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The First Printing in Indic Characters

IN 1556 the Jesuits in Goa opened the first printing press in India with Latin types brought from Europe. Such evidence as we have shows this press to have been only sporadically active, at least after the first years.¹ In any case the Latin alphabet was unknown to the natives, whose conversion was the principal aim of the Portuguese missionaries. Particularly in the extreme south, among the Tamils and the Malayalis, were native Christians now numerous, thanks primarily to the successful labors there of St Francis Xavier (although here also were to be found in large numbers the long-established Syro-Malabarian or St Thomas Christians). It is not surprising, therefore, that the first attempts to disseminate Christian teaching by printing in an Indic character should be in this same region of the south.

Very little has been known of this printing, through scantiness of records and absence of actual specimens. And as in all such cases speculation has been rife, leading to frequent confusions that have been perpetuated or intensified by simple borrowing. The accounts which have chiefly served later writers on the subject are the far from contemporary compilations of Sacchini and Sousa. According to Sacchini, in 1577 a Spanish lay-brother, Juan Gonsalvez, cut 'Malabar' types, by which was printed a Catechism, not less for the wonder than for the use of the Indians.² Sousa repeats that Gonsalvez was the first to make

¹ Anton Huonder, S. J., *Die Verdienste der katholischen Heidenmission um die Buchdruckerkunst in überseeischen Ländern vom 16.-18. Jahrhundert* (Abhandlungen aus Missionskunde und Missionsgeschichte, 37; Aachen, 1923), p. 47; James B. Primrose, 'The First Press in India and Its Printers,' *Library*, 4th Ser., XX (1939), 241-265 (to be used with caution); Johannes Laures, S. J., *Kirishitan Bunko: A Manual of Books and Documents on the Early Christian Missions in Japan* (Monumenta Nipponica Monographs, 5; Tokyo, 1940), pp. 3-4.

² Francesco Sacchini, *Historia Societatis Jesu*, Pars IV (Rome, 1652), I. 5, n. 181, under the year 1577: 'Hoc primum anno vidit India libros domi natos. Jam pridem latinos typos Goanum Collegium ex Europa transvectos acceperat, sed impressorum inopia non exercuerat. Verum necessitate, quae semper quidem acris et perspicax est, sed maxime ingeniosa, cum divina caritas exacuit, urgente, frater Hispanus natione, Joannes Gonsalvius nomine, Malabaricas formas excudit, quibus hoc anno primum, non minori Indorum miraculo quam usu, catechismus editus est, aliis mox libris edendis. Malabaricos fecit characteres: quod ea late per Indiam sparsa lingua sit. Canarinis molitus, quia sermo ille angustis clauditur finibus, ac partim etiam difficultate operis, ob litterarum barbaram formam ac sonum, destitit. Opportuno igitur etiam fuit haec additio ad Thomaeorum animos veritatis gratia demulcendos.'

'Malabar' types, describes his skill in metal-working, and records his death in 1580, at the College of St Paul in Goa, after a life filled with holiness and good works.³ But Sousa elsewhere tells of Fr João de Faria, first maker of 'Tamul' types, who opened a printing press on the Fishery Coast in 1578, producing in this year a number of specified works.⁴

These accounts therefore imply two contemporaneous centers of Indic printing in southern India, employing different alphabets. In the sixteenth century the Portuguese applied the term 'Malabar' both to the Tamil and to the Malayalam languages. Here, however, since 'Tamul' is specified for Faria, the 'Malabar' of Gonsalvez must be intended to refer to Malayalam. These two Dravidian languages share between them the southern tip of India. Tamil, richest and apparently most ancient of the Dravidian group, has as its area the southeast of the peninsula (including the Coromandel Coast with its southern extension the Fishery Coast), northern Ceylon, and the west or Malabar Coast of the peninsula as far north as Trivandrum in Travancore. The closely related Malayalam, ultimately derived from Tamil but with a different alphabet, is the basic language of the Malabar Coast north of Trivandrum, in Travancore and Cochin, although Tamil is interspersed all along this Coast. Certainly in the sixteenth century Tamil was the dominant language in southern India.

Contemporary sources offer additional though perhaps no less confusing evidence regarding this first Indic printing. Gonsalvez and Faria both appear in the manuscript Catalogue of the Goa Province preserved in the Archivum Romanum of the Society of Jesus. Gonsalvez was born in 1525, entered the Society in Lisbon in 1555, took the simple vows in Goa in 1557, and was there, in feeble health, as

³ Francisco de Sousa, *Oriente conquistado a Jesu Christo pelos padres da Companhia de Jesus da provincia de Goa* (Lisbon, 1710), II, 135: 'Faleceo no Collegio de S. Paulo com opiniaõ de Santo o Irmaõ Joaõ Gonçalves. Resplandeceraõ nelle tres virtudes, oraçaõ, mortificaçaõ, & humildade. Era ferreyro insigne, & muito em particular de relogios, que fabricava com admiravel subtileza. Foy o primeiro que fez na India as formas das lettras Malavares, com q se imprimiraõ varios livros. Era Hespanhol de naçaõ, & viveo na Companhia vinte & cinco annos, exercitando sempre seu officio com boas forças até a ultima velhice.'

⁴ Sousa, *Oriente conquistado*, II, 256-257: 'Do anno de 1578, não tenho noticia de outra cousa digna de memoria, senaõ da rara habilidade do Padre Joaõ de Faria, o primeiro que abrio, & fundio os caracteres da lingua Tamul na costa da Pescaria, com os quaes se imprimio este anno o Flos Sanctorum, a doutrina Christãa, hũ copioso confessorario, & outros livros, por onde os Padres aprendiaõ a ler, & escrever. Admiraraõ aquellas Provincias a nova invensaõ, & assim Christãos como Gêtios, buscavaõ, & estimavaõ muito os livros impressos.'

'praefectus fabricae domesticae et faber ferrarius' in 1575.⁵ Faria entered the Society in 1563, studied Latin four years and moral theology one year, and was ordained priest in Goa in 1575, at the age of thirty-six.⁶ We learn, further, that in 1575 the Provincial Congregation of Goa declared that various instructional works should be prepared for the native Christians (including a Catechism, a Confessionary, a *Doctrina Christiana*, and a *Saints' Lives*),⁷ and that the Visitor Valignano, deploring the fact that not even a short Catechism was available, ordered Fr Henrique Henriquez to prepare such works for the Tamil area.⁸ Fr Henriquez was the accomplished linguist who continued indefatigably St Francis Xavier's labors in southern India until his own death in 1600.⁹ Alessandro Valignano, Visitor for India and Japan 1573-83, Provincial of India 1583-87, and again Visitor until his death in 1606, was one of the diligent promoters of missionary printing, being responsible also for the first productions of a press in Macao and in Japan.¹⁰

Other references carry the story further, albeit fragmentarily and inconclusively. On 24 December 1576 Fr Christovão Luis, writing from Punicale on the Fishery Coast to the General of the Society in Rome, repeated the information regarding the Visitor's order to Fr Henriquez, and stated that Pero Luis had gone to Goa to see to the printing.¹¹ This Pero Luis was the first Brahmin to enter the Society.¹² A year later (6 December 1577) Fr Henriquez wrote from Tutucorin, also on the Fishery Coast, that the Malabar (Tamil) Catechism was being printed, thanks to the endeavors of the Visitor.¹³ The annual

⁵ MS Goa 24, fol. 88, in the Archivum Romanum of the Society of Jesus (as are all other manuscripts hereinafter referred to, unless otherwise specified).

⁶ MS Goa 24, fol. 86. According to De Backer-Sommervogel, Faria was born in 1539, arrived in Goa about 1572, and died there in 1581 (*Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, IX, col. 313).

⁷ MS Goa 47, fol. 17 (n. 22).

⁸ MS Goa 47, fol. 56 (n. 31); MS Japsin 8, fol. 65r.

⁹ See J. Castets, S. J., *Fr. Henrique Henriquez* (Trichinopoly, 1926); Robert Streit, O. M. I., *Bibliotheca Missionum* (Aachen, 1916-38), IV, 145.

¹⁰ Alessandro Valignano, *Historia del principio y progreso de la Compañía de Jesús en las Indias Orientales (1542-64)*, ed. Josef Wicki, S. J. (*Bibliotheca Instituti Historici S. I.*, 2; Rome, 1944), Introduction; Josef F. Schütte, S. J., *Valignanos Missionsgrundsätze für Japan* (Rome, 1951-), I, i, 42-46, 224.

¹¹ MS Goa 12, fol. 354.

¹² See Josef Wicki, S. J., 'Pedro Luis, Brahmane und erster indischer Jesuit,' *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft*, VI (1950), 120.

¹³ MS Goa 12, fol. 398.

Goa Letter for 1578, written 20 October by Fr Gomez Vaz, reported that the Malabar (Tamil) printing press for the Fishery Coast had been perfected and that the Parava Christians (living along the Coast) had been much interested in the work, contributing 400 cruzados toward it.¹⁴ In October 1579 Pero Luis was in Cochin, on the Malabar Coast, 'por amor da empresa malavar.'¹⁵ Shortly thereafter (10 January 1580) Fr Gaspar Alvares wrote from Cochin that a Confessionary was being printed from Tamil types and that the Catechism of Fr Marcos Jorge was to follow in the spring, with the native Christians defraying the expenses.¹⁶

But in spite of such support, the printing enterprise soon suffered from want of money, as Fr Rui Vicente, the Provincial, wrote to the General of the Order on 30 October 1581.¹⁷ A year later he had to report the death of Fr Faria.¹⁸ This was the deathblow for the enterprise, which was renewed only a hundred years later, at Ambalacata, near Cochin.¹⁹

Were there two presses, at work simultaneously on either coast, or only one? Was there printing in Malayalam as well as in Tamil? We do not yet know. One might suppose, from the greater importance of Tamil, and the greater accessibility of the Malabar Coast, that the printing activity was concentrated in that language and centered on that Coast. But the indirect evidence, as we have seen, is conflicting.

Until very recently no actual examples of this first Indic printing were known. Then in 1928 Fr Robert Streit, O. M. I., recorded a copy in the Library of the Sorbonne of Fr Marcos Jorge's *Doctrina Christiana* translated into Tamil by Fr Henriquez and printed in Cochin in 1579.²⁰ The chief title in Portuguese and the first page of the Tamil text are shown in Plate IIb. The work, in dialogue form, contains four unnumbered leaves and 112 numbered pages. A full description was published in 1930 by the senior author of the present paper, after examination of the unique copy.²¹

¹⁴ MS Goa 31, fol. 402.

¹⁵ Wicki, 'Pedro Luis,' p. 120.

¹⁶ MS Goa 47, fol. 141.

¹⁷ MS Goa 47, fol. 176.

¹⁸ MS Goa 47, fol. 248.

¹⁹ Huonder, *Verdienste*, pp. 61-62.

²⁰ Streit, *Bibliotheca Missionum*, IV, 145.

²¹ Georg Schurhammer, S. J., 'Ein seltener Druck (Der erste gedruckte tamilische Katechismus,' *Katholische Missionen*, LVIII (1930), 211-212; *Epistolae S. Francisci Xaverii*, ed. Georg Schurhammer, S. J., and Josef Wicki, S. J. (Monumenta Historica

DOCTRINA CHRISTIANA
 en Lingua Malatar Tamul.



காம்பலுயதெசு
 லாகையலண டுரகதி
 டாதி யாரதமநில
 டுரதெசுதின தம
 ரா ன ல ண க க ம .

PLATE I

Doctrina Christiana, 1578, p. 1

...
 * தமுழவாததை அல்லாததோடு...
 அந்நயதநாதநாமுயமின மமடுபப
 புகடுதததான...
 ...
 * * * * *

Doctrina Christããreita dada em lin-
 gua Tamul pello padre Anrique
 Anriquez da Companhia de IHSV, & pel-
 lo padre Manuel de São Pedro. Com ap-
 rovação do Ordinário, & Inquisidor:
 Scôlicca do Superior da mesma
 Companhia. Impressã em
 Coulam no Collegio
 do Salvador: aos
 Vite de Outubro de M.D. LXXVIII.
 Vãõ nesta doctrina alguãs vocabulos
 osquãis pera se conhecer q̃ nõ sãõ Mala-
 uares se he possestinal? vi. Hgreijã.

Pello final.

...
 * தமுழவாததை அல்லாததோடு...
 அந்நயதநாதநாமுயமின மமடுபப
 புகடுதததான...
 ...
 * * * * *

Credo

...
 * தமுழவாததை அல்லாததோடு...
 அந்நயதநாதநாமுயமின மமடுபப
 புகடுதததான...
 ...
 * * * * *

PLATE IIa
 Doctrina Christiana, 1578, pp. 2-3

Doctrina Christãã, a maneyra de
 Diologo: feyta em Portugal pello
 padre Marcos Jorge da Companhia de
 IHSV: Tradada em lingua Malauar
 Tamul, pello padre Anrique Anriquez
 da mesma Companhia. Impressã co ap-
 rovação do Ordinário, & Inquisidor,
 & cõ licença do superior. Em
 Cochim, no Collegio da
 Madre de Deos. aos
 quatroze de Nouẽ-
 bro, do Anno de
 M . D . L X X I X .

Vãõ nesta doctrina alguãs vocabulos,
 osquãis, pera se conhecer q̃ nõ sãõ Mala-
 uares, se he possestinal? i. a sicomo,
 i. Graça? i. Hgreijã, &c.

...
 * தமுழவாததை அல்லாததோடு...
 அந்நயதநாதநாமுயமின மமடுபப
 புகடுதததான...
 ...
 * * * * *

PLATE IIb
 Doctrina Christiana, 1579, pp. 2-3

கொண்டிவழிகள் போல உதவியருகே தவிர
நாளைத் தவிர மனமொடு னனை நகருளாவ
தகுமுண்டென அவிசரிக்ககொண்
புமென் -

Os Mandamentos

* தமபிரான் மாரகத்தின
கடபினதளரவ துபதது -
ஏழுதலையுதலொதவிமபா தகத்தமபிரா
னெநசித்தருபது -
ஏளண்டரவ துதமபிரான் திருநாமதனை
தகநொண்டெண்ணெசத்திய வருசையாமலி
ருபது -
ஏழுண்டவ துநாயருடனெசகருமபருநா
பு-கருநசுதமபியகொண்டொடாபுய
ருபது -
ஏநாலாவ துபிதாவையுமாதாவையருசுவ
கத்தருபது -
ஏழுசாவ துகொச்செய்யாமலிருபது -
ஏழுண்டவ அழகெனாமலிருபது -
ஏளமாவ துதளவாணமலிருபது -
ஏளபுண்டாவ துடையசரிபுகொலொ
மலிருபது -
ஏளபதாவ துருதனைபெணசாதிக்கி
சையபுண்டாமலிருபது -

ஏயத்தவ துபுதுண மவசுத்துககருகரு
புடைய-வைபபுண்டாமலிருபது -
ஏநெதப்பதுக்கொண்டிருமபாபு-ல
பு-ருமபுதுலையுதலொதவிமபாபு-ல
ததமபிரான் நெசித்தருபது -
ஏளண்டரவ துதனனை துநாண்டென்க
ததிருகுமபுடையுதலையுணமொடு
லொறாயுடுசென்கித்தருபது -

Os Mandamentos da Igreja

* சுததமான் மாதவாகிய
பிங்கொனையினகரபி
னதளரவ துபுது -
ஏழுதலைய துநாயருடனெசகருமபு
ருநாபு-கருநெசுமபுமபுசென்கு-
ஏளண்டரவ துநாயருடையண்கு
வருசுநெதா அகொமபுசாதிக்கி
ஏழுண்டவ துபிதாவையுமாதாவையருசு
கதிருமபு துகொண்டிருபது -
ஏநாலாவ துசுதளமான் மாதாவாகிய
கொசுகித்தருநாண்டெனாமலிரு
பது -
ஏழுண்டவ துதிசுசுகருமபு
பெணகருநெசுமபு -
புண்டவ தளரவிருக்கருமபு
புண்டவ தளரவிருக்கருமபு

Padre noſso

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Here was direct evidence of printing in Tamil on the Malabar Coast, tending greatly to strengthen the supposition that the early Indic printing was concentrated in Tamil and on this Coast. But more evidence was to follow. In January 1951 there was purchased for the Harvard College Library, from William H. Robinson Ltd., of London, and through the generosity of Mr Curt H. Reisinger, '12, a *Doctrina Christiana* of sixteen pages translated into Tamil by Fr Henriquez and Fr Manoel de São Pedro and printed at Quilon (Coulam), also on the Malabar Coast, in 1578. This little work, known only from this one copy, thus becomes the earliest example of printing in the character of one of the languages of India and at the same time the earliest example of printing in a native language executed in India.²²

The sixteen pages are printed on a single sheet, in conventional octavo format, the pages measuring approximately 14 by 10 centimeters. Pages 1-5 and page 16 are reproduced in the accompanying plates. On page 1 (Plate I), a brief Portuguese title at the top is balanced by a somewhat longer title in Tamil at the bottom, running roughly as follows: 'Humble address to the Lord translated and written in Tamil by Father Henrique Henriquez of the Company of Jesus.'²³ The outer border and the inner border surrounding the woodcut are made up of two sizes of crosses and a diamond-headed sign which reappear on following pages. The woodcut represents the Trinity in glory, with the Holy Ghost above, God the Father and God the Son enthroned, and a throng of the elect bearing palms ranged below. This same cut appears on the title-pages of the first two works printed by the Portuguese in Macao, the *Christiani pueri institutio* of João Bonifacio, 1588,

Societatis Iesu, 67-68; Rome, 1944-45), II, 585. The copy has subsequently disappeared. Plate IIb has been reproduced from a photostat made available by the senior author.

²² It should be noted that the first known printing in the Tamil language is to be found in a *Doctrina Christiana*, *Cartilha que contẽ breuemẽte ho q̃ todo christão deve aprẽder pera sua saluaçãõ . . . ẽ lingua Tãmil & Portugues*, printed in Lisbon in 1554. In this work, however, the Tamil is transliterated by Latin characters. Of this work also only one copy has been traced — that recently discovered in the Museu Etnológico de Belem, Lisbon (Georg Schurhammer, S. J., *Die zeitgenössischen Quellen zur Geschichte Portugiesisch-Asiens . . . zur Zeit des hl. Franz Xaver (1538-1552)*, Leipzig, 1932, No. 6046; facsimiles in Américo Cortez Pinto, *Da famosa arte da impressãõ*, Lisbon, 1948, Plates XVII-XX — at p. 358).

²³ Translations of Tamil appearing in this account have been very kindly supplied by Dr Natesaier Purshottam, of the University of Madras and Harvard University.

and *De missione legatorum Japonensium* by Valignano, 1590.²⁴ Valignano may well have brought the block to India in 1574; it presumably accompanied his press from Macao to Japan in 1590.

At the top of page 2 (Plate IIa) is a statement in Tamil concerning the use of the diamond-headed sign to indicate words in the text for which there are no Tamil equivalents and which are therefore left in Portuguese, transliterated by Tamil characters, as 'Catholico' and 'Igreija.' Then comes the date in Tamil, 'one thousand five hundred and seventy-eight,' with the equivalent for 20 October, and then the phrase 'written and made at Quilon.' Below a row of crosses is the full Portuguese title, reading in English as follows: 'Doctrina Christiana translated into the Tamil language by father Henrique Henriquez of the Company of Jesus, and by father Manoel de São Pedro. With approval of the Ordinary, and Inquisitor: and with license of the Superior of the same Company: Printed in Quilon in the College of the Saviour: on the twentieth of October M.D.LXXVIII.' Below this again is a repetition in Portuguese of the statement about the inclusion in the text of non-Tamil words.

There has been available a certain amount of information about the College at Quilon, but up to the present no evidence of printing there. The College had been founded by Xavier, who sent Fr Niccolò Lancillotto and Br Luis Mendes thither in January 1549 for the instruction of the resident Portuguese, the St Thomas and other native Christians, and also the Paravas of the Fishery Coast. Quilon, not far from the southern tip of the peninsula on the western side, was strategically situated in relation to the more remote missions on the eastern side, and the Rector of the College at Quilon was actually Superior of the Fishery and Coromandel Coasts. Since the manuscript catalogues of the College are wanting between 1576 and 1584, the officials of the College are not known for the year of the printing of the *Doctrina*. However, the Ordinary, Inquisitor, and Superior who approved and licensed the printing may be readily identified. The Ordinary, or Bishop of Cochin, within whose see Quilon was included, was in 1578 Fr Henrique de Tavora e Brito, O. P., who had also been Archbishop of Goa since 1577; the Inquisitor for India was Dr Bartolomeu da Fonseca; and

²⁴ Laures, *Kirisbitan Bunko*, pp. 9-13 and Plate I, figs. 2-3. These two works were also the first printing in European types on Chinese soil, the first printing by Europeans in China, 1584, having been in Chinese characters (see below, p. 156, and n. 37).

the Superior, or Provincial of the Order, stationed at Goa and controlling all the missions, was, as we have seen, Fr Rui Vicente. Fr Manoel de São Pedro, who is named with Fr Henriquez as translator of the *Doctrina*, was evidently a native priest who helped with the work.²⁵

The text begins on page 3 (Plate IIa) and continues through page 15. It comprises eighteen sections, entirely in Tamil characters, but each with Portuguese heading for facility of use by the teacher. The eighteen headings, embracing the basic tenets of the Church, may be translated as follows: Concerning the Sign [of the Cross, with the Trinity], Creed, The Commandments, The Commandments of the Church, Our Father, Ave Maria, Salve Regina, The Confession, The Articles of Faith, The Sacraments of the Church, The Deadly Sins, The Works of Mercy, The Five Senses, The Theological Virtues, The Cardinal Virtues, The Enemies of the Spirit, The Last Things, The Eight Beatitudes.

We now come to the last page (Plate IV), in many ways the most interesting of the sixteen. It is in actuality a type-specimen page. Below the page number (all pages except the first are numbered in Tamil characters) is a line of Tamil stating that 'this letter was made in Goa,' followed by a line in Portuguese repeating the information and adding the date, 'LXXVII.' Then come seven lines of a Tamil alphabet, to which the first two lines form an introduction. A second line of Portuguese then states: 'Tamil letter: made at Quilon: year of LXXVIII,' followed by the same information in Tamil, again with the date omitted. This pair of lines introduces a second and more extensive Tamil alphabet, of eleven lines, plus a line of Tamil figures (1-10, 100, 1000). The page concludes with a Latin motto.

The second and more extensive alphabet is that used for the Tamil printing of all preceding pages. It is executed with considerably more skill than the first alphabet. One can only suppose that the letter cut in Goa was displayed to show by comparison the advance in technique of

²⁵ For the College at Quilon see *Epistolae Xaverii*, II, 9, 24, 76-77, 134-135; *Documenta Indica*, ed. Josef Wicki, S. J. (Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, 70- ; Rome, 1948-), II, 16, 379-381, 405, 417, 520, 586. For Tavora e Brito see Casimiro Christovão de Nazareth, *Mitras lusitanae in Oriente* (Lisbon and Nova Goa, 1894-1924), I, 65-67, II, 68-69; for Vonseca, António Baião, *A inquisição de Goa* (Lisbon and Coimbra, 1930-49), I, 185-191, II, 7-98; for Vicente, António Franco, S. J., *Ano Santo da Companhia de Jesus em Portugal*, ed. Francisco Rodrigues, S. J. (Oporto, 1931), pp. 283-284, and *Fonti Ricciane*, ed. Pasquale d'Elia, S. J. (Rome, 1942-), I, 146.

the later work. In any case, no work printed in this Goa alphabet has come to light. Both alphabets are very close in form to the characters found in Tamil inscriptions and manuscripts of roughly the same period,²⁶ and are much simpler than the modern characters, which are more florid in style.

One of the most striking aspects of the volume is the paper on which it is printed.²⁷ The sheet employed was colored red on one side, with the result that pages 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 12, 13, and 16 have a bright red background while the other eight pages show the naturally buffy color of the paper as originally made. Upon the red pages appear here and there irregular blotches with a silvery surface texture (see Plates III and IV). The composition of the paper shows that a cloth rather than a bamboo mold was used. Such a combination of features points to a paper of Chinese origin, designed for ornamental use (as on a screen) rather than for printing. The material for the paper is presumably bamboo, the red coloring cinnabar (applied with a sponge), and the silvery blotches tin foil added for decorative purposes by a spatter method.

Importation of paper from China would be entirely appropriate at this time. The centuries-old trade of the Arabs and Chinese had regularly passed along the Malabar Coast, with Quilon actually the chief port of call, and the Portuguese themselves had been in direct contact with the Chinese since the beginning of the sixteenth century, first at Malacca and subsequently at Macao and on the mainland. Further, while the making of paper seems to have been introduced into extreme northern India (Kashmir) from Samarkand in the fifteenth century, there is no evidence for paper-making in central and southern India until a much later period,²⁸ the strict Hindu view that paper was unclean presumably retarding the development of the craft.²⁹

The sixteen pages of Chinese paper are sewn within wrap-around end leaves (two at the front and two at the back) of white laid European paper and a simple vellum cover without lining-papers. 'Doctrina Christiana' is neatly lettered in ink on the front of the cover. The verso

²⁶ See for example Arthur C. Burnell, *Elements of South-Indian Palaeography* (London, 1878), Plates XIX and XXXIII.

²⁷ The following account makes liberal use of the comments and suggestions of Mr Dard Hunter, of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, to whose expert scrutiny the paper was submitted.

²⁸ Dard Hunter, *Papermaking*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1947), p. 475.

²⁹ Burnell, *Elements*, pp. 10-11, 88-89.

of the last end leaf bears the following legend, in a different hand, and in ink which has eaten into the paper: 'Portata dall' Indie. Hauuta dal prē Fonseca del mese di Nouembre M. D. LXXIX.' One may assume, accordingly, that this copy of the *Doctrina* was sent to the headquarters of the Society in Rome shortly after printing. End leaves and cover were undoubtedly added in Europe. 'Padre Fonseca' may be identified as Fr Pedro de Fonseca, S. J. (1527-1599), noted professor of philosophy and theology at Coimbra and Evora, who was in Rome 1573-81 as Assistant for Portugal to the General of the Order.⁸⁰ As Assistant he would naturally be concerned with affairs of the Portuguese missions in India.

The immediate provenance of the volume is the Fideikommissbibliothek in Vienna of the Princes of Liechtenstein,⁸¹ whence it passed recently into the European book market and thence briefly to Mr William H. Schab in New York before its acquisition by Messrs Robinson. A modern armorial bookplate, 'Ex libris Liechtensteinianis,' is pasted within the vellum cover. The volume may have come to Vienna from the library of one of the two Jesuit colleges in Siena following the suppression of the Order in 1773. Its vellum cover is similar to the binding of many books from the Liechtenstein library which contain inscriptions indicating such a source.⁸²

Here, then, in this only known copy, is a notable addition to the already impressive array of brief Catechisms or Doctrinas representing first or near first printings in various regions or languages of the world. Compendia of the basic tenets of the Christian faith translated into the native languages were of course of primary importance to the missionaries wherever they went. Size, use, and circumstances of printing would all combine to render copies of such works exceptionally scarce in modern times. For some of the earliest, contemporary accounts remain the sole source of information, but in recent years, with more exhaustive searching, tradition has been substantiated from time to time by the discovery of an actual copy — as in the case of the Quilon and Cochin *Doctrinas* of 1578 and 1579. And in certain other cases copies may have been known to bibliographers for a relatively long period.

⁸⁰ *Epistolae Xaverii*, II, 281, n. 8.

⁸¹ Hanns Bohatta, *Katalog der in den Bibliotheken der regierenden Linie des fürstlichen Hauses von und zu Liechtenstein befindlichen Bücher aus dem XVI.-XX. Jahrhundert* (Vienna, 1931), I, 545 (No. 9809, with shelfmark '111-2-43').

⁸² Information from Mr Frederick G. Schab.

An enumeration of some of the more important of these early Catechisms may serve to place the Tamil printings in proper perspective among a distinguished company. Although no copy has come to light, a *Doctrina* in Spanish and Aztec, Mexico City 1539, is generally regarded as the first book printed in the New World.⁸³ Contemporary evidence is similarly responsible for the recording of a *Doctrina* by St Francis Xavier, in Portuguese only, as the second work printed in India, 1557, by the press established in Goa the year before; again no copy is known.⁸⁴ Three years before, as we have seen, a *Doctrina* in Tamil (transliterated) and Portuguese had appeared in Lisbon, of which one copy has been traced.⁸⁵ Next come the *Doctrinas* in Tamil characters of 1578 and 1579, one copy each, the Harvard copy of the 1578 printing being apparently the earliest known example of a *Doctrina* in a 'native' character.

A *Doctrina* in Spanish, Quichua, and Aymara, Lima 1584, was long thought to be the first book printed in South America, but another production of the same year, discovered a few decades ago, and antedating it off the press by perhaps a month, has relegated it to second place.⁸⁶ In this same year also appeared (at Chao Ch'ing) the first printing by Europeans in China, and here again the second work was a *Doctrina*, in Chinese characters, of which two copies are known.⁸⁷ Moving on to Japan, we find that the third and fourth works issued by the first European press there were *Doctrinas* in Romaji and Japanese, printed apparently nearly simultaneously at Amakusa early in 1592; only one copy of each is known.⁸⁸ Tradition had long recorded Doc-

⁸³ Lawrence C. Wroth, *Some Reflections on the Book Arts in Early Mexico* (Cambridge, Mass., 1945); Henry R. Wagner, *Nueva bibliografía mexicana del siglo XVI* (Mexico, D. F., 1946), pp. 5-9, 61. Wagner suggests that a copy may be in existence, in private hands.

⁸⁴ *Epistolae Xaverii*, I, 97-99.

⁸⁵ See note 22.

⁸⁶ José Toribio Medina, *La imprenta en Lima (1584-1824)* (Santiago de Chile, 1904-07), I; George P. Winship, *The Printing Press in South America* (Providence, R. I., 1912); José Toribio Medina, *La prima muestra tipográfica salida de la prensas de la América del Sur* (Santiago de Chile, 1916).

⁸⁷ *Fonti Ricciane*, I, 197-198 and Plates X and XI. The first work of the European press may be regarded as a fragment of a *Doctrina*, since it is a Decalogue, likewise in Chinese characters. The single copy known was found in one of the two copies of the Chinese *Doctrina*, all three copies being in the Archivum Romanum of the Society of Jesus.

⁸⁸ Laures, *Kirishitan Bunko*, pp. 16-19 and Plate II, figs. 2-3. The *Doctrina* in Japanese (Kanamajiri or mixed writing, a combination of cursive Chinese ideographs with Hiragana) is the earliest example of European printing in Japanese.

trinas in Spanish and Tagalog and Spanish and Chinese as the first and second works printed in the Philippines, at Manila in 1593; a single copy of the first has very recently been discovered.⁸⁰ Finally, as a demonstration in a somewhat different category, it may be noted that as late as 1712 the first work to issue from the press of the first evangelistic mission in India, that of the Danes under Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg at Tranquebar, on the Coromandel Coast, was a *Doctrina Christiana*.⁴⁰ The press itself, be it further noted, was supplied from London by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and — as though to round out a cycle — the languages employed in the *Doctrina* were Portuguese and Tamil.

The *Doctrinas* of the missionaries vary in length from a few pages to more than a hundred, with corresponding differences in scope. The short *Doctrinas*, such as the Quilon printing of 1578 with which we are particularly concerned, restricted as they are to the most fundamental elements in Christianity, inevitably offer comparatively little variation in content. None the less, an investigation of the more immediate historical background of this first Tamil *Doctrina* may enable us to establish with some certainty the origin of its text.

We know from references in his letters that St Francis Xavier, shortly after arriving in Goa in May 1542, prepared a brief Catechism or *Doctrina* for teaching purposes.⁴¹ It was this *Doctrina*, in Portuguese, which was printed in Goa in 1557, as the second work of the mission press. Though no printed copy is now known, manuscript copies or summaries ranging in date from 1548 to 1614 have been preserved in Lisbon and Rome. Examination of these manuscript copies, and particularly that in the Ajuda Palace, Lisbon,⁴² dated 1553, makes it clear that Xavier based his *Doctrina* upon that of the famous chronicler, João de Barros, which had been printed in Lisbon in 1539,⁴³ and a copy

⁸⁰ Dorotheus Schilling, O. F. M., 'Vorgeschichte des Typendruckes auf den Philippinen,' *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch*, 1937, pp. 202-216; *Doctrina Christiana, the First Book Printed in the Philippines, Manila, 1593*, ed. Edwin Wolf, 2nd (Washington, D. C., 1947).

⁴⁰ Volmer Rosenkilde, 'Printing at Tranquebar, 1712-1845,' *Library*, 5th Ser., IV (1949), 179-195.

⁴¹ A detailed account of the Xaverian Catechism, in its various forms and relationships, will be found in *Epistolae Xaverii*, I, 93-116; II, 581-590.

⁴² MS Ajuda 51-2-13, foll. 115ar-jv, n. 9.

⁴³ *Grammatica da lingua portugueza com os mandamentos da santa madre igreja*. [colophon:] aos XXII de dezembro, 1539 annos, issued with two other opuscula 1539-40.

of which was almost certainly among the library given Xavier by King João III on the eve of the departure of the mission for India.

But a *Doctrina* in Portuguese was plainly only a beginning in the work of conversion. Shortly after reaching the Fishery Coast, in October 1542, Xavier began the labor of turning his brief Catechism into Tamil, as he states in his first long report sent back to Europe, written from Cochin 15 January 1544. This Tamil Catechism Xavier and his colleagues spread throughout the area of their mission, leaving copies in the villages through which they passed, with native teachers trained to carry on the instruction. From a somewhat later letter, Manapar 27 March 1544, we learn that Xavier was concerned with revisions of his first and inevitably imperfect attempt to render the basic Christian mysteries in a difficult and completely alien tongue.

Even with his revisions Xavier's Tamil Catechism remained far from satisfactory. Further revisions were accordingly carried out by Fr Henriquez, who, though more proficient in Tamil, complained to St Ignatius, in a series of reports 1548-52, of the great difficulties confronting him in such a task.⁴⁴ And as late as 1558 we find him revising his own revisions.⁴⁵

So we come down to the time of the first Tamil printing. We have already seen from contemporary sources something of the immediate background of this printing.⁴⁶ In the light of these accounts, and of the history of translation just outlined, we may safely identify the Quilon *Doctrina* of 1578 not only with the brief Catechism ordered by Valignano in 1575⁴⁷ but with the 'lost' Tamil Catechism of St Francis Xavier, no doubt extensively revised by Henriquez, but still basically the work of the Apostle of the Indies.

Support for this identification may be found in the text itself. A comparison of the Quilon *Doctrina* of 1578 with Xavier's Portuguese Catechism of 1542 as preserved in manuscripts⁴⁸ shows close similarities of content and arrangement. Xavier's Tamil Catechism of 1542 was, it

⁴⁴ Schurhammer, *Zeitgenössische Quellen*, Nos. 4030, 4299, 4749, 4750.

⁴⁵ *Epistolae Xaverii*, II, 585.

⁴⁶ P. 149, above.

⁴⁷ In *Epistolae Xaverii*, II, 585, the first Indic printing is placed at Cochin, and the Cochin *Doctrina* of 1579 is equated with the Tamil Catechism required of Henriquez by Valignano, but these conclusions were reached before the existence of the Quilon *Doctrina* of 1578 was known. The relation of the two *Doctrinas* will be discussed below.

⁴⁸ See p. 157, above.

may be assumed, essentially a translation of that in Portuguese of the same year. But it is possible to go further. In his first account of the Tamil translation, sent to his colleagues in Rome from Cochin 15 January 1544, Xavier enumerated the first seven sections of the work:

Y después de avernos ayuntado muchos días con grande trabajo, sacamos las oraciones, começando por el modo de sanctiguar, confessando las tres personas ser un solo Dios: después el Credo, mandamientos, Pater noster, Ave María, Salve Regina y la confesión general de latin en malavar.⁴⁹

These sections agree exactly, both in subject and in order, with the first seven sections of the Quilon *Doctrina*.⁵⁰

It remains to consider the relationship of the first two examples of Indic printing. It is at once apparent that they are two entirely distinct works. Where the Quilon *Doctrina*, 1578, has 16 pages, the Cochin *Doctrina*, 1579, has 120.⁵¹ The Cochin *Doctrina* is, as its long title states, a translation of the Catechism in dialogue form composed by Fr Marcos Jorge — first published in Lisbon in 1566.⁵² Such more extended treatments of the basic Christian doctrine, conveyed by dialogue, were also commonly among the early products of the missionary presses, though not usually among the very first, as were the brief Catechisms. Jorge's Catechism, frequently reprinted, was generally current as the standard of its type until its supplanting early in the seventeenth century by the *Doctrina* of St Robert Bellarmine. No doubt Henriquez' translation of the Jorge Catechism was one of the works for the native Christians envisaged by Valignano in 1575.

Although there is no relation between the main texts of the Quilon and Cochin *Doctrinas*,⁵³ the typography is quite another matter. A comparison (Plates IIa and IIb) clearly shows that the Latin types are the same in both works, being a well cut font probably imported from

⁴⁹ *Epistolae Xaverii*, I, 162. The list is repeated in a letter sent from Cochin a year later, 27 January 1545 (*Epistolae Xaverii*, I, 273).

⁵⁰ See p. 153, above.

⁵¹ The page sizes of the two works are, however, practically identical: 14 by 10 centimeters.

⁵² Francisco Rodrigues, S. J., *História da Companhia de Jesus na Assistência de Portugal* (Oporto, 1931-), II, i, 459, n. 3.

⁵³ It may be noted that the Cochin *Doctrina* employs the diamond-headed sign for the same purposes, and with a very similar explanatory statement (in Portuguese), as does the Quilon *Doctrina*.

Europe.⁶⁴ A similar comparison shows that the main font of Tamil types in the Quilon *Doctrina*, used for the text, is almost certainly the same as the Tamil font appearing in the Cochin *Doctrina*, with the exception of three or possibly four characters, which might easily have been recut for the later printing. The identity of both fonts of characters in the two works raises interesting speculations as to the mechanics of production and the transportation of types, or less probably of matrices, from one Malabar port to the other. Nor should the presence be forgotten of the Tamil font made in Goa in 1577, included in the Quilon *Doctrina* apparently by way of specimen.

In conclusion, one might stress both the unexpectedness and appropriateness of the appearance at Quilon of a cornerstone in the history of printing and of India. No contemporary source or subsequent bibliographer mentions Quilon as a candidate, among all the names brought forward to vie for the honor: Goa, Cochin, Calicut, Tutucorin, Punicale, Vaipicota, Ambalacata, and the rest. And yet Quilon, strategically placed as a link between the Coasts, legendary scene of the labors of St Thomas the Apostle, the home of Christians from the seventh or eighth century, chief trading port on the Persian-Arab sea route to China from at least the ninth century, known to Marco Polo, see of a French bishop in the fourteenth century, one of the ancient cities of the ancient East — Quilon might well seem worthiest of all to cradle this first step toward a union of two great cultures.

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⁶⁴ The types do not resemble those used by the press in Goa as represented by the Harvard copy of Garcia de Orta, *Coloquios dos simples, e drogas he cousas medicinaes da India* (Goa, 1563 — the second work printed in India of which copies are known), or otherwise reproduced in Primrose, 'The First Press in India,' and King Manuel II, *Livros antigos Portuguezes 1489-1600* (London, 1929-35), II, 726, 732, 790, 793, 795. Perhaps the *Doctrina* types were brought out to India by Valignano, along with the wood block used for the Quilon *Doctrina*, as already suggested. In any case, these *Doctrina* types are again different from the types used by the 'Valignano' press in Goa (1588), Macao (1588-90), and Japan (1590 and later); this press is known to have arrived in India in May 1587. For the 'Valignano' press see Laures, *Kirishitan Bunko*, pp. 1-54.

A full set of photostats of the Cochin *Doctrina*, originally made for the senior author and now in the possession of the Rev. Xavier S. Thani Nayagam of Tuticorin, has very kindly been made available for study. A microfilm of these photostats has been deposited in the Harvard College Library for purposes of record.

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