Rome. Two of the Jesuit imperial envoys died in a shipwreck; a third, Antonio Provana (Ai Ruose 艾若瑟, 1662-1720), reached Rome in 1709, with the intention to illustrate the emperor's position to the pope and the Curia. After delivering the Chinese notarized materials given to him at court, and publishing their Italian translation (*Atti imperiali autentici*, 1710), Provana faced total obstruction of his efforts in Rome. The opponents of the Jesuits, including the Vicar Apostolic Giovanni Francesco Nicolai a Leonissa (1656-1737) who had returned to Rome from China, denied him legitimacy as imperial legate, and contributed to isolate him. Provana lived in Milan and Turin until 1717 and was able to re-embark for China only in 1719, dying during the journey. This ten-year delay in his envoy's return further stirred Kangxi's suspicions towards the pontifical diplomacy, which in the meanwhile was preparing its second legation.⁴⁶

After Tournon's death, the papacy and Propaganda considered ways to remedy the disastrous outcome of his mission. In 1715, Clement XI issued a new papal constitution, *Ex illa die*, condemning the Chinese Rites. It was now necessary to send the constitution to Beijing and obtain imperial assent for it, something that optimistic reports from the Propagandists in Beijing seemed to assure. Besides errors in China, mistakes had been committed also in Europe at the time of the first legation, and for the new legation the pontifical diplo-

⁴⁶ Eugenio Menegon, "Provana, Antonio SJ", in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, Roma, vol. 85, 2016, pp. 505-508; John Witek, "Sent to Lisbon, Paris and Rome: Jesuit Envoys of the Kangxi Emperor", in Michele Fatica & Francesco D'Arelli, eds., *La missione cattolica in Cina tra i secoli XVIII-XIX: Matteo Ripa e il collegio dei cinesi*, Istituto Universitario Orientale, Napoli, 1999, pp. 317-340.

macy decided to completely alter its strategy, especially towards Portugal.⁴⁷ Tournon had traveled through Spain and on Pontifical and French vessels and had been instructed to maintain distance and secrecy towards the Portuguese Crown. This time, instead, the new legate was to travel via Lisbon with Portuguese assent and protection. Again, Propaganda was charged with recommending candidates for the enterprise, and after some refusals by prominent prelates, Carlo Ambrogio Mezzabarba (Jiale 嘉樂, 1685-1741) assented to be the new legate, with the title of Patriarch of Alexandria. The Congregation assisted in the formation of a legatine group of twenty-two members, including ecclesiastical secretaries, priests from several religious orders and societies (Discalced Carmelites, Barnabites, Clerics Regular Minors, Servites, Scolopi Fathers), as well as lay artists and technicians for the court.⁴⁸ The legation reached Beijing in December 1720, and the legate could be received only after capitulating to the imperial demands with eight permissions. In several audiences Mezzabarba attempted to mediate, but once the full contents of the condemnatory papal constitution *Ex illa die* became known to Kangxi, any compromise became impossible. The legation failed its objective, but at least Mezzabarba was able to bring some order to the Propaganda mission, assign the members of his group to several missions in China, leave some at the service of the Qing court, and bring back the body of Tournon from Macao to Rome.

The Holy See and Propaganda never again attempted legations of this magnitude. When papal diplomatic documents issued by Innocent XIII and Benedict XIII (mostly briefs of congratulation) had to be delivered to the Qing court, missionaries traveling to China were asked to bring them and forward them to the court via the procurators or missionaries traveling to Beijing, as happened in 1721, 1723, 1724 and 1728.⁴⁹

The Propaganda Missionaries at the Qing Court in Beijing (1711-1811)

A positive outcome of the legations was the foundation of a Propaganda mission in Beijing that lasted for a century. In spite of Tournon's diplomatic deba-

⁴⁷ Giacomo Di Fiore, *La legazione Mezzabarba in Cina (1720-1721)*, Napoli, Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1989, p. 34.

⁴⁸ See *ibid.*, and Giacomo Di Fiore, "Mezzabarba, Carlo Ambrogio" in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, Roma: Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, vol. 74, 2010, pp. 61-65; Sergio M. Pagano, *Barnabiti alla corte imperiale di Cina*, Firenze: Provincia Romana dei PP. Barnabiti, 1982; Goffredo Cianfrocca, "Il dossier di padre Cassio Brandolisi missionario in Cina con la Legazione Apostolica del card. [sic] Mezzabarba (1720-1721)", pp. 3-80.

⁴⁹ Fortunato Margiotti, "Le missioni cinesi nella tormenta", p. 994. In 1725 two Discalced Carmelites delivered the documents directly in Beijing, see most recently Paola Bracaglia, "Per una storia delle relazioni diplomatiche luso-asiatiche: l'ambasciata di due Carmelitani Scalzi all'Imperatore Sung-Chin [sic] 1724. Documentazione Inedita", Università degli Studi della Tuscia, Viterbo, Tesi di laurea, 2003.

cle, three Propaganda missionaries stationed in Macao obtained in 1711 imperial permission to settle in Beijing thanks to their technical and artistic skills. The Lazarist Teodorico Pedrini (De Lige 德理格; 1671-1746) was invited to court for his musical knowledge; the secular priest Matteo Ripa (Ma Guoxian 馬國賢; 1682-1742) as a painter; and the Augustinian Guillaume Bonjour Fabre (Shan Yaozhan 山遙瞻; 1670-1714) for his astronomical expertise.⁵⁰ Although their level of competence was uneven, two among them, Pedrini and Ripa, succeeded in settling in the capital, and started sending detailed reports to Rome, today preserved in the Propaganda Archives. This was the beginning of a Propaganda presence in Beijing that is most precious for historians as it offers a window on missionary life at the Qing court, alternative to the better-known picture offered by the Jesuits of the Portuguese and French missions. While Bonjour died prematurely in Yunnan on a cartographic mission in 1714, Ripa remained at court until 1723, when he returned to Naples in Italy to establish the Chinese College (*Collegio de' Cinesi*) for the priestly formation of young Chinese. Although an independent entity, Ripa's Congregation of the Sacred Family of Jesus (*Congregazione della Sacra Famiglia di Gesù Cristo*), founded to run the College, maintained a close relationship with Propaganda. Unlike Ripa, Pedrini stayed in Beijing until his death in 1746. Pedrini lived with the French Jesuits at first, then near the Yuanmingyuan palace northwest of Beijing. In 1723 he finally established the residence and small chapel of the Xitang 西堂 (Western Church) near the Xizhi Gate (Xizhimen 西直門), within the walls of the Tartar City, and at his death he left it to Propaganda. In the late Kangxi reign, Ripa and Pedrini, both endowed with willful temperaments, acted as intermediaries between Propaganda and the court, especially during the Mezzabarba Legation (1720-1721), suffering the consequences of their uncompromising behavior. Pedrini, for example, was condemned to house arrest by imperial order for his opposition to the Jesuits and his manipulation of texts and conversations as an interpreter of the legate. A fascinating personality, but also as Fortunato Margiotti delicately put it, a "very singular fellow", Pedrini,

⁵⁰ On Pedrini see most recently Stefania Nanni, "Pedrini, Paolo Filippo Teodorico", in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, Roma: Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, vol. 82, 2015, pp. 75-78; Fabio Galeffi & Gabriele Tarsetti, "Documenti inediti di Teodorico Pedrini sulla controversia dei riti cinesi", in Filippo Mignini ed., *Humanitas. Attualità di Matteo Ricci: Testi, fortuna, interpretazioni*, Macerata: Quodlibet, 2011, pp. 215-250; and Teodorico Pedrini, *Son mandato à Cina, à Cina vado – Lettere dalla Missione, 1702-1744*, edited by Fabio G. Galeffi & Gabriele Tarsetti, Macerata: Quodlibet, 2018. On Ripa see several publications authored and edited by Michele Fatica in the series "Collana Matteo Ripa", especially Michele Fatica, ed., *Matteo Ripa. Giornale (1705-1724)*, Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1991 (vol. 1, 1705-1711), 1996 (vol. 2, 1711-1716); Napoli: Università L'Orientale, 2020 (vol. 3, 1716-1720); on Bonjour, see Ugo Baldini, "Guillaume Bonjour (1670-1714): Chronologist, Linguist, and 'Casual' Scientist", in Luís Saraiva ed., *Europe and China: Science and the Arts in the 17th and 18th Centuries*, Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, 2012, pp. 241-294.

both as the writer of reports and the object of complaints by other missionaries, dominated much of the correspondence with Propaganda for thirty years.⁵¹

Mezzabarba's cortege included several lay and ecclesiastical "virtuosi" (musicians, a surgeon, a painter), who eventually left Beijing for other destinations or Europe; and two Discalced Carmelites, who instead remained in Beijing with Pedrini for a decade (1720-1731), Rinaldo Maria Romei di S. Giuseppe (Li Ruose 李若瑟; 1685-1760) and Wolfgang Thumsecher de Lauro della Natività della Madonna (Na Yongfu 那永福; 1693-1772). Romei, confessor and trusted aide of Mezzabarba, and protégé of Rinaldo d'Este Duke of Modena, was named Vice-Procurator in Beijing, and lived with his confrère in Haidian. He kept sending detailed relations to Rome and the Duke, and once back in Rome became an important advisor on Chinese matters for Propaganda, ultimately rising to the dignity of Master General of his order.⁵² After the departure of these two Carmelites, the first two Discalced Augustinians of Propaganda reached Beijing in 1738, expressly to work at court: Serafino da S. Giovanni Battista (Zhang Chunyi or Zhongyi 張純一/中一; 1692-1742), miniaturist, and Sigismondo Meinardi da S. Nicola (Xi Dengyuan 席澄源; 1713-1767), horologist and automaton maker. Numerous reports from both survive in the Archives of Propaganda, offering a vivid picture of daily life and courtly relations during the early Qianlong period.⁵³ Serafino and Sigismondo also unofficially fulfilled the functions of Vice-Procurators, showing good entrepreneurial skills:

⁵¹ Margiotti, "Le missioni cinesi nella tormenta", p. 1005.

⁵² Biographical and bibliographical information on Romei in Ambrosius [Hofmeister] a S. Teresia, *Nomenclator missionariorum Ordinis Carmelitarum Discalceatorum*, Romae: Apud Curiam Generalitiam, 1944, pp. 320-321; Ambrosius [Hofmeister] a S. Teresia, *Regesta missionaria desumpta ex actis definitorii generalis Ordinis Carmelitarum Discalceatorum*, Romae 1950, 85, num. 725; Fortunato Margiotti, "La Confraternita del Carmine in Cina (1728-1838)", in *Ephemerides carmeliticae* 14 (1963), p. 91; Tiziana Iannello, "La missione in Cina di Rinaldo Romei O.C.D. nella corrispondenza da Pechino con il duca di Modena, Rinaldo d'Este (1720-1731)", *Scritture di Storia* 6 (2012), pp. 343-355.

⁵³ On the journey of Serafino and Sigismondo from Italy to Beijing, as well as biographical information on Serafino, see Eugenio Menegon, "La Cina, l'Italia e Milano: connessioni globali nella prima età moderna", in Michela Catto e Gianvittorio Signorotto, eds., *Milano, l'Ambrosiana e la conoscenza dei nuovi mondi (secoli XVII-XVIII)*, Milano: Biblioteca & Accademia Ambrosiana, Classe di Studi Borromaiici & Bulzoni Editore, 2015, pp. 267-80, and Eugenio Menegon, "Desire, Truth, and Propaganda: Lay and Ecclesiastical Travelers from Europe to China in the Long Eighteenth Century", in *Illusion and Disillusionment: Travel Writing in the Modern Age*, edited by Roberta Micallef, Boston, MA: Ilex Foundation & The Center for Hellenic Studies, Harvard University - distributed by Harvard University Press, 2018, pp. 11-41; biographical materials on Sigismondo compiled by Fortunato Margiotti, and some of his familiar letters are in Sigismondo Meinardi, *Epistolario. Parte prima. Lettere originali inviate a Torino*, Roma, Edizioni di *Vinculum* - Rivista interna dello Studentato Teologico di Gesù e Maria dei PP. Agostiniani Scalzi, 1964, republished with additional essays as *Il mondo di Sigismondo. Un druentino nella Cina del XVIII secolo. Lettere dell'agostiniano scalzo Padre Sigismondo Meinardi da S. Nicola*, edited by Assessorato alla Cultura del Comune di Druento, Druento (Torino): Tipografia

Serafino established the first cemetery of Propaganda in Beijing, while Sigismondo restored and enlarged the Xitang.⁵⁴ Other members of their orders followed suit: the Discalced Augustinian and future Bishop of Beijing, Damasceno Salusti della Concezione (An Deyi 安德義; 1727-1781); and the Discalced Carmelites Josef Maria Pruggmayr di S. Teresa (Na Yongfu 那永福; same name as Thumsecher; 1713-1791) and Arcangelo Bellotti di Sant'Anna (Li Hengliang 李衡良 1729-1781). They all have left numerous letters and reports in the Archives, especially Pruggmayr, who lived in Beijing for over forty years.⁵⁵ Pruggmayr habitually lived in Haidian, and taught for some time music at court, but for the most part of his long life he engaged in pastoral work in Beijing and its hinterland and was Vice-Procurator of Propaganda. He had an excellent command of the spoken Beijing patois, and compiled for the Propaganda library in Rome a large Italian-Chinese vocabulary today preserved in the Vatican Library.⁵⁶ Damasceno and Arcangelo were employed at court as painter and horologist, respectively, but were abruptly dismissed from the palace in 1773, ending for some time any direct interaction between the Propaganda missionaries and the court. Some other foreign and Chinese missionaries also lived in Beijing in this period with pastoral duties, including Eusebio Busato da Cittadella O.F.M. and a few *alumni* (pupils) of the Neapolitan Chinese College, such as Filippo Huang, a native of Beijing who had followed Ripa as a child to Naples.⁵⁷

Commerciale, 2019; Fortunato Margiotti, "Il P. Sigismondo Meinardi e la messa in cinese nel sec. XVIII", *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 22 (1966), pp. 32-45; on Sigismondo's activities at the Qianlong court, see Eugenio Menegon, "Quid Pro Quo? Europeans and Their 'Skill Capital' in Qing Beijing", in *Testing the Margins of Leisure. Cases from China, Japan and Indonesia*, edited by Rudolf Wagner, Catherine Yeh, Eugenio Menegon, and Robert Weller, Heidelberg: Heidelberg University Publishing, 2019, pp. 107-152.

⁵⁴ Fortunato Margiotti, "Il cimitero dei missionari Propagandisti a Pei-ching", *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 61 (1968), pp. 361-383; Menegon, "Quid Pro Quo."

⁵⁵ On these figures see, e.g., Margiotti, "La Confraternita del Carmine in Cina (1728-1838)" and Eugenio Menegon, "Telescope and Microscope. A Micro-Historical Approach to Global China in the Eighteenth Century", *Modern Asian Studies* 54.4 (July 2020), pp. 1315-1344; on Pruggmayr, see Óscar Ignacio Aparicio Ahedo, "Un carmelita descalzo misionero en China (1745-1791)", *Anuario de Historia de la Iglesia* 27 (2018), pp. 351-376.

⁵⁶ This impressive Italian-Chinese vocabulary of 548 folios is preserved in the Vatican Library, *signatura*: *Borgia Cinese* 407; see Eugenio Menegon, "Empire of Paper. A Shady Dealer, an Insatiable Linguist, an Industrious Missionary, and the Extraordinary Journey of a Manuscript Vocabulary between Beijing and Rome, 1760s-1820s", in *Empires et Interprètes. Maîtriser les langues, apprivoiser le monde: dictionnaires et outils multilingues d'Asie orientale – Interpreting Empires, Mastering Languages, Taming the World. Dictionaries and Multilingual Lexicons in East Asia*, edited by Michela Bussotti & François Lachaud, Paris École française d'Extrême-Orient, forthcoming.

⁵⁷ On Filippo's difficult relationship with Propaganda and his superiors in Naples, see Giacomo Di Fiore, *Lettere di missionari dalla Cina (1761-1775). La vita quotidiana nelle missioni attraverso il carteggio di Emiliano Palladini e Filippo Huang con il Collegio dei Cinesi di Napoli*, Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1995. The Archives of Propaganda also preserve some of Filippo's letters.

In 1784, other Propaganda missionaries reached Beijing at a time of great difficulty due to an anti-Christian campaign. Some of them, including the Propaganda Procurator Francesco Giuseppe Della Torre (Duoluo 哆囉; Battistino; d. 1785), arrived in chains from Canton, accused of conspiring to enter illegally China. A few others, however, were received as court artists. Among them was the Propagandist and Discalced Augustinian Adeodato da Sant'Agostino (De Tianci 德天賜; 1760-1821) painter and horologist, who re-established some direct connection with the court through his artisanal skills, in particular his work on automata and elaborate European clocks, so beloved by the Qianlong Emperor and his entourage. Due to several odd circumstances (including the presence of ex-Jesuits who had joined Propaganda after the Society of Jesus had been disbanded world-wide), there were at this time six Propaganda missionaries at the Xitang alone, with a shrinking flock of only 420 Christians.⁵⁸ The 1770s and 1780s were times rocked by internal divisions and quarrels between Portuguese, French ex-Jesuits and members of the Propaganda mission, so much so that the period is characterized by the so-called “Schism of Beijing”, with deep conflict between missionaries faithful to the Holy See and those under Portuguese *padroado*.⁵⁹

The slow collapse of the Beijing Propaganda mission was accompanied by momentous and far-reaching geopolitical changes, from the French Revolution to the Napoleonic Wars, and, in Asia, by the rise of British naval power. When the British planned the famous Macartney embassy to Beijing (1793), the missionaries' influence at court was seriously waning. In spite of this, the ambassador's emissary George Leonard Staunton traveled to Italy and asked the Prefect of Propaganda Cardinal Leonardo Antonelli (1730-1811; Prefect in the period 1780-1795), for recommendations for the Bishop of Beijing Alexandre de Gouvea, and assistance in recruiting four Chinese priests in Naples as teachers, translators and interpreters. At the end of March 1792 Staunton also had an audience with pope Pius VI, who orally communicated his request to King George III to extend British protection over the Catholic missions in China (obviously no formal written request to the head of the Anglican Church would have been possible). Among the four Propaganda Chinese priests who participated in this historic British expedition, Giacomo Li Zibiao 李自標 was

⁵⁸ Anselmo da S. Margarita O.A.D. to Propaganda, 25 agosto 1786, in APE, SOCP, vol. 65 (1787-88), ff. 529r-v.

⁵⁹ Copious references to relevant materials in the Archives of Propaganda and Portugal in Romano Primon, “L'atteggiamento della Congregazione di Propaganda Fide nello scisma di Pechino”, in Johannes Rommerskirchen & Nikolaus Kowalsky, eds., *Missionswissenschaftliche Studien. Festgabe Prof. Dr. Johannes Didingen O.M.I. zum 70. Lebensjahre dargeboten von Freunden und Schülern*, Aachen: Drukerei und Verlagsanstalt Wilhelm Metz, 1951, pp. 315-331; Georges Mensaert, “Nouveaux documents sur le soi-disant Schisme de Pékin”, *ibid.*, pp. 332-346; Joseph Krahl, *China Missions in Crisis: Bishop Laimbeckhoven and His Times, 1738-1787*, Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964, pp. 190-288.

the most accomplished as a guide and translator, accompanying the English all the way to Beijing.⁶⁰ We also have a portrait of one of the four priests, Vincenzo Yan (Nien or Nean) Kuanren 嚴寬仁, sketched by the embassy's painter, William Alexander, and now preserved in the British Library.⁶¹

During these twilight years, missionaries in Beijing experienced great difficulties in receiving funding from Europe, due to the continuous state of global conflict among European powers, and the captivity of the pope under Napoleon, with consequent difficulties for Propaganda. Global geopolitical factors were accompanied by developments in China, which contributed to accelerate the end of the Beijing mission.⁶² The new emperor Jiaqing made the life of Christians and priests in the capital region increasingly difficult during a series of crackdowns on Christian activities in 1805 and 1811, inspired by security concerns following internal unrest and rebellions. In 1805, Qing authorities intercepted a map of Northern China that the Propaganda court missionary Adeodato was sending to the Roman headquarters to settle the borders of ecclesiastical jurisdiction around Beijing and in Shandong. Adeodato was accused of plotting a rebellion, and rather than being deported to Macao as the Ministry of Punishments had suggested, by imperial fiat he was exiled incommunicado outside Beijing at the imperial hunting villa of Chengde between 1805-1809.⁶³ The three remaining Propaganda missionaries, the Discalced Augustinian Anselmo da Santa Margherita (Yan Shimo 顏詩莫), and the priests of the Congregation of St. John (Battistini) Emanuele Conforti (Gao Linyuan 高臨淵; ca. 1754-1837) and Giacomo Ferretti (Wang Yagebi 王亞各比), stayed in Beijing, but had their activities severely curtailed by the new circumstances.⁶⁴ After Adeodato was released, life in Beijing did not improve, and on September 23, 1811 the four men decided to officially abandon the mission for Macao to be reassigned to other places in Asia (Pulopinang and Manila), bringing to an end Propaganda's enterprise in the imperial capital.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Michele Fatica, "Gli alunni del Collegium Sinicum di Napoli, la missione Macartney presso l'Imperatore Qianlong e la richiesta di libertà di culto per i cristiani cinesi (1792-1793)", in *Studi in onore di Lionello Lanciotti*, ed. by Sandra Marina Carletti, Maurizia Sacchetti, & Paolo Santangelo, Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1996, vol. 2, pp. 525-565; Henrietta Harrison, "A Faithful Interpreter? Li Zibiao and the 1793 Macartney Embassy to China", *The International History Review* 41.5 (2019), pp. 1076-1091.

⁶¹ British Library, Album WD961, f. 53r, no. 147; cf. Database *China: Trade, Politics & Culture* <http://www.china.amdigital.co.uk/>, image c7698-01; <https://archive.is/ANYF8>.

⁶² Krahl's excellent book *China Missions in Crisis*, mostly based on the Propaganda Archives, offers a clear context on the difficulties of this period up to the late 1780s; see also Camille Rochemonteix, *Joseph Amiot et les derniers survivants de la mission française a Pékin (1750-1795). Nombreux documents inédits avec carte*, Paris: Libraire Alphonse Picard, 1915.

⁶³ Laamann, *Christian Heretics in Late Imperial China*, pp. 68-70, with reference to materials in the Propaganda Archives.

⁶⁴ In the period 1787-1811, Emanuele Conforti was mostly in Beijing as pastor of the Xitang.

⁶⁵ APF, *Procura Cina*, box 18, folder "E. Conforti", Latin letter to the Procurator Marchesi, 23 September 1811, signed by Anselmo, Adeodato, Conforti and Ferretti.

Christian Life in Beijing

Between 1601, when Matteo Ricci settled in the city, and 1838, when the last Portuguese missionary, the Lazarist Gaetano Pires Pereira (Bi Xueyuan 畢學源; 1763-1838) died, the city of Beijing uninterruptedly hosted European and Chinese missionaries in churches and residences serving the local communities of the capital and its vicinity. By the early eighteenth century, there were three Jesuit churches and residences within the city walls: the Southern Church (Nantang 南堂) and the Eastern Church (Dongtang 東堂), both belonging to the Portuguese Vice-Province, located in the Tartar City; and the Northern Church (Beitang 北堂), belonging to the French Jesuit mission, located in the Imperial City, close to the Forbidden City. A fourth, small church I already mentioned above, the Western Church (Xitang 西堂), belonged to Pedrini and eventually passed to Propaganda Fide.⁶⁶ The Directorate of Astronomy, where the Jesuits worked, was also staffed with several experts who were Christian converts and became one of the power centers for the mission in Beijing. In order to be close to the imperial workshops at the Yuanmingyuan suburban imperial complex, moreover, the missionaries also purchased some small residences with annexed chapels in the district of Haidian, around twelve kilometers from the city. Propaganda did so in 1722, when, at the order of papal Legate Carlo Mezzabarba, Propaganda's Vice-Procurator Rinaldo Romei OCD acquired two buildings in South Haidian 海淀 (甸) district from Manchu bannermen, through the intermediation of the French Jesuits.⁶⁷ Beijing's residences and churches sustained the Christian community life of the capital, occasionally offered a refuge to underground missionaries transiting through the capital and were a springboard for evangelical tours in the hinterland's villages. A network of chapels for women in private residences complemented the main churches, allowing Christian women to separately engage in devotions, away from possibly compromising encounters. Local Christians were organ-

⁶⁶ For a brief introduction to Beijing's Catholic churches, see Susan Naquin, *Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400-1900*. Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 2001, pp. 575-584; recent monographs on the churches are Wang Lianming, *Jesuitenerbe in Peking: Sakralbauten und Transkulturelle Räume, 1600-1800*, Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter GmbH, 2019; Alan Richard Sweeten, *China's Old Churches: The History, Architecture, and Legacy of Catholic Sacred Structures in Beijing, Tianjin, and Hebei Province*, Leiden: Brill, 2020; on Propaganda's Western Church, see Gabriele Tarsetti & Fabio G. Galeffi, "Mariner, Musician, Missionary, and True Priest Always': Teodorico Pedrini's Life in Xitang", in Ferdinand Verbiest Institute, ed., *History of the Catholic Church in China from Its Beginning to the Scheut Fathers and 20th Century: Unveiling Some Less Known Sources, Sounds and Picture*, Leuven: Ferdinand Verbiest Institute K.U. Leuven, 2015, pp. 125-151.

⁶⁷ See a copy of the Chinese purchase contract and its Latin translation in APF, SC, *Indie Orientali e Cina*, vol. 29, 1758-60, ff. 390r-v (Latin version) and 393r (Chinese text), as described in this Catalogue, Appendix 2, deed no. 21.

ized in confraternities, and lay leaders, both male and female, contributed to direct and fund these organizations, initially established under Jesuit aegis. The Propaganda missionaries eventually also introduced devotions typical of their own religious orders or congregations, such as the Confraternity of Our Lady of Carmel, established by the Discalced Carmelites.⁶⁸ For some time, the Propaganda missionaries in Haidian opened a school for Christian children, where a Chinese instructor was paid to teach elementary literacy and catechism. Moreover, each church paid and dispatched native catechists within the city and nearby villages, charging them with Christian education and control of religious discipline, as illustrated by a questionnaire preserved in APF, issued by the Jesuit Bishop of Beijing to all confraternity leaders and catechists (*huizhang xiangong* 會長相公) in 1735 on the observance in Beijing of the papal constitution *Ex illa die* against the Chinese Rites.⁶⁹ The Archives also preserve documents related to relations with the emperor, the court, and Beijing's Manchu population, shedding light on daily religious life among bannermen, important events bearing on the Christian communities, and economic questions. For example, we find a copy of a Chinese memorial by the brother of the Qianlong emperor, Prince Yinlu, reporting on the issue of illegal conversion to Christianity by members of the Manchu banners.⁷⁰ Another precious document in Chinese is the long vernacular report penned by the Chinese priest Giobatta Ku (Gu Yaowen 谷耀文; 1701-1763) in 1753, describing the arrival of a Portuguese embassy that year in the city, and its impact on the Christian community from a local perspective.⁷¹ Finally, a series of Chinese memorials written in 1780-1781 both by missionaries and Qing authorities reveal unique details on the real estate and economic dealings of the Beijing mission. Following the dissolution of the Society of Jesus in China in 1775, several ex-Jesuits decided

⁶⁸ On Christian life in Jesuit communities in Beijing, see e.g. John Witek, "Reporting to Rome: Some Major Events in the Christian Community in Peking, 1686-1687", in *Actes du VIIIe colloque internationale de sinologie, Chantilly 1992: Echanges culturels et religieux entre la Chine et l'Occident*, 1995, pp. 301-18; John Witek, "The Emergence of a Christian Community in Beijing during the Late Ming and Early Qing Period", in *Encounters and Dialogues: Changing Perspectives on Chinese-Western Exchanges from the Sixteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, Sankt Augustin & San Francisco, CA: Monumenta Serica Institute ; The Ricci Institute of Chinese-Western Cultural History at the University of San Francisco, 2005, pp. 93-116; Liam Brockey, "Flowers of Faith in an Emporium of Vices. The 'Portuguese' Jesuit Church in Seventeenth Century Peking", *Monumenta Serica*, 53 (2005), pp. 45-71. On Propaganda's Carmelite confraternity in Beijing, see Margiotti, "La Confraternita del Carmine in Cina (1728-1838)."

⁶⁹ APF, SOCP, vol. 39 (1736, Luglio-Settembre), ff. 136r-158v, Chinese original and Latin translation of the questionnaires on the observance of the papal constitution *Ex illa die* in Beijing.

⁷⁰ APF, SOCP, vol. 40 (1737), Chinese memorial at f. 62r-v, as described in this Catalogue, with Latin translation by Jean François Fouquet, *ibid.*, ff. 193r-197v & 199r-201v.

⁷¹ Two copies of this Chinese report are preserved in APF, SOCP, vol. 50 (1755-56), f. 220r, and APF, SC, *Indie Orientali e Cina*, vol. 27, 1751-53, f. 379r, respectively, as described in this Catalogue.

to join the Propaganda mission, and wrote copious reports to Rome on the quarrels within the Beijing clergy, including legal disputes on church property. The clash reached a high pitch when some missionaries petitioned the Qing government to intervene and adjudicate the matter, implicating in the contentions the Grand Councilor and Minister of the Imperial Household Bureau Fu-long-an 福隆安 (1743/1746?-1784), whose memorials are also found in APF.⁷² These materials illustrate the beginnings of a sharp decline of Catholic religious activities in Beijing, accelerated by the anti-Christian policies of the Jiaqing Emperor in the early nineteenth century.

Propaganda Missions in the Provinces

Unlike the mission in Beijing, a number of missions supported by or associated with Propaganda in the provinces survived from their foundation in the late seventeenth century into the nineteenth century and beyond. They eventually developed into some of the core vicariates apostolic and dioceses of modern times. Below we will take a brief tour of the Christian communities in the three main Vicariates of Fujian, Sichuan, and Shanxi-Shaanxi. We will also consider the activities of Propaganda missionaries in the *padroado* diocese of Beijing (including Shandong), the vicariate of Huguang and the adjacent Diocese of Nanjing, and the mission of Guangzhou (Canton), part of the Diocese of Macao. The complex drawing of boundaries of the Vicariates and *padroado* dioceses was highly contested and changed several times during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and to follow those changes would be confusing.⁷³ Rather, I concentrate on the regions with significant Christian communities and activities under the jurisdiction of Propaganda, and touch briefly upon their history, offering some essential bibliography, and reference to relevant sample materials preserved in the Archives.

Vicariate Apostolic of Fujian

The first Vicar Apostolic of Fujian, Mgr. Pallu, reached his Vicariate in 1684, dying soon thereafter, and Charles Maigrot M.E.P. (Yan Dang 顏璫; 1652-

⁷² Chinese memorials in APF, SOCP vol. 63 (1782-84), Tomo 2, ff. 540r-548r, accompanied by Latin translations, as described in this Catalogue. Context on these financial issues in Beijing can be found in Henri Cordier, "La suppression de la Compagnie de Jésus et la mission de Pékin", *T'oung Pao* 17 (1916), pp. 271-347 & 561-623; Joseph Dehergne, "Les biens de la maison française de Pékin en 1776-1778", *Monumenta Serica* 20 (1961), pp. 246-265; Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia, "The End of the Jesuit Mission in China", in *The Jesuit Suppression in Global Context*, edited by Jeffrey D. Burson & Jonathan Wright, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, pp. 100-116. See Fu-long-an's biography in ECCP, pp. 259-260.

⁷³ For a detailed treatment of the jurisdictional history of the Vicariates in China, see Mensaert, "Hierarchie."

1730) succeeded him in that position in the provincial capital of Fuzhou for a period of twenty year (1687-1706). Maigrot was a rigid man, aligned with the Jansenists in France, and conflicts linked to the Chinese Rites Controversy troubled his tenure.⁷⁴ After Maigrot's expulsion by imperial order for his role in the botched Tournon Legation, and his return to Europe, a Spanish Dominican of the Philippine Province of Our Lady of the Rosary, Magino Ventallol (Ma Xinuo 馬喜諾; 1647-1732), was named to that dignity, and until the 1950s the Vicars Apostolic of Fujian were always Dominicans. This Vicariate, thus, for most of its history was sustained by the labors of missionaries of the Spanish *patronato real* recognized by Propaganda, concentrated in the mission of Northeastern Fujian (Fuan County). Several scholarly monographs have explored the vicissitudes and life of that mission.⁷⁵ Moreover, a handful of French missionaries of the Missions Étrangères de Paris, and several Chinese priests trained by the M.E.P. congregation, by the Dominicans in Manila, and by the *Collegio de' Cinesi* in Naples, labored across the province, including Fuzhou, Xiamen and Xinghua.⁷⁶

Chinese documents preserved in APF offer glimpses of Christian life in Fujian. An extraordinary testimony is a set of petitions and denunciations that

⁷⁴ In 1700 a group of Christians in Fuzhou stormed Maigrot's residence and physically attacked him in retaliation for his suspension from their duties of the local Jesuits; see Wu Min, "Charles Maigrot et les chrétiens chinois", *The 6th International Symposium of the Verbiest Foundation*, Leuven, Belgium, 2-4 September, 1998, unpublished; Wu Min 吴旻 and Han Qi 韩琦, "Liyi zhi zheng yu Zhongguo Tianzhujiatou: yi Fujian jiaotou he Yan Dang de chongtu weili 礼仪之争与中国天主教徒: 以福建教徒和颜璫的冲突为例" [The Chinese Rites Controversy and Chinese Catholics: A Case Study of the Conflict between the Christians in Fujian Province and Bishop Charles Maigrot (1652-1730)], *Lishi yanjiu* 历史研究 (2004, no. 6), pp. 83-91; see also Claudia von Collani, "Charles Maigrot's Role in the Chinese Rites Controversy", in *The Chinese Rites Controversy. Its History and Meaning*, edited by David E. Mungello, Sankt Augustin: Steyler Verlag, 1994, pp. 149-183.

⁷⁵ See José Maria González, *Misiones dominicanas en China (1700-1750)*, 2 vols. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1952-58; José Maria González, *Historia de las misiones dominicanas de China*. 5 vols. Madrid: Imprenta Juan Bravo, 1955-1967; Miguel Angel San Roman, *Cristianos laicos en la misión dominicana del norte de la provincia de Fujian, China, en el siglo XVII*, Roma: Excerpta ex dissertatione ad Doctoratum in Facultate Missiologiae Pontificiae Universitatis Gregorianaе, 2000; Eugenio Menegon, *Ancestors, Virgins & Friars*; Zhang Xianqing 张先清, *Guanfu, zongzu yu Tianzhujiiao: 17-19 shiji Fuan xiangan jiaohui de lishi xushi* 官府、宗族与天主教 - 17-19世纪福安乡村教会的历史叙事 (Officials, Lineages and Catholicism: A History of the Rural Church of Fuan in the 17th-19th Centuries), Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2009.

⁷⁶ On native Fujianese missionaries associated with Propaganda see, e.g., Georges Mensaert, "Adrien Chu, prêtre chinois et confesseur de la Foi (1717-1785)", *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 12 (1956), pp. 1-19, about the priest Adrien Zhu Liguān 朱里官, a native of Xinghua 興化 prefecture in central coastal Fujian, educated in the M.E.P. college of Ayuthia (Siam); and Eugenio Menegon, "Wanted: An Eighteenth-Century Chinese Catholic Priest in China, Italy, India, and Southeast Asia", *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 15.4 (September 2010), pp. 502-518, on Peter Cai Ruoxiang 蔡若祥 (1739-1806), a native of Longxi/qi 龍溪, Southern Fujian, a priest trained in the *Collegio de' Cinesi* in Naples.

Fujianese Christians addressed on long sheets of Chinese paper to the Vicars Apostolic and the Procurator of Propaganda in Macao. These delicate pages were eventually forwarded to the authorities in Rome and reflect the ‘political’ life of the Christian communities. The bureaucratic nomenclature used in these documents reveals that they were indeed conceived within a Chinese context. Several of these Christian versions are specifically called “petitions” (*bing* 稟 in Chinese), a type of official document that inferiors would submit to superiors in government and courts of law. One of these petitions in the SC series, signed by 118 Christian men from the district of Jianning 建寧 in Northwestern Fujian, for example, was probably addressed in 1686 to Bishop Bernardino della Chiesa O.F.M., at the time briefly Vicar Apostolic of Fujian and Jiangxi, to ask for the re-assignment back to their district of the Mexican Franciscan Pedro de la Piñuela, transferred elsewhere.⁷⁷ Through this kind of “signature campaign” petitions, also submitted in other parts of China and surviving in other archives, Christians tried to make the hierarchy aware of their preferences for certain pastors and attempted to bypass the local superiors by appealing directly to Rome.⁷⁸ This is the case of a batch of letters and petitions in Chinese that Christians in Fuan County (Northeastern Fujian) compiled some decades later. Today preserved in the SOCP volumes, these documents denounce the pastoral policies of the Vicar Apostolic of Fujian, Francisco Palás O.P. (Huang Fangjige 黄方济各, 1706-1778), and the actions of several Chinese and Spanish priests in the Vicariate.⁷⁹ In the “Memorie” of 1767, the Procurator of Propaganda in Macao, Emiliano Palladini, explained that these *querele* (denunciations; *gaobing* 告稟) were sent in multiple copies directly to him, to the Procurator of the Mission Étrangères de Paris and to an unnamed third party, with prayer to forward them to the Congregation in Rome.⁸⁰ Given the gravity of some of the accusations, written by a group of “rebel” Christians, the Procurator had asked a Chinese priest of the *Collegio de’ Cinesi* residing in Macao to prepare summaries in Latin detailing the accusations. These documents were sent in the original Chinese, not just in their Latin summary, as they were considered judicially valid, and Palladini even suggested that the Chinese seminarians in Naples translate them in their entirety, if necessary, once they had reached Rome.

⁷⁷ See a description in this Catalogue, APF, SC Cina e regni adiacenti vol. 5 (1688-1690), f. 31r.

⁷⁸ In APF, SC Cina e regni adiacenti vol. 9 (1705-1706), f. 395r; see for example a specimen from Xinghua, Fujian, requesting the recall from Yunnan of Philibert Le Blanc M.E.P., as described in this Catalogue.

⁷⁹ See a description in this Catalogue, APF, SOCP, vol. 55 (1765-69), ff. 640r-646r, Petitions 1 to 6.2.

⁸⁰ APF, SOCP, vol. 55 (1765-69), f. 654v.

*Vicariate Apostolic of Sichuan*⁸¹

The wars of the Ming-Qing transition effaced the first Jesuit attempts to establish a mission in Sichuan 四川 during the seventeenth century. Propaganda appointed Artus de Lionne (1655-1713) of the Missions Étrangères de Paris as first Vicar Apostolic of Sichuan, but he never reached the province, returning to Europe from Macao. In 1702, de Lionne assigned Northern Sichuan to his confreres Jean Basset (Bai Risheng 白日昇; 1662?-1707) and Jean-François Martin de la Baluère (Liang Hongren 梁弘仁; 1668-1715), and Southeastern Sichuan to two Lazarists directly sent by Propaganda, Ludovico (Luigi) Appiani (Bi Tianxiang /Bi Leisi 畢天祥 - 畢類思; 1663-1732) and Johannes Müllener (Mu Ruohan 穆若翰; 1673-1742). These two expeditions were short-lived, and all missionaries were soon expelled to Canton by order of Kangxi in the wake of the failed Tournon legation. Müllener managed to return to Sichuan in 1711 without an official permit, and remained the only missionary in charge of that region for almost two decades. He was eventually named Vicar Apostolic, with joint responsibility for neighbouring Huguang, and became the jealous custodian of the Sichuan Vicariate, denying entry to any other congregation. In 1732, however, Joachim Enjobert de Martiliat M.E.P. (Ma Qingshan 馬青山; 1706-1755) arrived in Chengdu with authorization from the Bishop of Macao, accompanied by the catechist Linus Zhang Feng 張鳳 (1669?-1743), and asked Müllener to allow the Missions Étrangères to re-establish their presence there. After years of resistance, initially backed by Propaganda, Müllener finally had to accept the pontifical briefs of nomination and under direct orders from Cardinal Vincenzo Petra, Prefect of Propaganda in Rome, proceeded to ordain first the Italian Dominican Luigi Maggi (Lu Diren 陸迪仁; ?-1744) as coadjutor bishop for Huguang in 1740, and then Martiliat as Vicar Apostolic of Yunnan in 1741. Maggi and Martiliat never attempted to establish missions outside Sichuan, and Martiliat introduced other M.E.P. missionaries to strengthen the Sichuanese church. A province the size of France, Sichuan had by the early 1740s only seven European and Chinese missionaries. Due to increasing government repression and the death of several missionaries, however, the famous native priest André Ly (Li Ande 李安德, 1692/1693-1774) soon remained alone there.⁸² This meant that Chinese catechists and Christian virgins conducted most

⁸¹ For a chronological history of the Sichuan mission, see Adrien Launay, *Histoire des missions de Chine. Mission du Se-tchoan*, 2 vols., Paris: Téqui, 1920; on the geography of the mission, see Joseph Dehergne, "La Chine du Sud-Ouest: le Szechwan, le Kweichow, le Yunnan. Étude de géographie missionnaire", *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 42 (1973), pp. 246-287; cf. also Standaert, ed., *Handbook of Christianity in China*, vol. 1, pp. 555-567 (passim).

⁸² For details on the life of André Ly in Sichuan, see his exceptional diary, first published in the original Latin by Adrien Launay, *Journal d'André Ly, prêtre chinois, missionnaire et notaire apostolique, 1746-1763*, Hong Kong: Imprimerie de Nazareth, 1924, and translated into French

of the evangelization of this frontier mission, which was finally assigned to the M.E.P. in perpetuity. Future Vicars Apostolic were all members of that society, and the most notable were François Pottier (Bo Siye 博四爺; 1726-1792), pro-Vicar from 1756 and then Vicar of Sichuan from 1767 to his death, and Louis-Gabriel-Taurin Dufresse M.E.P. (Li Duolin 李多林; also Xu Dexin 徐德新; 1750-1815), named Vicar in 1800. The scattered nature of the Sichuanese communities yielded differences in practices, and the clergy, under the leadership of Vicar Dufresse, called the first Synod of Sichuan in 1803 in the city of Chongqing. This regional assembly, with a majority of Chinese priests in attendance, was a milestone in the history of Chinese Catholicism. The decisions of the Synod were transmitted to Propaganda Fide, and after a long period of study within the Congregation (a delay partly due to the Napoleonic Wars), they were approved and published in 1822, and their validity was extended to the entire country in 1832, setting the pastoral standard until the next National Synod of Shanghai in 1924.⁸³ In spite of the clandestine status of the church, Sichuanese Christians went from a total of 4,000 in 1756 to 60,000 in 1815, and by the early nineteenth century around fifteen to twenty priests, mostly Chinese, ministered to the communities. The Jiaqing reign, however, brought much grief too, and the Vicariate of Sichuan experienced a period of harsh government suppression. In the period 1815-1820, Qing authorities arrested and executed Vicar Apostolic Dufresse and five other priests and catechists in Sichuan alone.

*Christian life in the Sichuan Vicariate*⁸⁴

Sichuan was a frontier society, and for that reason the vast majority of the converts originally had migrated from other provinces, especially Fujian and

by Colette Douet and edited by François Barriquand, *Sichuan, chronique d'une mission au XVIIe siècle: Journal d'André Ly, prêtre chinois, missionnaire et notaire apostolique, 1745-1764*, Paris: Youfeng, 2015. For an analytical presentation and summary of the diary's themes in English, see Henry Serruys, "Andrew Li, Chinese Priest, 1692 (1693?)-1774", *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 32.1 & 32.2 (1976), pp. 39-55 and 130-144; for a focus on Ly's pastoral activities, see Anton Borer, "Das Tagebuch André Ly's als Quelle der Missionspastoral", *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 1 (1945), pp. 194-203. On Linus Zhang Feng, see Robert Entenmann, "Linus Zhang Feng (1669?-1743): A Catholic Lay Evangelist in Early Qing Sichuan", in *China. New Faces of Ethnography*, edited by Bettina Gransow, Pál Nyíri, and Shaw-Chian Fong, *Berliner China-Hefte* no. 28, Münster: LIT Verlag, 2004, pp. 138-146.

⁸³ *Synodus Vicariatus Sutchuensis habita in districtu civitatis Tcong King Tcheou, anno 1803, diebus secunda, quinta, et nona Septembris*, Romae: Typis Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, 1822; Fortunato Margiotti, "La Cina cattolica al traguardo della maturità", in *MR*, vol. III/1 (1975), pp. 514-515; Josef Metzler, *Die Synoden in China, Japan, und Korea, 1570-1931*. Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1980, pp. 42-67; R. G. Tiedemann, *Handbook of Christianity in China. Volume Two: 1800 to the Present*. Leiden: Brill, 2010, pp. 217-218.

⁸⁴ On the social and religious life of the Sichuan mission see Launay, "La vie chrétienne", in *Histoire des missions de Chine. Mission du Se-tchoan*, vol. 2, pp. 308-336, as well as several

Guangdong. Most Sichuanese Christians were poor (peddlers, small shopkeepers, laborers, artisans and farmers) with the exception of a few merchant and entrepreneurial families like the Li of the city of Chongqing. Many Christians resided in isolated mountain villages, although some clusters could be found in the cities of Chengdu and Chongqing and their hinterlands. Due to dearth of both European and Chinese priests, native catechists (sometimes called *huizhang* 會長, ‘confraternity leaders’) and consecrated Chinese women known as ‘Christian virgins’ engaged in educational work and nurtured the devotional life of the Christian communities, especially during periods of government anti-Christian campaigns. This also meant that lay leaders developed autonomous authority over the communities, and often had a more continuative control over their life than the priests, who were obliged to be on the move quite a bit.⁸⁵ For that reason, occasional conflicts could develop between newly arrived priests or vicars, and lay leaders, who objected to the introduction of new regulations or changes in pastoral practice. The Archives, for example, preserve a Chinese memorial from some Chinese *huizhang* in Sichuan against such innovations in pastoral practices and precepts introduced by André Ly and the M.E.P. missionaries in the 1760s.⁸⁶ Funerals were another source of tension with Chinese converts. Propaganda issued strict prohibitions against certain traditional Chinese funerary practices (such as the kowtow), and vicars and priests tried to enforce common practices, sending to Rome models of funerary tablets for approval. The Archives contain, for example, the Chinese text of a Christian funerary text (*Defunctorum Christianorum memoriae exemplar*);⁸⁷ and a beautiful drawing of a Christian funerary tablet with Latin notes, sent by Vicar-Apostolic Martiliat.⁸⁸ The Propaganda Archives also pre-

essays by Robert E. Entenmann: “Clandestine Catholics and the State in Eighteenth-Century Szechuan, in *Zhongguo jindai zhengjiao guanxi guoji xueshu yantaohui lunwen ji (Proceedings of the First International Symposium on Church and State in China: Past and Present)*, edited by Li Qifang, Danshui: Tamkang University, 1987, pp. 123-156; “The Establishment of Chinese Catholic Communities in Early Ch’ing Szechwan”, in *Actes du Ve Colloque International de Sinologie (Chantilly 1992). Echanges culturels et religieux entre la Chine et l’Occident*, edited by Edward Malatesta, Yves Raguin & Adrianus Dudink, San Francisco, CA, Paris and Taipei: Ricci Institutes, 1995, pp. 147-61; “Chinese Catholic Clergy and Catechists in Eighteenth-Century Szechwan”, in *Actes du VIe colloque International de Sinologie de Chantilly. Images de la Chine: le contexte occidental de la sinologie naissante*, edited by Edward Malatesta & Yves Raguin, Paris: Institut Ricci, 1995, pp. 389-410; “Catholics and Society in Eighteenth-Century Sichuan”, and “Christian Virgins in Eighteenth-Century Sichuan”, in *Christianity in China from the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, edited by Daniel Bays, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996, pp. 8-23 and 180-193 respectively.

⁸⁵ Entenmann, Robert, “A Mission Without Missionaries: Chinese Catholics Clergy in Sichuan, 1746-1756”, in *Sinicizing Christianity*, edited by Zheng Yangwen, Leiden: Brill, 2017, pp. 31-54.

⁸⁶ SOCP, vol. 52 [1760-63], ff. 628r-629v.

⁸⁷ SOCP, vol. 33 [1727-1728], f. 427r-v.

⁸⁸ SOCP vol. 46 [1746], f. 130r.

serve other Chinese-language materials related to Christian life, such as Chinese language real estate contracts; and to Qing government repression in that province, including transcripts of Qing judicial documents incriminating Christians and missionaries in Chengdu and its hinterland.⁸⁹

Vicariate Apostolic of Shanxi-Shaanxi

This region covered the vast northwestern swath of the empire, comprising the two Qing provinces of Shanxi and Shaanxi, and parts of Gansu and Qinghai (at the time under the jurisdiction of the Qing Governor General of Gansu-Shaanxi). The Jesuits were the first to evangelize both Shaanxi and Shanxi, but Reformed Franciscans from Italy and Bavaria, under the authority of Propaganda, later replaced them.⁹⁰ The first Vicar Apostolic of Shaanxi was Basilio Brollo da Gemona (Ye Zunxiao 葉尊孝; 1648-1704), named in 1696 with the limited powers of apostolic prefect.⁹¹ He actually reached the provincial capital of Shaanxi, Xi'an, with his companion Antonio Laghi da Castrocaro (Mei Shusheng 梅述聖; 1668-1727) only in 1701, starting a Franciscan presence in the Northwest that would last into the 1940s.⁹² In 1715, Laghi was named Vicar Apostolic of the newly enlarged Vicariate of Shanxi-Shaanxi, and the proscription of Christianity in 1723 drove the missionaries and their communities underground. The Vicars and their priests (never more than a handful of six or seven men for this large territory) continued undisturbed their activities for many decades, with only occasional arrests, as several of the missionaries were native Chinese, some trained in Naples, some in Beijing, and thus escaped the government's notice.⁹³ However, when the number of pastors dwindled in the 1780s, a new contingent of four Italian Franciscans travelled across the empire with the support of the Propaganda Procurator in Canton to reach the mission. Their discovery and arrest in Huguang provoked a large anti-Christian campaign in 1784-1785, and Qing authorities deported several missionaries to Beijing,

⁸⁹ SOCP, vol. 39 [1736, Luglio-Settembre], ff. 285r-300r.

⁹⁰ For the early history of the Shanxi mission, see Fortunato Margiotti, *Il cattolicesimo nello Shansi dalle origini al 1738*, Roma: Edizioni Sinica Franciscana, 1958; for the history of the missions in Shanxi and Shaanxi in the later period, see Giovanni Ricci, *Vicariatus Taiyuanfu: seu Brevis historia antiquae Franciscanae missionis Shansi et Shensi a sua origine ad dies nostros (1700-1928)*, Pekini: Typographia Congregationis Missionis, 1929.

⁹¹ See Simonetta Polmonari, *Padre Basilio Brollo da Gemona in dialogo con la cultura cinese*, Vicenza: L.I.E.F., 2009.

⁹² See Domenico Cresi, *Mons. Antonio Laghi da Castrocaro (1668-1727) vescovo titolare di Lorima, vicario apostolico di Shensi e Shansi*, Firenze: Edizioni Studi Francescani, 1957.

⁹³ Georg Kilian Pflaum, *Nathanael Burger und die Mission von Shansi und Shensi, 1765-1780*, Landshut: Solan-Missions-Druckerei, 1954; Standaert, *Handbook of Christianity in China*, vol. 1, pp. 331-334; see a list of seven Chinese seminarians in the Beijing seminary in 1791, including three from Shanxi and four from the capital, in APF, SOCP, vol. 68 (1793-95), f. 211r.

including the Vicar of Shanxi-Shaanxi Antonio Maria Sacconi O.F.M. Obs. (Kang Andang 康安當; 1741-1785), who died in prison there.⁹⁴ After this setback, Giovanni Battista da Mandello O.F.M. Obs. (Wu Shanhan 吳善翰; 1746-1804) and Luigi Landi da Signa O.F.M. Obs. (Lu Leisi 路類思; 1749-1811) returned to the mission and both became Vicars of Shanxi-Shaanxi in succession (1792-1804, 1804-1811). We have detailed information on this Vicariate in the late eighteenth century thanks to two long reports kept in the Archives of Propaganda, penned by Emanuele Conforti (Gao Linyuan 高臨淵; Battistino; ca 1754-1837).⁹⁵

Christian Life in the Shanxi-Shaanxi Vicariate

Recently, materials from the APF have been extensively used to sketch the history of parts of the Shanxi Vicariate from the late eighteenth century into the present, contextualizing Christian activities within local society, and showing how the global Church impacted the imaginary and the organization of the Shanxi converts, down to the village level. Paradoxically, it is in Rome that the early history of the village is recorded, as Henrietta Harrison reminds us, showing how the Propaganda Archives are silent custodians of the past of rural Chinese Christianity, just awaiting to be unlocked and rediscovered.⁹⁶

A sample of Chinese documents from Shanxi-Shaanxi in APF gives us a sense of the daily life and religious practices of the Vicariate. The account of a miracle in Hongtong 洪洞 County (Pingyang 平陽 Prefecture, today Linfen 臨汾, Shanxi), for example, reflects religious devotion in a landscape inhabited by competing spiritual forces and ritual specialists, describing how a dead non-Christian man resuscitated in his coffin, and then converted, moved by his travel to the afterlife.⁹⁷ Such exceptional cases, however, should not obscure the quotidian dimension of Christian life. Recent research showed how funer-

⁹⁴ Bernward Willeke, *Imperial Government and Catholic Missions in China during the Years 1784-1785*. Missiology Series No. 1. St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1948; Krahl, *China Missions in Crisis*; Menegon, "Sacconi, Antonio", in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, Roma: Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, vol. 89, 2017, pp. 539-541.

⁹⁵ While stationed at the Xitang in Beijing, Conforti was named Visitor of Shaanxi-Shanxi, where he conducted two visitations between 1796 and 1799, to solve internal quarrels between the Vicar Giovanni Battista Zucchi da Mandello and the local Chinese clergy. The Latin report of the first visitation was published in Bernward Willeke, "The Report of the Apostolic Visitation of D. Emmanuele Conforti on the Franciscan Missions in Shansi, Shensi and Kansu (1798)", *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 84 (1991), pp. 197-271. It is full of statistics and information on the state of Christianity in those regions; the original is kept in APF, SOCP, vol. 69 (1796-1801), ff. 469-489.

⁹⁶ See Henrietta Harrison, *The Missionary's Curse*.

⁹⁷ APF, SOCP, vol. 39 (1736, Luglio-Settembre), ff. 220r-223r, with a Chinese narrative of the miracle entitled *Zhenjiao yizheng* 真教一証 (One Proof for the True Teachings), as described in this Catalogue.

als were a very important moment in the religious cycle of Chinese Christian communities, and a time for lay leaders to direct the liturgy. The miracle shows how dramatic this communitarian moment could become when invested with miraculous powers. However, another document shows rather the need to create stable localized liturgies to be used consistently for funerals. This is reflected, for instance, in a document with a special Chinese-language formula for invitations to be used at Christian funerals in Shanxi (1792).⁹⁸ The life of these communities, moreover, was occasionally rocked by controversy and internal fights, pitting missionaries against each other, and dragging the Chinese lay leadership into such disputes through the writing of petitions and letters to Church authorities. In the late 1720s, for example, the Franciscan Gabriele da Torino, then in Canton, in a report about his conflict with the Procurator of Propaganda Perroni over assignment after the exile to Guangdong, included a Chinese letter from his Christians in Taiyuan, Shanxi, who were asking him to return to the mission.⁹⁹ In another Chinese-language letter written by the Christians of Shaanxi province in the 1740s, instead, we hear requests for accommodation by local converts to recent changes a zealous missionary implemented in their Vicariate after the arrival of the *Ex quo singulari* papal constitution on the Chinese rites.¹⁰⁰ Finally, a Chinese version of the pastoral letter (regulations or “Constitutions”) that Emanuele Conforti issued during his visitation of the Vicariate gives us a sense of the tensions over discipline and orthodoxy brewing within the Christian communities, and dividing the missionaries and converts in competing factions.¹⁰¹

Propaganda Missions in the Diocese of Beijing (Bei Zhili/Hebei, Manchuria, Shandong)

The Propaganda missionaries stationed at the imperial court (Xitang and Haidian) also served small Christian communities scattered in the hinterland of Beijing (Bei Zhili, today’s Hebei), and north of the the Great Wall.¹⁰² APF

⁹⁸ APF, SOCP, vol. 68 (1793-95), f. 716r, as described in this Catalogue. On Christian funerals in China (especially in the South), see Nicolas Standaert, *The Interweaving of Rituals. Funerals in the Cultural Exchange Between China and Europe*, Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2008.

⁹⁹ APF, SC Indie Orientali e Cina (1726), vol. 18, f. 425, as described in this Catalogue; copies also in SOCP, vol. 33 (1727-1728), ff. 474r-475r and SOCP, vol. 34 (1729-30), f. 495r-v.

¹⁰⁰ APF, SOCP, vol. 46 (1746), f. 291r, and second copy f. 379r, as described in this Catalogue.

¹⁰¹ APF, SOCP, vol. 69 (1796-1801), ff. 430r-445v, see Appendix 11 and, for a photograph of the document, see figs. 61-78; cf. Willeke, “The Report of the Apostolic Visitation”, p. 202, where the date of compilation of these Chinese language “Constitutions” in Lu’an Prefecture is given as December 23, 1797.

¹⁰² These two long articles focus in particular on Jesuit communities, although they occasionally include Propaganda and the Franciscans: Paul Bornet, “1. Notes sur l’évangélisation du Tcheli et de la Tartarie aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles. 2. Notes sur l’origine de quelques chrétientés

preserves traces of these tiny communities in the letters of the Beijing Propagandists, especially those dating to the 1730s-40s, when Portuguese and French Jesuits opposed Propaganda's jurisdiction over those villages, and appealed to Rome to defend their 'parishes'. Missives from the Propagandists Filippo Maria Serrati, Sigismondo Meinardi, Josef Maria Pruggmayr and the Italian Franciscans based in Shandong refer to these hamlets, sometimes listing their names in Romanization and the number of Christian families.¹⁰³ The Archives also contain some Jesuit petitions, such as a Latin letter by Antoine Gaubil S.J. to the Cardinal Prefect, dated November 25, 1745, asking to relinquish back to the French Jesuits control over a village in Hebei, one day travel south of Beijing.¹⁰⁴ Among the Chinese-language documents in SOCP we find copies of letters that the Chinese Jesuit Louis Fan Shouyi (樊守義; 1682-1753) sent in July 1741 to the lay confraternity heads (*huizhang*) of Zhaojiazhuang hamlet, Wei village, in Wei County (威縣, 魏村, 趙家庄), as well as letters of some *huizhang* complaining to him about lack of pastoral care. These documents were forwarded to Rome with related correspondence by the Franciscan Giovanni Battista di Lucera, active in Hebei between 1741 and 1775, as part of the jurisdictional quarrel between Propagandists and Jesuits.¹⁰⁵

A few isolated clusters of Christian converted families existed along the route leading to the imperial summer villa of Chengde and to Manchuria. Missionaries following the imperial court during the annual hunting expeditions in the Northeast baptized these Christians, and would occasionally visit them to minister the sacraments. Among the Propagandists, Matteo Ripa kept in touch with a few Christians in Luanping and in Gubeikou, both near Chengde,

du Tcheli et de la Tartarie aux XVIIe siècles", offprint from *Bulletin catholique de Pékin*, Sienhsien, 1937; Joseph Dehergne, "La mission de Pékin vers 1700. Étude de géographie missionnaire", *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 22 (1953), pp. 314-38.

¹⁰³ See, for example, a report on the Propaganda missions of the Italian Franciscans in Shandong and Beijing/Hebei, in APF, SOCP vol. 46 (1746), ff. 165r-168v, "Stato delle Missioni de PP. Osservanti Italiani di San Francesco, Missionarj per la S. C. di Propaganda Fede [sic] fondate in Cina nelle Provincie xan over scian tung e Pe ci li cioè Provincia di Pekino." These documents contain lists of villages in romanized Chinese with tonal diacritics, and number of Christians (around 1,150 individuals). For the hinterland of Beijing, see especially f. 166v: "Territori e luoghi prossimi a soprascritti, ma attenenti alla Provincia de Pe ci ly cioè Pechino"; f. 167v: "Segue lo stato della missione nella prov. di Pekino, o pe ci ly"; *ibid.*, "Segue lo stato della nostra missione nella prov. di Pekino."

¹⁰⁴ APF, SOCP vol. 46 (1746) pp. 415r-416r, published in Antoine Gaubil SJ, *Correspondence*, edited by Renée Simon, Geneva: Droz, 1970, pp. 561-563.

¹⁰⁵ A Catholic community still exists in Wei village today, with a large nineteenth-century church dedicated to the Virgin Mary (河北省, 邢台市, 威县, 魏村, 中华圣母堂), see <http://map.chinacath.com/show.asp?id=3523> (website address active in March 2017). The Chinese documents by Fan Shouyi (and related materials) are described in detail in this Catalogue and preserved in APF, SOCP vol. 44 (1742-1745 [I]), ff. 173r-178v.

and established around 1719 a small school for boys in Chengde itself, while engaged there in artistic work for the Kangxi emperor. That school was the first nucleus for Ripa's *Collegio de' Cinesi* established in Naples after he returned to Europe.¹⁰⁶

The province of Shandong was dotted with several active Catholic communities as well. Alcantarine Discalced Franciscans of the Philippine Province of San Gregorio Magno under Spanish patronage ministered a cluster of small Christian communities in the region surrounding the provincial capital Jinan and along the Grand Canal connecting South-central China to Beijing. Antonio de Santa Maria Caballero (Li Andang 利安當; 1602-1669), Propaganda's Apostolic Prefect and a Spanish Alcantarine, reached Shandong in 1650 after his expulsion from Fujian and a period of travel outside China. He established a small church in Jinan with support from the pre-existing Jesuit network and at the recommendation of the famous Jesuit court astronomer, Adam Schall von Bell. With only temporary assistance from his confrère Buenaventura Ibáñez (Wen Dula 文度辣; 1610-1691) in the period 1654-62, Caballero ministered there alone until his deportation to Canton in 1666, during the anti-Christian movement of the Calendar Case, never to return. After the end of the campaign, another Spanish Franciscan, Agustín de S. Pascual (Li Anding 利安定; 1637?-1697), returned to Jinan, and in subsequent decades several friars from the same religious province moved to Shandong. They opened a few missionary stations in the central and western parts of the province, encountering some success among the peasantry, but also difficulties with local sectarians and imperial authorities, besides experiencing jurisdictional conflicts with other missionary groups in the region (Jesuits and Italian Franciscans).¹⁰⁷

In 1705, a few Italian Observant Friars Minor, directly sent by Propaganda, founded a new mission in central Shandong and Hebei. Their enterprise grew in the period 1705-1740, in spite of the government's proscription of Christianity in 1724. Internal jurisdictional struggles with the Beijing Jesuits and Shandong's Spanish Alcantarines agitated these underground communities until 1741, followed by a period of increased pressure from without and within starting in 1753, which culminated in the great empire-wide persecution of 1785. With the arrest and expulsion of many missionaries and the death of some, this traumatic episode ended the Italian Observant Franciscan presence in Shandong, although Chinese priests of the *Collegio de' Cinesi* continued to

¹⁰⁶ Dehergne, "La mission de Pékin vers 1700", pp. 333-334; Michele Fatica, *Matteo Ripa. Giornale (1711-1716) Volume 2*, Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1996.

¹⁰⁷ See *Sinica Franciscana*; David Mungello, *The Spirit and the Flesh in Shandong, 1650-1785*, Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001, pp. 55-103; R. G. Tiedemann, "Christianity and Chinese 'Heterodox Sects.'" Mass Conversion and Syncretism in Shandong Province in the Early Eighteenth Century", *Monumenta Serica* 45 (1996), pp. 339-382.

minister these communities on behalf of Propaganda until the 1820s. Among the most important pastors of this Propaganda enterprise were Bishop Bernardino della Chiesa and his Vicar General, Carlo Orazi da Castorano (Kang Hezi 康熙子; 1673-1755), who established the episcopal residence in the commercial town of Linqing on the Grand Canal.¹⁰⁸

Christian Life in the Diocese of Beijing and in Shandong

Shandong was a notoriously unruly province, scourged by famine and drought and inhabited by a poor peasantry, but rich in Buddhist lay groups and other “sectarian” religious organizations, especially among the masses of workers employed to pull boats and operate the imperial waterway of the Grand Canal. Such groups were built around charismatic leaders and nourished by scriptures (“precious scrolls”) inspired by Buddhist and Daoist millenarianism and ritual. In this environment, the missionaries interacted with a few literati in major centers like the capital Jinan, as in the case of the official Shang Huqing (尚祐卿; 1619-?), who collaborated with Antonio Caballero in writing philosophical and catechetical texts.¹⁰⁹ But missionaries mostly spent their time in rural villages and small towns, ministering to local farming communities, artisans and petty merchants. In this environment, Christian liturgical observances and restrictions imposed from Rome were not uniformly enforced on communities lacking close pastoral supervision, and local congregations likely remained attached to many of the practices of Chinese popular religion. In fact, we have cases of “sectarians” converting to Christianity during the period of tolerance prior to 1724, to find cover from authorities persecuting their heterodox activities.¹¹⁰

Among the Chinese documents in APF there are several real estate conveyances for the residences that Della Chiesa and Castorano purchased in Shandong between 1701 and 1722, just before the prohibition of Christianity. They are described in detail in this Catalogue’s Appendix 2. These deeds reflect the extension of the mission into country villages and commercial towns, and offer insights into the economic workings of the mission.¹¹¹ Correspondence from the period of suppression scattered in several sections of APF shows that some Christian merchants based in Linqing and its vicinity engaged in trans-

¹⁰⁸ Georges Mensaert, “Les Franciscains au service de la Propagande dans la province de Pékin”, *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 51 (1958): 161-200 & 273-311; Bertuccioli “Della Chiesa”; Michela Catto, “Orazi, Antonio [Carlo Horatii da Castorano, o Carlo di Orazio da Castorano]”, in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, Roma: Istituto dell’Enciclopedia Italiana, vol. 79, 2013, pp. 402-405.

¹⁰⁹ Mungello, *The Spirit and the Flesh*, pp. 32-33.

¹¹⁰ Tiedemann, “Christianity and Chinese “Heterodox Sects.”

¹¹¹ APF, SC, *Indie Orientali e Cina*, vol. 29, 1758-60.

portation of merchandise from Canton to Beijing via the Grand Canal on behalf of the Church, and continued to support the logistics of the Propaganda mission in North China until the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

Vicariate Apostolic of Huguang & Diocese of Nanjing

The two provinces of Hunan 湖南 and Hubei 湖北, each ruled by a Governor, formed the Qing administrative region of Huguang 湖廣, under the authority of a Governor General. This territory was initially evangelized by Portuguese and French Jesuits, especially in the province of Hubei.¹¹² The Holy See attached the region to other apostolic vicariates starting in 1659, but finally made it into an independent vicariate in 1696, at least on paper. This was one of the most fertile territories of China, rich in lakes and rivers, and a veritable rice bowl for the empire. During the period of prohibition, the region was mostly left undisturbed by imperial authorities, particularly because most of the converts were poor farmers and fishermen in remote locations, and their lives did not attract much attention. Moreover, for a few years during the early Qianlong period (1737-39), the Governor General of Huguang was the Imperial Prince Depei 德沛 (1688-1752), a crypto-Christian baptized as Joseph by the court Jesuits, whose presence in the region afforded some benign neglect. The Propaganda presence in the Vicariate in the eighteenth century was minimal, including only a couple of Lazarist missionaries, foreign and Chinese.¹¹³ The region depended for many years from the Vicar Apostolic of Sichuan, who did not wish to relinquish control, and thus letters from Sichuan's Vicar Müllener offer some information on the region. Among the Chinese documents in APF we find, for instance, inside a letter by Müllener, two appendices with Chinese language contracts for the purchase of houses in Huguang, made under the name of a Chinese priest to avoid government interference. This was a common practice during the time of suppression of Christianity, and shows how Chinese lay leaders and priests were necessary for the survival of the mission.¹¹⁴

¹¹² Kang Zhijie 康志傑, *Shangzhu de putaoyuan: E xibei Mopanshan tianzhujiao shequ yanjiu (1636-2005)* 上主的葡萄園—鄂西北磨盤山天主教社區研究 1636-2005 (The Lord's Vineyard: Study of the Catholic Community of Mopanshan in Northwest Hubei, 1636-2005), Xinzhuang – Taipei: Furen daxue chubanshe, 2006.

¹¹³ Joseph Dehergne, “La Chine centrale vers 1700. III. Les vicariats apostoliques de l'intérieure. Étude de géographie missionnaire”, *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 36 (1967): 32-71 & 221-246; Krahl, *China Missions in Crisis*, pp. 15-17; Noël Gubbels, *Trois siècles d'apostolat: Histoire du catholicisme au Hu-kwang depuis les origines, 1587, jusqu'à 1870*, Paris and Wuchang: Franciscan Press, 1934, a biography of Depei by Fang Chao-ying in ECCP, pp. 714-715; most recently on Depei see William T. Rowe, “The Soul in Eighteenth-Century China: Depei's Confucian Christianity”, *Late Imperial China* 41.1 (June 2020), pp. 39-70.

¹¹⁴ APE, SOCP, vol. 32 (1726), 405-411 (duplicates at ff. 739r-746v).

The nearby diocese of Nanjing was, technically speaking, never part of the Propaganda structure, but rather one of the three dioceses of the Portuguese *padroado*. This was the territory with the largest number of Christians in China, probably around 60,000, and the core of the ancient Jesuit mission of Jiangnan. Starting in the early eighteenth century, a few Portuguese Lazarists also served in this region, and eventually, in the 1820s, a succession of Lazarists were named Vicars Apostolic of Jiangnan, following the abolition of the diocese. The Propaganda Archives preserve many Latin documents penned by Gottfried Xavier von Laimbeckhoven S.J. (Nan Huairan 南懷仁; 1707-1787), who served as a missionary in Huguang and then was named Bishop of the Diocese of Nanjing, and Administrator of the Diocese of Beijing. While most of them are about jurisdictional struggles between Portugal and the Holy See, including the difficulties following the dissolution of the Jesuits in China, they also give us glimpses of the pastoral situation in this vast territory in the Qianlong period.¹¹⁵

Canton (Guangxi & Guangdong; Diocese of Macao)

The Holy See initially put the two provinces of Guangxi 廣西 and Guangdong 廣東 (administratively known as Liang Guang 兩廣) under the formal control of the Apostolic Vicariate of Fujian, although such jurisdiction was only nominal. In 1680 Mgr. Pallu, the Apostolic Vicar of Fujian in charge of most South China, named Mgr. Bernardino della Chiesa Pro-Vicar of that territory. Della Chiesa eventually reached Canton (Guangzhou 廣州) in 1684.¹¹⁶ However, in 1690 Alexander VIII incorporated the two provinces into the *padroado* Diocese of Macao, and the bishops of Macao were given jurisdiction on Guangxi-Guangdong. Jesuit missionaries subject to Portuguese *padroado*, under special vicars of the Bishop of Macao (*vigarios da vara*), were officially the only allowed there, but in practice the missions were also evangelized by other religious orders depending on the Vicar Apostolic of Fujian (Franciscans and Augustinians supported by the Spanish *patronato real*, and French M.E.P.). The number of converts in Guangxi was always very limited. In Guangdong, the largest concentration of Christians was in Canton and its vicinity, and the presence of several religious orders, including their Procurators, was linked to the important role of that port city as gateway to the empire, and hub of international trade. Dehergne offers a detailed census of the

¹¹⁵ For a list of letters by Laimbeckhoven in APF and elsewhere see Krahl, *China Missions in Crisis*, pp. 314-321. On religious life in Jiangnan, see Xiaojuan Huang, "Christian Communities and Alternative Devotions in China, 1780 -1860", Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of History, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, 2006.

¹¹⁶ See Georges Mensaert, "La reprise des missions franciscaines en Chine après la persécution de Yang Kuang-hsien: 1672-1684", *Bulletin de l'Université l'Aurore* 5 (1944), pp. 830-870.

different communities in the two provinces, and in particular in Canton.¹¹⁷ The city and its vicinity boasted eight churches (each with a chapel for women), administered by Spanish Discalced Franciscans, Spanish Augustinians, French M.E.P., and Jesuits, and also hosted the Procurator of Propaganda, who lived for a time in the M.E.P. residence.

When in 1732 the Yongzheng Emperor decided to expel all remaining missionaries from Canton, which was the only city in the south where churches were then still open, all Catholic structures were requisitioned, and transformed into buildings of public utility, while their value in silver was turned over to the government of Macao, to be distributed back to the religious orders owning them. In spite of this debacle, and the subsequent difficulties of the local dwindling congregations, Canton remained an important city for the functioning of the Propaganda mission and the Catholic missions in general. When relations between Propaganda and the Portuguese authorities worsened during the Qianlong period, for example, one of the Procurators asked imperial permission to move to the area of the “foreign factories” (the establishments of foreign merchants) along the Pearl River near the Chinese city, and thus for a time Canton became again a center of Propaganda’s activities in the Qing empire and East Asia, until the 1784-1785 great anti-Christian campaign forced the Procurators once again to move back to Macao. In spite of this, Canton, as an administrative city in charge of foreign trade and foreigners from the maritime frontier, remained crucial for the missions, and Qing provincial officials residing there continued to act as intermediaries between the central government and the missionaries arriving in Macao, who were asking to proceed to Beijing to serve at the court. Moreover, the supercargoes of the French, Swedish and English East India companies based in the Canton factories assisted whenever possible the missionaries with their commercial and maritime contacts.

Among the Chinese documents from this region preserved in APF, we have, for example, a Chinese language petition by enemies of the missionaries in Canton around 1726,¹¹⁸ and a 1789 letter in Chinese and Latin from the Christians of Shunde 順德, in the vicinity of Canton to pope Pius VI, requesting to send Chinese priests in the wake of the 1784-1785 persecution.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ See Joseph Dehergne, “La Chine du Sud-Est: Guangxi (Kwangsi) et Guangdong (Kwantung). Étude de géographie missionnaire”, *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 45 (1976), pp. 3-55.

¹¹⁸ APF, SOCP vol. 33 (1727-1728), ff. 360v-361v, “Memoriale contra li Missionarii di Cantone nel quale sono accusati alcuni d’Essi d’esser entrati ascostamente nelle Provincie.” The circumstances for the production of this document and a summary in Italian are found at ff. 270r-271v.

¹¹⁹ APF, SOCP, vol. 67 (1791-1792), f. 167.

The Procurators in Macao and Canton

After considering various local communities under the authority of Propaganda in China and concluding with a brief mention of Canton as the logistical pivot of the south, we naturally conclude this excursus with a discussion of the functions and history of the vital institution of the Propaganda Procurator in China. We opened this essay with Domenico Perroni at his desk in Canton. Indeed, without the assistance of the Procurator, missionary operations in China would have been practically impossible. Even if removed from the pastoral field, and subject to great limitations in manpower and financial support, the Procurator made it practicable for other apostolic missionaries to reside in Beijing and the Chinese provinces, and to continue their multifaceted work.

The Propaganda Congregation always nurtured the ambition to direct from Rome all global missionary activities, no matter how far afield. This aspiration, however, created serious bottleneck and great delays in policy implementation, due to the slow pace of communication, the bureaucratic inertia inherent in any administration, and the low number of missionaries and vicars apostolic in the field. East Asia was the region that experienced the most serious difficulties in expeditious communication and funding. The maritime commercial routes between Europe and Asia, plied by vessels of the East India Companies of several countries, and by a multitude of other Asian ships, were the necessary conduits for the papal missionary initiative, and financial and logistical needs depended on an understanding of the mechanism of the maritime world. Unlike the Jesuits, who had received from the Portuguese and Spanish Crowns the right of free passage on their ships to Asia, papal envoys and missionaries had to use other vessels to reach their destinations in East Asia.¹²⁰ Their long and arduous journey relied on the courtesy of European and Asian secular rulers, and East India Companies, to obtain passage and financial support. The financial backing of the French Crown and the logistical support of France's navy and the fledgling French East India Company, founded in 1664, remained crucial in the early years of Propaganda efforts in Asia. Yet, the difficulties were truly enormous given the unstable political situation affecting navigation at the time, with France at the center of several European and colonial wars. In fact, over the course of the eighteenth century, Propaganda's apostolic missionaries would travel even on politically unpalatable Dutch or English Protestant ships, whenever a French passage was not easily

¹²⁰ For a list of all Jesuits on board Portuguese ships, see Joseph Wicki, "Liste der Jesuiten-Indienfahrer 1541-1758", in *Portugiesische Forschungen der Gorresgesellschaft. Reihe 1. Aufsätze zur portugiesischen Kulturgeschichte*, edited by Hans Flasche, vol. 7, Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, Münster, 1967, pp. 252-450.

obtainable due to the fickleness of dynastic alliances, especially during the tempestuous reign of Louis XIV.¹²¹

This dependence on secular and commercial support reveals the weakness of the papal missionary enterprise, and explains why Propaganda finally approved what missionaries and vicars apostolic stationed in the field had advocated for some time: the establishment of a Procurator office in East Asia. This was an anomalous position within Propaganda, as the Procurator's powers became over time very extensive, both over financial administration, and ecclesiastical and pastoral matters. Many of the documents inventoried in this Catalogue were in fact produced or transmitted by the Procurator's office.¹²²

In the summer of 1705, while waiting in Canton to leave for his diplomatic mission at the Qing court, the Apostolic Legate Tournon took the initiative to establish the post, pending an assent by the cardinals of Propaganda to an earlier 1703 official request. Macao and Manila were not ideal seats for a Procurator, given the opposition of Portugal and Spain to the papacy's designs, and, in fact, already in 1698 Bishop Della Chiesa had suggested that a Procurator be based, rather, in a *Chinese* port in Guangdong or Fujian (Canton or Amoy/Xiamen).¹²³ In August 1705, Tournon ordered his personal physician Giovanni Borghese to purchase from the Procurator of the Missions Étrangères de Paris, Jean Bénard (1668-1711), one of the two properties that the M.E.P. had acquired in Canton, a large house in the quarter of Xiaonanmen (小南門), and named Ignazio Giampé (1658-1726), one of his collaborators in the legatine party, the first Propaganda Procurator.¹²⁴ The decision to station Giampé in the great commercial port of Southern China, arguably the most important center of Chinese international commerce, and subject to Qing political jurisdiction, was not casual. Canton (more precisely, the island of Whampoa down-river) was the obliged destination for the large vessels of all East India Companies and the ocean-going junks and sampans from Asian countries,

¹²¹ Matteo Ripa, one of the first two Propaganda missionaries in Beijing, artist at the Qing court, and founder of the Chinese College of Naples in 1734, for example, had to use an English vessel to reach China in 1708; see Fatica, *Matteo Ripa. Giornale (1705-1724)*, vol. 1, pp. XXVI-XXVII, 42-50.

¹²² On the early history of the office of Procurator, see Silvester De Munter, *De S. Congregationis de Propaganda Fide Procurae Cantonensis Primordiis. Excerpta ex dissertatione ad lauream*, Romae – Mechliniae [Mechelen]: Pontificium Atheneum Antonianum – Facultas Sacrae Theologiae, 1957; an overview of the functions and biographies of all Procurators in Metzler, “Das Archiv der Missionsprokur.”

¹²³ De Munter, *Procurae Cantonensis Primordiis*, p. 28. The proposal was declined by Propaganda in 1701, see Margiotti, “Le missioni cinesi nella tormenta”, p. 1002, citing *Simica Franciscana* V, pp. 388-89; Dino Staffa, *Le delegazioni apostoliche*, Roma: Desclée, 1959, p. 109; APF, Acta CP, vol. 2 (1701-17), ff. 13v-17v.

¹²⁴ Margiotti, “Le missioni cinesi nella tormenta”, p. 1002, citing APF, Acta CP, vol. 2, f. 102r-v; Biblioteca Casanatense (BC), Ms. 1631, f. 95rv; APF, *Lettere*, vol. 94 (1705), ff. 25v-27v.

including peninsular and insular Southeast Asia and the Philippines. The city was the terminal of a vast transportation network towards the interior of China. It harbored a small Catholic community and several religious communities (Jesuits, Franciscans, Augustinians, Dominicans, M.E.P.). Finally, it was the seat of the Qing Governor and Governor General in charge of introducing foreigners to the Qing court.¹²⁵ The Propaganda Procurator would thus be well-positioned to network with foreign and Chinese merchants, Qing government officials, the not-too-distant Portuguese authorities in Macao, and the Spanish entrepôt of Manila.¹²⁶ This location helped facilitate the economic workings of the papal missions in China and Southeast Asia, and was a good gathering point for intelligence and a maritime postal hub for Propaganda Fide and the missionaries stationed in the interior. By virtue of its location in Canton, the Procurators remained independent of colonial powers, benignly neglected by the Qing government until 1732. Giampé occupied the residence until his departure for Italy in January 1709, and was then succeeded by other members of the legate's party (Sabino Mariani; Giuseppe Ignazio Cordero; Giuseppe Cerù [龐克修]; Domenico Perroni [郭中傳]; Arcangelo Miralta [閔明我]). In 1732, the Procurator Miralta and all other missionaries residing in Canton, who had been allowed to live in that city after the proscription of Christianity in the provinces, were deported to Macao by imperial order.¹²⁷ The missionaries' expulsion in 1732 was part of a broader attempt on the part of the Yongzheng Emperor to control foreign presence in Canton, and at that juncture, some local officials even presented an impractical proposal to transfer all foreign commerce to Macao.¹²⁸ The ejection risked jeopardizing the logistical and eco-

¹²⁵ On Canton and its maritime network, see, e.g., Paul Arthur Van Dyke, *The Canton Trade: Life and Enterprise on the China Coast, 1700-1845*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2005; Leonard Blussé, *Visible Cities Canton, Nagasaki, and Batavia and the Coming of the Americans*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008, esp. pp. 50-53.

¹²⁶ Tournon eventually named another "corresponding" Procurator in Manila, Don Francisco Rayo y Doria, Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Manila and Treasurer of the Cathedral, charged with transmitting funds coming from Europe through the Spanish Pacific route; De Munter, *Procurae Cantonensis Primordiis*, p. 43, note 7.

¹²⁷ On the procuration in Canton, see Margiotti, "Le missioni cinesi nella tormenta", p. 1003, citing BC, Ms. 1643, f. 157. Some extensive manuscript relations by Cerù cover his years in Canton as Procurator from 1712 to 1722: APF, SC, *Indie Orientali e Cina - Miscellanea vol. 9*; and *ibid.*, vol. 16 (I), 1722. On the 1732 expulsion, see Yang Wenxin 杨文信 (Yeung Man Shun 楊文信) "Yongzheng nianjian Tianzhujiao chuanjiaoshi shiye zai Lingnan de fazhan yu cuozhe: yi 1732 nian quchu Guangzhou chuanjiaoshi wang Aomen zhi shijian wei zhongxin" 雍正年间天主教传教士事业在岭南的发展与挫折: 以1732年去除广州传教士往澳门之时间为中心 (The Development and Frustration of the Catholic Missionary Activities in Guangdong in the Reign of Yongzheng), in Zhao Chunchen 赵春晨 et al., eds., *Zhong Xi wenhua jiaoliu yu Lingnan shehui bianqian 中西文化交流与岭南社会变迁 (East and West Cultural Exchanges and Social Transformation in South China)*, Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2004, pp. 657-677.

¹²⁸ Van Dyke, *The Canton Trade*, p. 7.

onomic operations of the entire Catholic Church in the interior of China, including the two important Portuguese and French Jesuit missions at the Qing court in Beijing, still allowed to continue. Removal from Canton curtailed opportunities for easy shipping of mail and merchandise, and subjected missionaries from France, Italy and elsewhere to the whims of the Portuguese authorities in Macao. This was the first forced transfer of the Propaganda Procurator's residence away from Canton. Arcangelo Miralta (1682-1751; in office 1729-1750), as an agent of the pope infringing upon the Portuguese *padroado*, was not allowed to purchase any real estate in Macao. A compromise was reached, and he could eventually find hospitality in the convent of the Portuguese Dominicans, where the Propaganda Procurators resided until 1776, in a sort of jurisdictional limbo as far as the Portuguese authorities were concerned.¹²⁹

A decade of difficulties (1750-61) ensued under Francesco Maria Guglielmi (Clerks Regular Minor, 1715-1772), accused of concubinage and illegal use of funds, and thus removed from his post. The rigid tenure of Emiliano Palladini (1733-1793), a member of the Congregation of the Holy Family in Naples, followed between 1761 and 1772. His term is particularly well documented, and has attracted the attention of scholars working on the Neapolitan *Collegio de' Cinesi* in recent years. Palladini established a strong, although often troubled, relationship between the Propaganda missions and the Chinese priests of the *Collegio* from which he hailed.¹³⁰ During the tenure of the next Procurator, Palladini's junior confrere Nicola Simonetti (in office 1772-1778), the office had to be rushed back to Canton. Simonetti sided with the Macanese Governor against the new bishop of Macao, Alexandre Guimaraes, who had arrived in 1774 and was supporter of the royalist policies of the Marquis de Pombal. When news reached Simonetti that his patron had been demoted by order of the Viceroy in Goa, and that a new governor sympathetic to the bishop was on his way, he decided to hurriedly relocate to the Canton "foreign factories" in 1776, where he remained until his death in 1778.¹³¹ After Simonetti's death,

¹²⁹ APF SOCP vol. 36 (1732-1734), ff. 420r-v and 421r-423v, cover letter by Miralta dated 3 Dec 1732 and report "Succinta Relazione dell'espulsione infame de Missionari di Cantone" (421r-422v), cf. Antonio Martins do Vale, *Entre a cruz e o dragão: o padroado português na China no século XVIII*, Lisboa: Fundação Oriente, 2002, pp. 345-346 and 379-381; Chinese sources on this incident are collected in Zhongguo *di-yi* lishi dang'anguan 中國第一歷史檔案館 et. al., *Ming Qing shiqi Aomen wenti dang'an wenxian huibian* 明清时期澳門問題檔案文獻匯編 (Archival Documentary Collection on Macao in the Ming Qing Period), Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1999, vol. 1, pp. 168-175, especially memorial no. 126, October 16, 1732. More details on the position of the Procurators in Macao-Canton in Vale, *Entre a cruz e o dragão*, pp. 380-381.

¹³⁰ Francesco D'Arelli & Adolfo Tamburello, eds., *La missione cattolica in Cina tra i secoli XVII-XVIII. Emiliano Palladini (1733-1793)*, Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1995.

¹³¹ Vale, *Entre a cruz e o dragão*, pp. 392-394. This shows that, in fact, the prohibitions of the Yongzheng era had completely lapsed, and that the so-called Canton System of trade instituted during the Qianlong period, with the establishment of foreign factories, and the rise of the Hong merchants, allowed year-long residence by foreign supercargoes and even missionaries.

Candido Paganetto O.F.M. (in office 1778-1781) and Francesco Giuseppe Della Torre (in office 1781-1785) occupied the same quarters in Canton. Della Torre and his assistant Giambattista Marchini (1757-1823), both members of the Congregation of St. John the Baptist (Battistini), eventually obtained an imperial residence permit, and could officially remain in Canton. Soon an incident revealed the precariousness of their situation. Imperial authorities arrested a group of Propaganda missionaries traveling in Huguang in 1784, implicating Procurator Della Torre, and prompting the Grand Council and the Qianlong Emperor to launch an empire-wide anti-Christian campaign in 1784-1785.¹³² Because of this government campaign, the missions of Propaganda suffered serious damage, and over 40 missionaries were discovered, arrested, and deported from China. Giambattista Marchini, immediately set all his energies on obtaining permission from Lisbon to return to the relatively safe haven of Macao, and was finally able to transfer the procuration house back to the Portuguese enclave in 1787, where the office remained until 1842, when it moved to Hong Kong. Officially confirmed as Procurator by Rome in 1790, Marchini served in that capacity for a total of 37 years, from 1786 until his death in 1823. His life represents an ideal bridge between the age of the French Revolution to the post-Napoleonic world order, and his correspondence in APF shows how East Asia and China were becoming an arena of competition among European colonial powers, first among them, Britain. At his death, Raffaele Umpierres (in office 1823-1837), an Italian secular priest who had joined Marchini in 1818 as his assistant in Macao, succeeded him, although his tenure was troubled due to his incompetence, leading to his return to Rome, where he supported himself as instructor of Chinese language in the Propaganda College.¹³³

The Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries (1785-1830)

As mentioned in our brief regional histories above, the great anti-Christian campaign of 1784-85 was followed by a period of relative peace during the late reign of the Qianlong Emperor. The blow of the repression for the Church in China, however, was great, and felt all the way to Rome. In response to this crisis, the Secretary of Propaganda, Stefano Borgia (1731-1804), prepared two memorials in 1787, urging the Holy See to establish a Chinese episcopate as remedy for the recent arrests and deaths of European vicars apostolic, arguing that only natives could escape detection, and fully represent their people within the Church.¹³⁴ This sweeping and eminently practical proposal, like several

¹³² On the great anti-Christian campaign of 1784-85, see Willeke, *Imperial Government and Catholic Missions*, passim; and Menegon, "Wanted."

¹³³ Metzler, "Das Archiv der Missionsprokur", pp. 95-97.

¹³⁴ First published in Vittorio Bartocetti, "La necessità di un episcopato indigeno in Cina di-

other requests for Chinese bishops in the previous century, was tabled once again, due to institutional objections and a discriminatory attitude towards native priests.

The revolutionary period provoked great upheaval in Europe, and Propaganda's missionary activities suffered greatly. In 1798, following the arrest and forced exile of pope Pius VI to Paris (where he died in 1799), the Congregation was dissolved by the revolutionary government of Rome, and its archives were transported to the French capital, returning to Rome only in 1815, with some losses. Propaganda survived thanks to the energy of Stefano Borgia, now a cardinal, named pro-Prefect and then Prefect, who kept the Congregation active from its temporary seat in Padua until 1800. That year, the new pope Pius VII re-established himself in Rome, under the protection and control of Napoleon, and Borgia also returned, reconstituting the Congregation's dispersed real estate and documentary patrimony as best as he could.

The European misfortunes of Propaganda were mirrored by equally negative developments in China. The nineteenth century brought a series of new Qing government suppression campaigns between 1805 and the signing of the Sino-French Treaty of Whampoa in 1844, following the conclusion of the First Opium War (1840-1842). The reigns of the Jiaqing (1796-1820) and Daoguang (1821-1850) Emperors were characterized by a steady decline in social stability and in economic growth, and a worsening relationship with Western powers. The court, concerned about internal rebellions and foreign threats, decided to curtail any remaining freedom of the missionaries in Beijing, as we saw above, and to uproot any suspicious religious movements, including Catholicism.

When in 1802 the Macanese tried to obtain Qing imperial protection to repel a British attack with the good offices of the Bishop of Beijing Mgr. Alexandre de Gouvea, they in fact provoked the opposite effect, alarming the court for this suspicious communication, and in part setting in motion the 1805 anti-Christian repression.¹³⁵ That year, as mentioned above, authorities captured a Chinese Christian courier directed to Macao carrying a topographic map of Zhili sent to Rome to resolve a question of jurisdiction over missions near Beijing. Several Christians and missionaries were arrested and exiled.

mostrata nel 1787 dal Segretario di Propaganda Stefano Borgia”, *Il pensiero missionario* 6 (1934), pp. 225-247; reprinted as Vittorio Bartocetti (ed. by Josef Metzler) “Necessità di un episcopato autoctono in Cina. Stefano Borgia: ‘Memoria sopra la necessità, che l’ultima persecuzione di Cina ne dimostra di stabilire Vescovi Nazionali, e sul divieto da farsi ai missionari esiliati di non rientrare per ora in quelle terre’; ‘Seconda Memoria sopra i luoghi nei quali converrebbe fissar Vescovi Nazionali in Cina, con nuove osservazioni sopra il medesimo tema’”, in *MR* vol. III/2 (1976), pp. 723-726. Cf. Margiotti, “Le missioni cinesi nella tormenta”, pp. 1011-1012 (‘Vescovi’).

¹³⁵ Margiotti, “La Cina cattolica al traguardo della maturità”, p. 511; APE, Acta CP, vol. 20 (1815-1821), ff. 91-93; APE, SOCP vol. 72 (1815-1816), ff. 311-314; Abbé Richenet, “Note sur la Mission des Lazaristes en Chine spécialement à Pékin [1817]”, *T’oung Pao* 20.1 (1921), pp. 117-129.

The Jiaqing Emperor banned Catholicism and issued draconian orders to prevent the infiltration of the empire. In an edict issued in 1811, the emperor ordered the strangulation of religious leaders and preachers; exile and slavery to the borderlands of Manchuria for those who did not apostate; the expulsion from Beijing of all missionaries not employed in technical jobs at the court; and the removal of any missionary from the provinces.¹³⁶

Until 1838, for the Church the old framework remained in place, i.e. three dioceses of Portuguese patronage and three vicariates depending from Propaganda. The number of foreign missionaries, however, continued to dwindle, an on-going phenomenon since the dissolution of the Jesuits in China in 1775. This was later compounded by the consequences of the French Revolution, the rise of Napoleon, the state of global maritime war, and the wave of anti-clericalism with the dissolution of religious orders and congregations that swept Catholic Europe. Only a few Italian Franciscans, Spanish Dominicans, priests of the Foreign Missions of Paris, and French and Portuguese Lazarists remained in China, together with a contingent of native priests educated in local seminaries, Penang, and Naples.

Statistics from 1810 offer the following figures: 215,000 Catholics, 7 bishops and vicars apostolic (all foreign), 80 native priests and 23 foreign priests. Including Macao, there were about 220,000 faithful with about 140 priests.¹³⁷ These numbers show that, partly because of the domestic and international geopolitical factors mentioned above, most clergy at that time was in fact Chinese. The 1803 Synod of Sichuan was attended by two foreign and thirteen Chinese priests, and is a good example of the native clergy numerically outweighing the Europeans. This did not mean that the Chinese Church was becoming indigenized in its liturgical practices: the proceedings of the Synod, for example, reflected very much a French ecclesiastical approach, imposed by the vicars apostolic. Yet, the Chinese clergy, imbued with the spirit of French theology they learned abroad, accepted this approach. In spite of this, given the paucity of clergy, male native catechists, lay leaders and Christian ‘virgins’ dominated Christian life at the local level.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Chinese text of the edict in SC, *Cina e Regni Adiacenti*, vol. 3 (1806-1811), f. 876; see Johannes Beckmann, “Die Lage der katholischen Missionen in China um 1815”, in *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 2 (1946), pp. 217 -223; Pierre-Emmanuel Roux, “La trinité antichrétienne: essai sur la proscription du Catholicisme en Chine, en Corée et au Japon (XVIIe-XIXe siècles)”, Doctorat nouveau régime – Histoire et civilisations, Paris, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2013, pp. 173-192.

¹³⁷ These statistics are found in APE, SC, *Cina e Regni Adiacenti*, vol. 3 (1806-1811), f. 741, see Margiotti, “La Cina cattolica al traguardo della maturità”, p. 510.

¹³⁸ Arnulf Camps, “Actors: Catholic Missionaries (1800-1860)”, in R. G. Tiedemann, *Handbook of Christianity in China. Volume Two: 1800 to the Present*, Leiden: Brill, 2010, pp. 115-118.

In Europe, however, the beginning of the modern missionary movement was gaining strength, both among Protestants and Catholics. With the end of the Napoleonic Wars in Europe and the restoration of several religious orders, including the Jesuits in 1814, European Catholics started offering substantial financial resources for the missions, especially in France, where the establishment of the Association for the Propagation of the Faith in Lyon in 1822 signalled the beginning of the new era. Catholic foreign missionaries in China rose from twenty in 1815 to fifty in 1840 (mostly Portuguese and later French Lazarists). Even if occasional anti-Christian campaigns ensued in these decades, with the execution of two French missionaries in Wuchang (Jean Francois Régis Clet CM in 1820, and Jean-Gabriel Perboyre CM in 1840), in general the Qing government ignored the Catholics, being rather preoccupied with the domestic and international crises eventually leading to the first Opium War.¹³⁹

An 1838 report on the Chinese missions in APF describes a situation of general disarray of the hierarchical organization, with the Portuguese dioceses of Beijing, Macao and Nanjing all vacant. Yet, Catholic communities persisted, and were in need of assistance. The diocese of Beijing had 40,000 faithful, with 10 native priests and 3 foreign Lazarists. Nanjing counted 30 to 40,000 Catholics, with 5 or 6 native priests and 2 Portuguese Lazarists. Macao had about 16,000 faithful with many Portuguese priests in the city and only a few indigenous priests in the inland missions. The situation in the vicariates was better. Sichuan had 60,000 faithful, assisted by a vicar apostolic and his coadjutor, 30 native priests, and 10 French priests. Shanxi-Shaanxi had around 60,000 Catholics, cared for by a vicar apostolic, a coadjutor, 15 indigenous priests and 5 foreign Franciscans. Fujian counted around 40,000 faithful, governed by the vicar, 10 Chinese priests, various Spanish Dominicans, and some French Lazarists.¹⁴⁰

This was the eve of a new epoch for Christianity in China, supported by European imperial powers and their military might, and characterized by a massive influx of foreign missionaries and funds, under the patronage of France. Propaganda decided between 1838 and 1841 to gradually abolish the Portuguese dioceses of Beijing and Nanjing, and limit the jurisdiction of the diocese of Macao, given the complete lack of resources from Portugal to support them, and to create new vicariates. With the signing of the Treaty of Whampoa negotiated by French plenipotentiary Theodore Lagrené in 1844

¹³⁹ Roux, "La trinité antichrétienne", pp. 192-240, brilliantly illustrates the legal aspects of the prohibition of Catholicism in the Jiaqing and Daoguang periods; on this period, see also Laaman, *Christian Heretics in Late Imperial China*, pp. 71-72; and Jean Charbonnier, "Chinese Catholics in the Early Nineteenth Century", in Tiedemann, *Handbook of Christianity in China*, vol. 2, pp. 214-222.

¹⁴⁰ See APF, Acta CP, vol. 22, ff. 220-231a, as quoted in Margiotti, "La Cina cattolica al traguardo della maturità", p. 516.

following the Chinese defeat in the First Opium War, official tolerance for Catholicism in China – but also renewed elite and popular resistance to it – began within the Qing empire. But this story brings us beyond the chronological limits of this Catalogue.

CONCLUSION

As illustrated by the two distinct but complementary parts of this essay, the activities of Propaganda in China are best understood from two vantage points. On the one hand, we have to consider the point of view of the Roman bureaucracy, with its administrative, political and theological dynamics, and its centralist tendencies. On the other hand, we are confronted by the reality of the local social and religious life of China's Christian communities, the pastoral, liturgical, and disciplinary concerns of the missionaries, and the logistical and economic challenges of the entire missionary operation, across the sea and inside the Chinese empire.

Historians of Propaganda have spent much energy on the Roman part of this equation, showing how the Congregation was at the same time hopelessly centralizing and ineffective, but also sometimes creative in articulating political and theological solutions. Bureaucratic inertia, ideological conservatism, and maneuvering by colonial powers, however, frustrated the efforts of the more enlightened prefects, secretaries, and missionaries who tried to change the status quo by debating Chinese rituality *ad nauseam*, promoting the idea of a native clergy and episcopate, or trying to reduce the religious control of European secular powers over China and East Asia.

Reading the correspondence sent from China by missionaries and Christians can be a saddening exercise, as it often shows the disconnect between Rome and the missions. In 1676, the China Propaganda missionary and member of the Dominican Province of the Holy Rosary in Manila, Vittorio Ricci O.P., wrote a pathetic letter to the cardinals of Propaganda:

It has already been thirty-two years since I came from Rome to the missions of these expansive and vast kingdoms of China and the Orient. Obeying the commandments of the Sacred Congregation, I wrote to Your Very Reverend Eminences many relations, letters, notices, requests, and petitions from different parts of the world, that is, Spain, America, the Philippines, China, the Island Formosa, and other parts. But for so long I have never received any answer. This brings notable discouragement to us ministers, because if your Eminences respond with so much pleasure to a letter of good wishes that matters so little, how is it possible you would not console [with a letter] those like us who expose their lives to a thousand dangers to spread the faith? You command us with remarkable care and rigor that we write and give advice. We do it, but

without any profit since we receive no answer, nor any resolution. Therefore, we think that the Sacred Congregation has totally forgotten us, which is unbelievable, because in the world there are no more flourishing missions than these of the East, namely China, Japan, Cochinchina, Irraya, Zambales, Ituy, and others. China alone exceeds the number of people in three Europes. Maybe it is because I do not deserve this consolation, but we shall not abandon the work of God for this reason.¹⁴¹

Perhaps, another Propaganda missionary, Matteo Ripa, put it best in a letter penned in 1717 in the Imperial Summer Villa at Chengde in China, and addressed to the Cardinal Prefect:

To wait for an answer from Rome is like the case of a moribund waiting for a medicine from Rome. Once it arrives, either the patient is dead, or the symptoms at the time require a different cure. Actually, if [the medicine] arrived at all, it would still be good. The truth is that we send letters, very few responses come back from Rome, and in the meantime the patient, that is the Mission, dies.¹⁴²

The entire decisional system of Propaganda was based on letters, reports, documents, and was governed by a rigid centralism. As Ripa complained, this ‘empire of paper’ required an excessive amount of time to reach any decision, and the delay, or complete lack of response, undermined pastoral efforts in the mission field. The Jesuit order relied as well on a complex system of communication, and the General in Rome was kept abreast of development across the world. But the strength of the Jesuit order (as was the case for other missionary orders, like the Franciscans and Dominicans) was its flexibility in delegating power to local superiors, and the existence of a strong common corporate religious culture, that helped the daily operations of the mission, even when inflated egos clashed. Propaganda’s vicars and missionaries in China, on the other hand, had much less autonomy than members of the religious orders in making local decisions. The continuous need to appeal to Rome for a theological or liturgical verdict, or to receive an increase in the meager annual subsidy, was further exacerbated by the infighting within the small motley crew of the Propaganda priests, coming from so many religious orders and congregations, and lacking a common spirituality, education, and internal disciplinary culture.

¹⁴¹ APF, SOCG vol. 493, f. 237r; this letter is reproduced in Ralph M. Wiltgen, *The Founding of the Roman Catholic Church in Oceania, 1825 to 1850*, Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1979, p. 172. For a recent biography of Ricci, see Eugenio Menegon, “Ricci, Francesco (Vittorio Ricci)” *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, Roma: Istituto dell’Enciclopedia Italiana, vol. 87, 2016, pp. 243-247.

¹⁴² APF, SC, *Indie Orientali e Cina*, vol. 13 [III], 1716-17, f. 960r.

To assign a vicariate to one specific order or congregation, rather than to send apostolic visitors to bring unity, would become the best way to avoid conflict and assure success, a lesson learned especially well in the nineteenth century.

The Chinese documents catalogued here open a window on the daily life of the Chinese Christian communities and their pastors, and the reaction of Chinese society to Catholic activities. They reflect to a remarkable degree the reality on the ground. Read together with the letters and reports sent from Asia in European languages to accompany them, they offer a corrective to a Rome-centered vision of the missions, and restore some agency, across the vast gulf of time, to those converts and priests who hoped to be heard and understood by their bureaucratic superiors in the capital of Christendom, but that often felt ignored.

A visit to the Propaganda Archives in Rome will always be rewarding because of this vital aspect in its documentation, and the vastity and completeness of its holdings. Other repositories in Rome complement this richness: the Roman Archives of the Society of Jesus (ARSI, especially its *Japonica Sinica* section), the Vatican Archives, the Vatican Library (containing the richest collection of ancient Christian Chinese books in Rome, including those once at Propaganda), the Biblioteca Casanatense (especially its Tournon papers), the Biblioteca Corsiniana, the General Archives of the Franciscans (ACGOFM, with a good portion of the archives of the Chinese College of Naples), the Archives of the Holy Office, the State Archives of Rome, the National Central Library of Rome, the Library of the Pontifical Urbaniana University, and the archives of several religious orders scattered across the city. They all contain materials on China, and, used in concert, can help us reconstruct both dimensions, Roman *and* Chinese, in the history of Propaganda and its missions.¹⁴³ Welcome to Rome!

¹⁴³ Besides the CCT-Database, to learn about the “China” holdings of some of these Roman collections the following materials should be consulted: ARSI: Albert Chan, *Chinese Books and Documents in the Jesuit Archives in Rome. A Descriptive Catalogue, Japonica Sinica I-IV*, Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2002; Vatican Archives: Sergio Pagano and Francesca Di Giovanni, *Guida delle fonti per la storia dell’Africa del Nord, Asia e Oceania nell’Archivio Segreto Vaticano*. Collectanea Archivi Vaticani 37, Città del Vaticano: Archivio Segreto Vaticano, 2005; Vatican Library: Paul Pelliot, *Inventaire Sommaire des manuscrits et imprimés chinois de la Bibliothèque Vaticane – A Posthumous Work by Paul Pelliot – Revised by Takata Tokio*. Reference Series 1. Kyoto: Istituto Italiano di Cultura – Scuola di Studi sull’Asia Orientale, 1995; Biblioteca Casanatense: Eugenio Menegon, “The Casanatense Library (Rome) and Its China Materials. A Finding List”, *Sino-Western Cultural Relations Journal* XXII (2000): 31-55; Isabella Ceccopieri, *Il fondo «cinese» della Biblioteca Casanatense, testi e documenti manoscritti dei secc. XVII-XVIII*, Roma: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 2022, 2 vols.; Biblioteca Corsiniana: Giovanni Vacca, “Catalogo delle opere giapponesi e cinesi manoscritte e stampate conservate nella Biblioteca della R. Accademia dei Lincei (Fondo Caetani e Fondo Corsini)”, *Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei* XXI (1912): 331-40; Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Roma: Marina Battaglini, “Libri cinesi e giapponesi alla Biblioteca Nazionale”, in *Pagine dall’Oriente. Libri cinesi e giapponesi della Biblioteca Nazionale*, edited by Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Vittorio Emanuele II – Roma, Roma: Bardi Editore, 1996, pp. 7-14.

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