From the River:
Jesuit Missions and Exemplarity in Spanish Colonial Philippines
1581-1768

A dissertation presented
By
Maria Cecilia Holt
To
The Faculty of Harvard Divinity School
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Theology
In the Subject of
History of Christianity
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts
May 2014
From the River: Jesuit Missions and Exemplarity in Spanish Colonial Philippines

1581–1768

Abstract

Using an interdisciplinary approach to textual interpretation and drawing from the fields of theology, history, literature, cultural studies, and anthropology, this dissertation explores the idea that Jesuit missionaries in the Philippines performed acts of imitatio Christi that were every bit as complex and creative as those demanded of the new Christian converts to whom they ministered. While the dissertation does not engage in an uncritical defense of missionaries, it does attempt to restore some of the complexity of the missionaries’ own negotiations with the ideals of Roman Catholic conversion exemplarity and imitation.

References to patristic authors and Roman historians, and emulation of their rhetorical style and method by Jesuit missionaries may be seen as evidence of imitation at work, but do not signal its transparent application. Rather, they indicate theological reflection and critique in light of particular circumstances. Ideas about martyrdom, miracle-working, the extirpation of idolatry, and the Church’s relationship to empire itself were challenged by religious tensions in Europe and the New World, as well as locally. Indeed it is as a result of these circumstances that the liminality of Roman Catholic missionaries stands out because the liminalility reveals the complexity of their own imitative relation—their own “colonized” situation, as it were—to Christian tradition. Away from home and far from the centers of European and colonial power, acts of imitation by individual missionaries in colonial Philippines alternately consolidated or ruptured these connections.
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Roman Catholic Imitation and Exemplarity</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Martyrdom Re-Framed</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Jonah and the Crocodile: Jesuit Missions as Translation Studies</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Ambiguity and Encounter</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Marvel and a Confessional Divide: Jesuit Missionary Strategy</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Judgment</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Working Wonders: Jesuit Accommodation and the Bracketing of Authority</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Conversion by Miracle or the Mundane?</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. The Catolona as Warrior and Wonder Worker</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. The Male Catolona as the New Magdalen</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Conclusion</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. The Martyrs’ Farewell: Jesuits, Self-Love and the Writing of History</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Saving Morga’s Mission</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Sermon on the Sleeve and the Heart in Hiding</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Mission and Martyrdom from the Jesuit and Franciscan Perspectives</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Holy Impudence: The Nagasaki Martyrdom from the Franciscan perspective</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Concluding Remarks</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Defying the Devil’s Yo-yo:</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. The Devil’s Yo-Yo</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Turning the Christian Soldier on its Head</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Temptation and redemption of the senses in Jesuit Sermons from China</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Errant Hearts: Melancholy, Consolation and Mission in Colonial Philippines</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Introduction</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. The place of the Augustinian Order and the Conquest of the Philippines</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. San Agustin’s Letter</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Melancholy and the Severing of Christian Friendship</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Delgado’s Consolation</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. San Agustin’s Consolation</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Conclusion</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acknowledgements

For Jacob and Holt Sievers
Introduction

Rivers and riddles: These could well be the essence of Roman Catholic missionary life in colonial Philippines. Indeed the Tagalog people of the are so named as coming from the river and the Tagalog language was praised for its “intricacies and subtleties…fullness and elegance…” as well as “civility and good breeding,” not to mention its “articles and the distinctions applied to common [and] proper nouns” attributes the language was thought to share with Hebrew, Latin, Spanish and Greek respectively.¹ Moreover, in written form, understanding indigenous script (recorded by Pedro Chirino S.J. in Relación de las Islas Filipinas) required readers to “supply the omitted consonants.”² This practice came naturally to a people whose culture was suffused with riddles that demanded intellectual dexterity and emotional discernment to interpret and understand. Thus, in the context of temporal and spiritual encounters with “others,” learning a new grammar was a challenge aptly met by Jesuits trained in the studia humanitatis and The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, and by the indios themselves, who responded to the Jesuits’ gifted presentation of the Mystery of the Incarnation with their own unfathomable riddles, poetry and beguiling ways of proceeding.³

When the Jesuits first arrived in the Philippines in 1581, they learned the archipelago’s many dialects as they walked through forests and waded across rivers; they were baptized in the local waters: quickly and thoroughly immersed, yet not without a lasting appreciation for what remained ineffable, those elements of each language that cannot be said or felt in another. With

---


² Chirino, Relación, 281.

Horace in mind, the Jesuit Pedro Chirino wrote to prospective missionaries: “… for to the natives each language possesses a beauty and elegance which are hidden from strangers’ eyes … Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere fidus.”⁴ In citing Ars Poetica, Chirino was mindful of the challenges of spreading the Gospel—the challenges for which he was ever prepared to be “annihilated and broken in imitation of Jesus Christ”: Translation.

In Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Conversion in Tagalog Society Under Early Spanish Rule, Vicente Rafael has drawn our attention to the politics of translation especially of Catholic prayer and practice and its effects on the dynamics of power between the so called colonizer and colonized; Rafael’s contribution to scholarship on Spanish colonial Philippines has focused on the reciprocity of cultural exchange between Tagalogs and Roman Catholic missionaries. The vitality with which indios received Roman Catholic conversion and reciprocated its mysteries with cultural wonderments of their own continues to challenge perceptions about the passivity with which evangelism was carried out. What occurred in the Philippines may require a shift in the assumption that there is a uniform pattern, rigid and intractable, of Christian doctrine as of missionary and ritual practice.

Following Rafael’s example, this dissertation upholds the figure of the indio as an active agent in colonial encounters and retains the view that the translation of Christianity from late sixteenth to eighteenth century Philippines was often fraught with politics, poor judgment, even terror. This dissertation also explores the work of translation and conversion from a different perspective—that of Roman Catholic missionaries themselves; for insofar as they were translating Roman Catholic doctrine and ritual practice for others, they were also engaged in acts of translating the Incarnation for themselves, or better yet, in themselves, in an alien and

challenging context: in the texts they wrote, preached, embodied, enacted, emoted, punctuated, wrought upon their heart and even (as we shall see) wore upon their sleeve.

When a native convert swimming in a river was swallowed whole and then spewed forth, “untorn” from the belly of a crocodile, his parting words to his friend were broken off in mid-discourse—real-life *aposiopesis*—and thus lost in transmission and translation; yet they nevertheless generated multiple redactions in several Jesuit documents. Thus a man from the river, his story, his time spent in the belly of the crocodile and his riddle-like speech epitomized the Jesuits’ efforts to translate cultural and religious differences during the first years of their Philippine mission. More importantly, the story’s appearance in several guises and literary genres from 1601–1610 has attested to the Jesuits’ recognition and negotiation not only of indigenous culture but also of their own predicament: as men sent to bear the Gospel, men sent to bear the meaning of the Word made flesh and missionaries who tried to make sense of their own sending. This dissertation is about Jesuit missionaries and discrete moments of translation, accommodation and exemplarity from the time of their arrival in the Philippines 1581 to their expulsion in 1768.

Using an interdisciplinary approach to textual interpretation and drawing from the fields of theology, history, literature, cultural studies, and anthropology, this dissertation explores the idea that Jesuit missionaries along with Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustinians in the Philippines performed acts of *imitatio Christi* that were every bit as complex and creative as those demanded of the new Christian converts to whom they ministered. While the work does not engage in an uncritical defense of missionaries, nor condone the violence the Spanish conquest of the Philippines (and its contemporary consequences), individual chapters do attempt to restore some of the complexity of the missionaries’ own negotiations with the ideals of Roman Catholic conversion exemplarity and imitation.
A. Roman Catholic Imitation and Exemplarity

During the Renaissance and an era of Global Expansion

Although providing a genealogy of Christian imitation is beyond the scope of this dissertation (indeed what is presented here is limited to an examination of Jesuit exemplarity in comparison with other Roman Catholic orders in the context of Philippine missions), this thesis proceeds from an understanding that the Society of Jesus was founded during an age of global expansion, humanist printing, religious wars, and at a time when the influence of renaissance humanism was still deeply felt—with the *studia humanitatis* forming the basis of a Jesuit education in its colleges. ⁵ Although contemporary scholars continue to stress the connection between Jesuits and medieval scholasticism, ⁶ (It is a debt St. Ignatius Loyola himself did not wish to be forgotten; in the eleventh rule of the *Spiritual Exercises*, he noted the need to praise scholastic learning. ⁷) the significance of Christian humanism and its recovery of classical and patristic sources in the service of missionary endeavors in Europe and abroad continue to be overlooked.

While Dominicans and Franciscans cited classical and patristic sources in their own writings during the medieval period, it is the Jesuits’ unique approach and understanding of *studia humanitatis* in the early modern era that will be investigated. The late fourteenth through sixteenth centuries saw a call for a renewal of the relationship between rhetoric and theology in the academies and monasteries of Europe; seemingly confined to monastic habits, and academic

---


spaces, to particular genres and specialists, the disciplines of rhetoric and theology were seen by some humanist figures to have suffered too much time apart, and as it were, enduring death “sentences.” Indeed in his *Enchiridion*, Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466–1536) quipped that inappropriate language was tantamount to a stinking corpse; whereas when God was present in one’s heart “the soul will speak divine words.”8 Similarly, in a scathing critique against those who would divorce eloquence (rhetoric) from moral responsibility and specifically Christian virtue, Petrarch—in his treatise, “On his Own Ignorance and that of Many Others”—passionately declared his desire to be free of the “glittering shackle” that symbolized faith without learning: Petrarch accuses his opponents for revering Aristotle unquestioningly albeit only with regard to philosophical matters or concerning logic, and for relegating Cicero to mere matters of style, not content or method.9 Although the critique of scholasticism was prone to hyperbole and vulnerable to misunderstanding as any contemporary scholarly quibble, the debates surrounding humanist and scholastic approaches to theology and the exemplary life still shed light on an era in which St. Ignatius Loyola, the first Jesuits and Jesuit missionaries first set out, and are particularly illustrative of how the rhetoric of Christian imitation, conversion, mission were construed.

For both humanists and their late antique predecessors such as Cicero and Quintilian, philosophy and later theology came to be seen as the exclusive hold of an elite group of people not to be discussed by others (who found themselves outside the academy or the monastery) even though, as Quintilian points out in the first book of *The Orator’s Education*, “we all handle themes which philosophy claims for its own.”10 In other words, everyone speaks; for those educated in the art of rhetoric, even subjects about divine matters are and ought to be subjected to

---


a rhetor’s (or better yet an orator’s) rigorous analysis. For an orator properly taught how to speak well and aptly, is one who has also followed the example of those who have thought wisely. Indeed for Quintilian, “no one can be an orator unless he is a good man.”11

In Lorenzo Valla’s “In Praise of Thomas Aquinas,”12 we see justification made for the recovery of theology on the basis of Scripture and patristic models. Explicit in Valla’s praise (and blame) of St. Thomas is a critique of scholastic theology that is echoed by other humanists including Petrarch, Vives and Erasmus. Valla makes just this point toward the end of his encomium when he assigns instruments to the aforementioned princes of theology including early church fathers. While other patristic figures play the zither, the flute, etc. St. Thomas is assigned the cymbals—cymbals to represent the sound made by the joining of philosophy and theology. The allusion to 1 Corinthians 1313 drives home the point that St. Thomas Aquinas and the scholastic theology he represents is akin to a “cymbal gonging” for lack of love. Although this indictment was rather harsh, it does reflect a humanist construction that the reformation of theology must have as its basis the renewal of the speech of love/charity that included a remarriage of rhetoric and theology in imitation of St. Paul, St. Augustine and the Cappadocians for whom eloquence was not a threat, but rather that which rendered great service to wisdom. As St. Augustine wrote in the prologue to De Doctrina: “Although they may rightly rejoice that God has given them this gift, they should remember that they have learned at least the alphabet from men.”14 Whereas philosophical disputation in humanists’ eyes increases doubt, rather than dispels

13 “If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.”
it, the restoration of rhetoric as theology’s consummate partner, in its ideal form is the building up of community on the basis of mutual concern for both the speaker or writer and his audience.

B. Martyrdom Re-Framed

Translation, Accommodation and Mission—The Jesuit Difference

This dissertation contributes to the field by offering a nuanced view of Roman Catholic missionaries as complex figures and pioneers of anthropology and the appreciation of ‘the other’ as not uncivilized and savage but as possessed of values and codes and practices that would be understood as ‘a culture’. Rather than seeing them as always and everywhere in collusion with empire, this dissertation challenges prevailing notions by looking at the Jesuit, Dominican, Franciscan or Augustinian missionary himself as subject to imitatio Christi and its challenges, imperfections and perpetual instigation to “something greater.”

To the best of my knowledge, no one has investigated the theme of religious imitation and exemplarity in my proposed sources. With the notable exception of Vicente Rafael, no historian of the Philippines has inquired into the influence of Renaissance humanism on the process of conversion in the Philippines during the early decades of Spanish rule. However, this influence is decisive for an understanding of colonial mimesis, because humanist notions of imitation inform the missionaries’ self-description at many levels. Although this dissertation draws from Rafael’s work especially as it pertains to native converts and their strategies to deflect colonial power, the analysis conducted here hopes to challenge prevailing negative assumptions

15 Although the introduction to the recent English translation of Pedro Chirino’s Historia de la Provincia de Filipinas de la Compañía de IHS acknowledges the Jesuit’s abundant references to the apostle Paul, Tacitus, Cicero, and Augustine, these references are neither annotated nor analyzed beyond noting the possible affinity between historical situations. Significantly, references to the apostle Paul are treated with even less curiosity on the presumption that they “discuss in the same manner the composition of basic Christian communities” (xxi).
about the ways in which renaissance humanism (so called) contributed to the destruction of indigenous knowledge in early colonial Philippines by means of Christian evangelization.

This dissertation investigates whether the pressures and violence of mission life (including journeys to unfamiliar places and the ever present threat of martyrdom) contributed to an understanding of imitation as an interpretive and narrative category. One such strategy deployed by missionaries in order to make sense of their experiences can be seen in references made to early Christian figures and locales. Looking at the Philippines through the lens of early Christianity, was not, however, simply a matter of imposing the old world upon the new, or of validating their presence.

References to patristic authors, quotations from Roman political figures and historians or an emulation of their rhetorical style and method might signal imitation at work; one cannot, however, assume a transparent application has been made. Rather, these instances of imitation by missionaries (and their readers) offered opportunities for theological reflection and critique in light of particular circumstances. Ideas about martyrdom, miracle-working, the extirpation of idolatry, and the Church’s relationship to empire itself were challenged by religious tensions in

16 Chirino’s *Historia* describes missionaries as “forgetting their own excellent qualities and merits for high dignities [to] be annihilated, and broken in imitation of Jesus Christ…” (2).

17 Referring to his work in the Jesuit mission at Taytay, Pedro Chirino, S.J. likened himself to Saint Gregory Wonderworker (ca, 213–217 AD). This reference will be analyzed in one chapter of the dissertation.

18 See Daniel Reff’s *Plagues, Priests and Demons: Sacred Narratives and the Rise of Christianity in the Old World and the New* for an analysis of how early Christian literature served as literary models for Jesuits in colonial Mexico.

19 The call to imitate early Christianity formed the basis of Valla, Petrarch, and Erasmus’ critique of scholastic theology; despite a preoccupation with style as a mark of truth and substance, humanists like Erasmus focused on imitating the *method* of classical and ancient Christian figures rather than merely mimicking their language. More specifically, imitation and eloquence were subject to Christian ideals. Within the rhetorical category of “praise and blame” the humanist view of rhetoric and of imitative acts, was not merely a matter of ornamentation, but constituted a dynamic practice that was attuned to historical contexts and used to negotiate theological, social, and political tensions.
Europe (especially Spain) and the New World, as well as locally, by the missionary’s experience “on the ground,” and by the cultural exchanges that took place as a result of everyday contact with indios. Indeed, it is as a result of these circumstances that the liminality of Catholic missionaries stands out—not just because they were in contact with “others” but because this very contact revealed the complexity of their own imitative relation—their own ‘colonized’ situation, as it were, with regard to Christian tradition. Away from home and far from the centers of European and colonial power, acts of imitation by individual missionaries in the early colonial Philippines alternately consolidated or ruptured these connections.

The imitation of Christ by word and by deed effected by Roman Catholic missionaries of different orders was surprisingly diverse, drawing much debate, criticism and conflict with one another even when faced with a seemingly unified Protestantism in the form of “Dutch heretic pirates” that threatened coastal regions of the Philippine archipelago (discussed in Chapter 3). These differences in Christian exemplarity often found expression as competing missionary strategies among Jesuits, Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustinians; while texts, scripts as well as samples of old and new world flora and fauna crossed the seas and traveled with missionaries overland through New Spain (along with trade, war and deliverance), tools of interpretation moved with them. Thinking typologically was one of the many creative ways that Jesuits and their counterparts (Roman Catholic and Protestant) made sense of their experiences.

This dissertation implicitly discusses typology in connection with Jesuit mission as martyrdom re-framed. This is in evidence iconographically in a mid-seventeenth century ivory carving of Saint Ignatius of Antioch (ca.50–ca.98–117) imported to Spain from the Philippines by a future bishop of Seville. The carving, which was given as a gift to a church in Medina de Rioseco, depicts St. Ignatius being attacked by a lion; the sculpture is visceral: The lion’s teeth dig into Ignatius’ right shoulder and its claws rip open his chest to reveal a red heart emblazoned with IHS. While the iconography is recognizable, the lion shows the influence of its Chinese or sangley carver.
In his letters written on the way to martyrdom, St. Ignatius of Antioch was *already* reframing interpretations of Jesus’ suffering, death, and resurrection for the earliest Christians when he exhorted the faithful to “coax the wild beasts” rather than try to save him. Through the centuries that message would undergo other re-framings or re-imaginings in art as the image of St. Ignatius moved from one medium to another.

Indeed in this case, message, art, temporal and spiritual conquest coalesce. For the Chinese craftsman who may or may not have been a convert, for the missionary who may have grappled with how to translate Christ’s Resurrection to new Christians, for the patron who may have had connections in trade, and for the Catholic devout in Spain who then came to church to both venerate St. Ignatius and view his image in an exotic form from the Philippines, this carved ivory of an early church father, also represented contemporaneous re-framings about the meaning of mission, martyrdom, and even “economy” among different Catholic orders. If the carving was originally associated with Jesuits, as some scholars suggest, then the mirroring of both Saints Ignatius of Antioch and Loyola (1491–1556) in one aesthetic form serves as further evidence of Jesuit commitment to re-imagining the human being in light of a critical appreciation of ancient sources, cultural contexts and principles of accommodation.

Another depiction of the martyrdom—this one from Peru—dating from the 1580s, could be said to use an image of Ignatius Loyola in place of an image of Ignatius of Antioch even more vividly than the one from the Philippines. What might this mean? With Ignatius of Antioch martyred in Rome, it is fitting that in the relief painting, we see in the background an image that appears to be that of Castel Sant’Angelo in Rome. Saint Ignatius Loyola did not travel on missions to far away places, as did St. Francis Xavier who became the first Jesuit missionary to

20 “San Ignacio de Antioquía.” Relief painting by Bernardo Bitti, S.J. (1548–1610), Cuzco, Peru. Museo Histórico Regional de Cuzco, Cuzco, Peru
India and Japan. Therefore, it might be argued that St. Ignatius Loyola’s martyrdom lay in having been denied physical martyrdom and later in reforming ideas about martyrdom through the Jesuits’ legacy of accommodation.

These two images of St. Ignatius of Antioch—enflamed with a Jesuit heart in one case and mirroring St. Ignatius of Loyola so vividly in the other—epitomize significant points about this dissertation that will be made throughout every chapter—the most important being: “Something greater is here.” Although each of the Roman Catholic orders will make this claim in one way or another, the Jesuits do not try to do outdo their founder, as do the Franciscans or the Dominicans (as we shall see in Chapters 3 and 4). Rather the Jesuits position themselves with regard to an early church father, and perhaps dare to say, they were “something greater” than those who came before, just as St. Ignatius of Loyola was greater than St. Ignatius of Antioch; and perhaps just as controversially for our thesis: that missionary work is the new and greater form of martyrdom. How so and in what way lead us to an examination of the workings of typology and exemplarity that will be the concern of every chapter. Central to the examination of Christian imitation and exemplarity proposed here is the work of typology. Typology draws its method from the Incarnation: As Northrop Frye tells us, [typology] is an essentially revolutionary form of thought or feeling.”

Although typological interpretation is certainly neither exclusively Jesuit nor Christian, this dissertation explores the ways Jesuits in Spanish colonial Philippines attempted to negotiate difficult theological and cultural contexts typologically—and how such juxtaposition of “type” and “ant-type” within history potentially illuminates situations hitherto unquestioned or assumed as mere embellishment, a flourish or proof of erudition. For instance, what might it mean to have

---

21 Matt. 12:41

22 “Typology points to future events that are often thought of as transcending time, so that they contain a vertical lift as well a horizontal move forward,” Northrop Frye, The Great Code: The Bible and Literature (New York: Penguin Group, 2007), 110.
a depiction of St. Ignatius Loyola and St. Ignatius of Antioch in one image? It is not simply a matter of Jesuit missionaries willing to be sent to suffer and die in Christ’s name in an alien territory; nor is it simply a “doubling” for the purpose of upholding—without question—ancient authority, or using a church father to strengthen the order’s interpretation of martyrdom. Not only do both Ignatius of Antioch and Ignatius of Loyola gesture toward Christ, but in their very depiction as “the other’s Other,” tension is created, questions and a possible critique ignited; indeed what I hope to demonstrate is how much Jesuits grappled with the realities of what it meant to be a missionary, and how grappling with their own predicament often meant critiquing both ancient and contemporaneous sources however venerable or respected: So, might the Jesuit heart enflamed within St. Ignatius of Antioch signal an uncomplicated relationship to martyrdom in the New World, or were and are the Jesuits trying to get under everyone’s skin?

To follow the example of Christ in a new wilderness be it China, Peru or the Philippines, could require the demonstration of martyrdom with one’s very body, or it could also mean the explanation of martyrdom with the body of a text, within the exemplary body as text, the translation and interpretation of texts or the enunciation of the Incarnation and the Resurrection through reading, writing, preaching, confession, prayer, and everyday speech.

The Philippines represented Spain’s most vulnerable yet also potentially its most valuable asset: It was vulnerable as it was susceptible to attack from other European powers attempting to gain a foothold in the area (e.g., the Dutch, the Portuguese, the English, etc.) and from local sovereignties that threatened to invade such as the Regent of Japan who had just consolidated power. For the very reasons it was vulnerable, however, the Philippines was also lucrative as a place for trade and as a mediating stage for larger “prizes” (both spiritual and temporal) symbolized by China and Japan.

How humanism and exemplarity affected Jesuit missionary strategy especially among Spanish Jesuits and Spanish missionaries to the Philippines in general has been so little studied, however. Having enjoyed a successful “mission” there, it ought surely to be considered as
“representative” of Jesuit missionary strategies in Asia—even if Jesuit strategy is so often more celebrated for the places in which it did not succeed in producing a lasting Roman Catholic presence such as in China or Japan.

Jesuit sources and Jesuit strategies of mission and imitation were more clearly understood when compared with other Roman Catholic religious orders. The main sources explored in this dissertation include published works of the Jesuits detailing their missionary work in the Philippines including the Jesuit Relations, *The Spiritual Exercises*, *Annual Letters*, and a *History from the Philippine Province of the Society of the Jesus*. The Jesuit Relations and the *History of Society the Philippine Province* were the compilation of many Jesuit writings edited by a single author named Pedro Chirino (1557-1635) in order to better understand Jesuit missionary work in general. Antonio de Morga (1559-1636) wrote *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* partly in defense of his actions during an important naval battle against the Dutch, and offers readers exemplarity in the writing of history; the other works consulted such as the sermons of Francisco Blancas de San Jose O.P. (1560-1614) and that of Martin de Ascencion O.F. M. (martyred in Japan 1597) written on a sleeve enable us to look more closely at preaching—a ministry common to all orders.

In order to situate the Jesuits in the Philippine context and within their missionary labors, Chapters 1 and 2, examine Jesuits at work in the missions of Taytay/Antipolo in the Philippines. Chapter 1 investigates the example of Jonah as a both a type of Jesus and as a type of the missionary and how this found complex negotiation and translation in a colonial religious setting; the choice of Jonah as exemplar for both the missionary and the indigenous convert signifies a creative move on the part of the missionary as he struggles to come to terms with his role as one sent (willingly or perhaps reluctantly) on a mission to proclaim the Gospel. Immediately at stake in this chapter is the problem of translation not simply of language but of doctrine. And we will see what will be recurring themes or questions emerge for themes for the first time: Translation, Idolatry, Authority, Resurrection, Rhetoric, Accommodation.
In Chapter 2, Jesuit “accommodation” is challenged and made challenging by an insistence on its interpretation as a rhetorical category and as part of “dicere aptius.” In chapter 2, an analysis of exemplarity and Jesuit accommodation of indigenous idolatry via punctuation and printing, will I hope, lead to greater appreciation for the subtle and more creative ways Jesuits thought through complex and challenging situations of religious practice, spiritual authority and gender. Following on the heels of the first chapter, we see, once more, how easily Jesuit accommodation in a complex situation can be overlooked. As in the previous chapter, however, “accommodation” is heeded. In this investigation of Pedro Chirino’s imitation of St. Gregory Wonderworker (c. 213–270), Jesuits uphold writing and we are witness to the complexities of contested authorities—graphic, typological, theological and otherwise; furthermore, idolatry is negotiated in a way that recognizes its persistence without threat to Christianity and exemplarity is accorded to new converts in surprising ways.

Chapter 3 (The Martyrs’ Farewell) situates Jesuits within a larger sphere of politics and caught up in colonial intrigues as the meanings of embassy, mission and diplomacy collide when pressures from Dutch “heretic” pirates as well as Japan expose the vulnerability of the Philippines. It also exposes the allure of going beyond the archipelago for both political and evangelical reasons. This chapter centers around Dr. Antonio Morga, a powerful Spanish colonial official, whose history of the Spanish administration of the Philippines includes an attempt to rehabilitate his reputation after being accused of conduct in battle. Among the pieces of evidence he uses in his defense is a letter written by Franciscans and Jesuits who are about to be martyred in Nagasaki. This chapter explores the ideals of Christian suffering, martyrdom, in contrast to self-love and what this might mean for exemplarity and the writing of history whether for secular politicians, for Jesuits, and for Franciscans martyred in Japan in 1597.

Chapter 4 (Sermon on the Sleeve) Whereas Chapter 4 begins to draw a comparison of Jesuit and Franciscan visions of mission and martyrdom with the tense case of the political embassy and eventual crucifixion of Franciscans and Jesuits in Nagasaki in 1597, what is
depicted here through an analysis of a series of “apologia” is a continued examination of the shifting meaning of martyrdom and imitatio Christi for both orders. For Franciscans, physical martyrdom is the end of the mission and to follow St. Francis is the point, the punctum, the puncture created by St. Francis’ stigmata that they now would fulfill on the very cross in Nagaski. For Jesuits, the martyrdom at Nagasaki was seen as bringing an ‘end’ to a significant mission in Asia, a mission that had been built up through decades of learning the language and customs of Japan. The question at stake in this chapter: Is a visible, physical Christian imitation of Christ to be held as martyrdom and the only form of martyrdom, or ought Jesuit accommodation, ‘invisibility’ and a discipline not to endanger the greater goal of mission count as a valid form of martyrdom, a martyrdom par excellence for the modern age?

Chapter 5 (The Devil’s Yoyo) Once more, translation and accommodation will be investigated and compared, this time with the Dominicans; here the senses and exemplarity are what are being translated. Through a comparison of early seventeenth century sermons Dominican sermons by Francisco Blancas de San Jose, O.P. written in Tagalog given on the second Sunday of Lent and Chinese sermons from Li Jiubaiao’s Diary of Oral Admonitions, we shall look closely at exemplarity through temptation and spiritual warfare and how the senses play a part in humanity’s redemption through the example of the humanity of Jesus Christ.

The contrast between Dominicans and Jesuits (in their understanding of the senses) is remarkable. For the Dominicans, the Incarnation is embodied and ever present, and the senses potentially saved from temptation via exemplarity; on the other hand, through the Spiritual Exercises, the Jesuits grasp a more redemptive sensing at the level of emotion and imagination that allow not just for the redemption of the senses but redemption through the senses themselves. What is more, through the practice of spiritual discernment and colloquies in the Spiritual Exercises, the sensing self is redeemed, not just in oneself, but also in and through the other—more importantly through conversation with another.
Chapter 6 (Melancholy and Consolation) From the time of their arrival in the Philippines to their expulsion in 1768 Jesuits will be shown to be concerned with how rhetoric and theology fit to address Christian mission and the needs of the soul. We conclude this thesis on Jesuits in the Philippines with a Jesuit in the eighteenth century still reading hearts and still discerning its rhetoric for clues as to its spiritual state. Calling to mind Erasmus’ concern with language and a heart filled with God’s “divine words” as well as spiritual warfare, this chapter underscores the continuing conflict and concern over the Philippines 150 years after the Conquest. In this chapter it is the reading and “translation” of the seemingly racist letter of an Augustinian missionary that allows a Jesuit to warn other prospective missionaries of the dangers of missionary life and of the mutual harm that comes to those who do not truly minister to others humbly. Here the Jesuit attempts to rewrite the narrative of the conquest of the Philippines in order to say, “We must be more than conquerors.”
I. Jonah and the Crocodile: Jesuit Missions as Translation Studies

For, to natives each language possesses beauty, elegance which are hidden from strangers’ eyes … *Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere fidus.*

What does a man swallowed whole and spewed forth from the belly of a crocodile have to do with Jesuit missionary strategy in the Philippines during the early modern period? Judging from the multiple redactions of one such story recorded in the *Annual Letter* from the Philippines in 1601—an incident of “no little wonder” to its author—we can presume its importance to Jesuits and their efforts to translate cultural and religious differences during the first years of their Philippine mission. Indeed from the time of their arrival in 1581—with the Dominican bishop Domingo de Salazar—to their expulsion in 1768, Jesuit missionary strategy in the Philippines could be characterized as concerned with the connections between theology, rhetoric and exemplarity.

Jesuit annual letters, relations and histories of the Society were written for the benefit of


25 Domingo de Salazar, O.P. (1512–1594) served as the archipelago’s first bishop arrived in the Philippines with the first Jesuits in 1581. As an advocate on behalf of fair treatment of the indios, he is often compared to Bartolome de Las Casas.

26 There may be “rules” and expectations governing these genres as laid out in the Constitutions; as I have understood it, Annual Letters were typically reserved for administrators and may have contained more sensitive information, not meant for wide circulation; Jesuit Relations enjoyed wider readership across the globe may have even been read by those outside the Society; histories are a peculiar genre in that they have a didactic, exemplary purpose, especially during the early modern period.
Jesuits around the world, (a world in which some of the same stories were redacted,\textsuperscript{27}) and offer a glimpse into the various ways Jesuits in the Philippines (as elsewhere) negotiated missionary encounters with indigenous peoples. These letters, relations and histories, together with the translation of Catholic doctrine into local dialects feature the use of Scripture, along with classical and patristic sources as lenses for viewing situations of difference in social custom, anthropology, religion and politics. More importantly, the stories told in these documents also demonstrate the fluidity with which Jesuits articulated missionary strategies by harnessing the literary and theological imagination in concert with a critical use of these ancient sources as they were brought to bear on Christian imitation and exemplarity in a colonial setting.

In doing so, Jesuits not only wrote, thought and acted using a humanist framework which was in every way attentive to literature and literary analysis (sacred and “pagan”)\textsuperscript{28} they did so informed by the \textit{Spiritual Exercises} of Saint Ignatius Loyola and the \textit{Constitutions of the Society}, but also a theology “performed on the ground” by other Jesuits from different parts of the world—including most notably, Jose de Acosta (1540–1600) and Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606).

At the outset, one must own up to various temptations to both underestimate as well as oversimplify what that Jesuit missionary strategizing was about; for often, the complexity of Jesuit missions not to mention the centrality of the Gospel is taken for granted. Context is key to elucidating the complexity of Jesuit missionary strategy in the early modern period. Jesuits in China, Japan, India and the Philippines faced unique situations that influenced the way these very

\textsuperscript{27} Ines G. Županov, \textit{Disputed Mission: Jesuit Experiments and Brahmanical Knowledge in Seventeenth-Century India} (Oxford University Press, 2001), 1–16.

\textsuperscript{28} Pedro Chirino S.J.’s \textit{History of the Philippine Province of the Society} written between 1606 and 1610 cites Scripture alongside Tacitus, Terence, Livy, and the Church Fathers such as Saint Augustine, Saint Clement of Alexandria among others. See Introduction.
missions were formed and run. For instance, the force and quality of the colonial presence,²⁹ the organization of the native populace prior to and during its interaction with missionaries and most importantly, how the Gospel was spread and received must be taken into account if one is to appreciate Jesuit missionary strategy for both its subtle and sweeping gestures.

Therefore, a significant part of examining Jesuit missionary strategy requires asking what does it mean to be a Jesuit missionary in the first place? Only by examining this question in a particular context during the late sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and situating our question as a moment of cultural encounter within the milieu of Jesuit and (in our case) Philippine custom and spirituality (so far as can be understood from available sources) can we even begin to broach questions of Jesuit missionary strategy.” While this thesis is addressed in every chapter, our first—much like the story first told in The Annual Letter of 1601—attempts to grapple with it in its entirety.

A. Ambiguity and Encounter, explores a version of the story from Francisco Vaez S.J.’s Annual Letter of 1601. Written on June 10, 1601, The Annual Letter was published in Latin by John Hay in 1605. This first part lays the groundwork for “Jesuit missionary strategy” by examining the story through a negotiation of Christian mission and imitation as mediated through the biblical figure of Jonah who also serves as a symbol for competing Christian and indigenous notions of obedience, death and the afterlife. Moreover, it will engage in the problems of translation and rhetoric itself, thus paving the way for the story’s subsequent transformation and use as part of Jesuit missionary strategy proper—strategy as defined in the OED as “…projecting and directing the larger military campaign.” As we shall see, the “campaign” at stake in the early modern period was one of redefining Roman Catholicism in general, and reframing “martyrdom” through Jesuit mission life in particular.

²⁹ If indeed there was a colonial presence, Jesuits acted and spoke accordingly; if not, accommodation rather than conquest was the strategy deployed both politically as well as ecclesiastically, as in the case of China or Japan.
We explore the ambiguity not only of the indio’s utterance to his friends, but the ambiguity inherent in its translation as a potential cue for the creativity of Jesuit approach for and indigenous reception of the Gospel message and the practice of exemplarity. In particular, we pay close attention to ideas of imitation, typology, and the Resurrection in conjunction with indigenous ideals of reciprocity and gift-giving.

Secondly, in *B. Marvel and Confessional Divide: Jesuit Missionary Strategy*, we will explore a Spanish version of the story that appeared in the Jesuit Pedro Chirino’s (1557–1635) *Relación de las Islas Filipinas*, published in Rome in 1604. In the Spanish version, the bathing man’s friends confessed horror, not wonder, at the event that had befallen their friend. In this redaction, there is evidence of “mission strategy” deployed, as the narrative was re-worked into one that emphasized Roman Catholic confession both practical and theological. With attention to genre and audience, Chirino attended to more pragmatic concerns facing Jesuits in light of theological pressures immediately surrounding the Philippine mission field, abroad, and indeed in Europe where theological wars of confession were also raging. When placed in the context of other stories in the *Relación*, one detects a broader scheme through which indigenous “idolatry” was to be combatted through the practice of confession as highlighted in this (and other texts) as an efficacious and perhaps a more marvelous sign of Roman Catholic conversion.

The third part of the chapter, *Judgment*, presents yet another version of the story as re-written by Chirino between 1606 and 1610 for a then unpublished *History of the Philippine Province of the Society of Jesus*. In the *History*, the story was taken extremes, stripped to mere allegory with reference to Saint Dorothy (martyred c.311) and an unnamed prophet from

30 It is possible that since Pedro Chirino compiled part of the Jesuit Relations in Rome, he may have worked with this version of the story. The *Jesuit Annual Letter* written by Francisco Vaez S.J. was printed in Italian and included in a book by Diego de Torres S.J. entitled *Relatione Breve* in 1603. It was also published in Latin by John Hay and included in *De Rebus Iaponicis, Indicos* etc. in 1605. Blair and Robertson acknowledge that they do not know for certain in which language the letter was written, but that they made their English translation from the Latin.
Scripture who is killed by a lion for his disobedience (1 Kings 3:20). Under History’s didactic gaze, this particular expression of Jesuit missionary strategy reflects more intently upon the Jesuit missionary himself and presents a new and more excellent form of Christian witness—martyrdom, not through the spectacle of a glorious death, but through mundane acts of everyday mission. Missionary strategy here is defined in terms of an imitation of Christ unto death, but on a different cross! As I hope to show, an analysis of the redaction in Chirino’s History, in conjunction with other events and theological perspectives from Jesuit life in the Philippines and in other parts of world offers an intriguing reflection on the figure of the Jesuit missionary through his evangelical labors—that is through the missionary strategy of “martyrdom” revised in the Philippine context.

A. Ambiguity and Encounter

The Jesuit Missionary and Catholic Converts

Although published in 1605, this version of the story is drawn from the Jesuit Annual Letter written on June 10, 1601, and publication chronology aside, genre must be considered. Jesuit Annual Letters first and foremost served as reports from mission fields around the world. In addition to providing a progress report, Francisco Vaez’ pleaded with Jesuit Superior General Claudio Acquaviva to send more laborers “that they may bring unto these places of darkness some light by their preaching of the gospels.” To attract more missionaries to the Philippines, the Annual Letter showed the fruit of their labor, knowing that Jesuit identity is rooted in this particular ministry. As the Constitution of the Society states:

…we are to be obliged by a special vow to carry out whatever the present and future pontiffs may order which pertains to the progress of souls and the propagation of the faithful and to go without subterfuge or excuse, as far as in us lies, to whatsoever provinces they may choose to send us...32

From this perspective, the Annual Letter aimed to paint a scene, to draw special attention to this young mission, and it is a scene redolent with images from Scripture and early Christianity; indeed it seems as if even its author encouraged multiple interpretations and acts of storytelling to unfold:

The custom has everywhere been introduced of singing throughout the year, in honor of the Virgin Mother of God, the anthem Salve Regina, and on Saturdays in Lent of performing the discipline in church. So when some Indians were bathing in the river, as is the custom (more) in hot countries, and heard the bell give the call for the Salve and the discipline, they put on their clothes (amictu resumpto in viam dederunt) and set out. Only one remained and laughing (Unus solus restitit & irridens socios) at his companions said in their language: “Acoi Ouian”—that is “Bring back something for me. “ which is their expression of ridicule (irridendi). When the others had gone away, he who was alone was attacked and killed by a crocodile—a fierce animal of these regions, which very fond of human flesh—and that before they could render him any assistance spiritual or temporal. This event was indeed an occasion of no little wonder, for the beast is very voracious and swallows men whole, or piece by piece, or at least tears off hand or foot; but this man he left whole and untorn (integrum & illaesum), which the Indians attribute (attribuere) to the Salve they sang and the discipline that they performed.

On the surface, the story could be read in terms of exemplary behavior. It displays the zeal of a number of new converts in the performance of penitential discipline. It also functions as a cautionary tale, a warning of who and what ought not to be imitated. Although the story above appears to have come to a satisfactory conclusion in the eyes of the letter-writer (with the death of the recalcitrant native to the edification of his companions), it is not simply the obedience or Christian imitation of the convert that is at stake in the story, but also that of the Jesuit missionary.

While there is indeed indication of judgment implied within the letter-writer’s interpretation of events, the *Annual Letter*, taken in its entirety is in fact far more ambivalent when it comes to offering a report of “how things are” among Jesuits in the Philippines. Indeed, compared to other reports, the scene at the riverbank appears like a picturesque interlude.

The first indigenous convert mentioned in Vaez’ letter is a Jesuit brother by the name of Martin Sanchez, “a native of these islands” who in his ten years with the Society, “left a glorious example in life and death.” Indeed, Martin Sanchez was the first Filipino to enter the Society of Jesus in 1593, having been “quizzed on his catechism by Philip II himself.”\(^{33}\) Although much of Sanchez’ exemplary life took place in Europe and Mexico, readers nevertheless were given clues as to what constitutes an exemplary life for indigenous peoples or indios: Native converts are apparently fond of confessing to the Jesuits; they “greatly affect the Holy Communion” as well as “hasten to perform their discipline with the others.”\(^{34}\) Indios hasten to hear Mass and were seen “hastening down the mountain to supplicate the benefits of baptism;” and after an earthquake destroys the church all “hastened together … to give their help in clearing the stones away.” Moreover, the letter speaks of catechism being taught by an old blind man who was a former *catalon* (shaman); it speaks of boys that “march in procession through the public streets chanting Christian belief”\(^{35}\) and girls who perform service in hospitals. Wrote one priest overjoyed with the fruits of his labor: “Nay, the very children, like to angels and taught by I know not whom, now repeat the Christian faith.”

What is repeated in the story of friends bathing in the river appears far from exemplary for both the indigenous peoples and the Jesuit missionaries. Vicente Rafael might approach this story as emblematic of the politics of translation. In spite of their supposed command of Spanish


and native tongues evidenced in the publication of grammars and catechisms in local dialects, late-sixteenth century missionaries to the Philippines may not have had as much control or mastery over language as they perceived. The attribution of ridicule to the man’s parting words may be solely the work of the letter-writer and may be the result of a mistranslation of the native man’s speech. Indeed to the best of my knowledge, and in consultation with experts in Tagalog, no such idiom of ridicule exists; it is possible that when the man said: Acoi Ouian, he simply meant, Come home to me. Dr. Michael Coroza agrees and points out specifically:

“Ako’y uwian” or “uwian ako” could stand without an object: “Come back/home to me.” The “+an” added to the root “uwi” denotes that the object of the action is “ako.” In Tagalog grammar, the focus of the verb is what is being considered in analyzing the relationship between the subject and the verb. The subject “ako” is the object (focus) of the verb “uwi.” Meaning to say, the receiver of the action “uwi” (pag-uwi) is the subject “ako.”

Moreover, the Latin irridendeo was potentially translated and understood multiple ways in Spanish including zumbarse de: to thump or to whack someone whether seriously or in jest. This would be more in keeping with a known feature of Tagalog grammar that delights in riddles, riddling and ambiguity. This potential misunderstanding not only points to the larger issue of translation and colonialism, but also addresses the problem and promise of translating Christian imitation into Tagalog speech and practice. While the translation of the man’s phrase may well signal an attempt by the missionary to apprehend and regulate the vernacular for exemplary speech, the narrative also unwittingly records native responses to the event that mitigate the force


37 I am greatly indebted to Michael M. Coroza, Ph. D., Associate Professor, Department of Filipino at Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines for his help.

38 Michael Coroza, Ph.D., private correspondence with the author on July 24, 2013.

39 Egidio Forcellini, Vincenzo De-Vit, Giuseppe Furlanetto. Totius Latinitatis Lexicon (Typis Aldinianis, 1854).
of the letter-writer’s judgment. In spite of the potential gulf created by the difference in their choices, the man’s friends refuse to “dismember” him from their community; in spite of the apparent *aposiopesis* (to which we will turn in a moment) captured in the rendering of the man’s speech, his friends attribute their work of penance as effecting his wholeness.

The man’s wholeness (*integrum*) and undamaged state deserves reflection both from an indigenous and Catholic perspective. From the indigenous perspective, it is worth noting that missionaries and other historians have recorded oaths invoking crocodiles including an oath made at the signing of the peace accord between the Spanish Conquistador Miguel Lopez de Legazpi and the leaders of Manila and Tondo in 1571 where indigenous leaders preferred sealing the pact both:

> …in writing according to our way, and sealing…with an oath, like all the nations. Those who took the oath did it by invoking the sun to cut their body in half and kill them, that their wives refuse them all favors or call down evil on them, that the *crocodiles cut them to pieces and eat them*.40

In our story, the man left behind in the river was neither cut to pieces nor eaten, nor had he sworn an oath; so by this logic, he had been cleared of any wrongdoing. What other scene might be playing out in the Jesuit theological imaginary?

*A New Jonah, Resurrection Re-Imagined*

In at least one other Jesuit “crocodile story” from the Philippines, a person was called “Jonas” who fell into the water, but *escaped* being eaten by a crocodile.41 However, one could argue that in the man’s very refusal to obey, and in his fate in the belly of the crocodile, he does imitate Jonah; but he does so on indigenous terms—thus frustrating attempts by the missionary to convert this indio and eradicate his idolatrous practices.

40 Chirino, *Historia*, 1:49.

41 Chirino, *Relación*, 249.
Crocodiles were venerated by native people and called *Nono* or grandfather based on a common belief that the souls of one’s ancestors were transformed into crocodiles. Taking local belief into account, the native man’s parting words—“Come to home to me”—acquire new meaning. Namely, the man’s death precipitates a clash of cultural logics; a genuine moment of encounter is thus preserved, not just for edification, but also for questioning. This point is perhaps nowhere better illustrated than in the Gospel of Matthew when Jesus *himself* announces *his own* imitation of Jonah when he foretells of his death and Resurrection.

“For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so for three days and three nights the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth.”

This is significant for our story because not only is typology established with Jonah as the forerunner or type, but also the passage functions as a commentary on future *imitatio Christi*. Moreover, Jesus also goes on to say:

“The people of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it because they repented at the proclamation of Jonah and see something greater than Jonah is here.”

Acts of imitation may be partial but *they also contain the possibility of something greater*. Indeed the figure at the center of our story along with his companions can be said to imitate the story of Jonah in ways greater than missionaries even dared to imagine. Like Jonah, the man displays resistance in heeding God’s call, and like the people of Nineveh, his companions repent and perform penance both *following and in spite of* his utterance. Moreover, according to Chirino in his *History*, death by crocodile was accorded special status in local belief.

42 Chirino, *Relación*, 298.

43 Matt 12:40–41
They also included among their gods, all who died by the knife, those devoured by the crocodile, or killed by some lightning, whose souls they said climbed to heaven by the rainbow, which they call “Balangao”.

Not only was the man in the river able go to heaven according to indigenous belief, he successfully circumvented the need for Roman Catholic discipline. Moreover, his friends’ engagement in an act of storytelling re-shaped the way they experience the otherwise traumatic death of one of their own. By their own account, the performance of the discipline honored their friend. They have not abandoned him; nor have they conceded to the letter writer’s judgment.

Resurrection Reconsidered

Perhaps in an attempt to paint a promising portrait of new converts in the Philippines, Vaez could not help but depict a “resurrection” scene of his own. Indeed echoing Pauline imagery of putting on immortality, the river-bathers who decided to obey the bell for the discipline have “put on their clothes,” and even the man who stayed behind was, by Vaez, accorded affinity with the “untorn” body of Christ; for in his wholeness (integrum) we read “Not of bone of his shall be broken;” what is more, in light of Matt. 12:40–41 the man in the belly of the crocodile and his friends performing the Lenten discipline at the church could be said to be abiding for a time in their respective “tombs” awaiting the Resurrection.

Bearing in mind the Resurrection, let us return to the original translation offered by the Jesuit for “Acoi Ouian” and consider it not only as one of many possible correct translations but also in keeping with “local idiom.” According to Vaez, Acoi Ouian means “Bring back something for me,” further stating its connection to a local idiom “of ridicule.” Although no contemporary native speakers consulted for this dissertation have attested to any such idiom of ridicule,

44 Chirino, Historia, 1:59

45 John 19:36.

46 As mentioned above, irriedens could suggest a moment of jesting or playfulness.
perhaps it may yet have to do with a traditional ‘idiom’ of bringing home something to friends and family who have stayed behind. Indeed I would like to suggest a reading that respects the promise of Resurrection and local custom while maintaining the integrity of the narrative for both the Jesuit and the community of which he writes.

Although Vaez protested that the indio who stayed behind in the river was killed “before they could render him any assistance spiritual or temporal,” they in fact did render him assistance and fulfill the promise of a traditional gift—the pasalubong—given as a homecoming present by the one who has traveled a distance to the one or ones who have stayed behind. From this perspective, the Jesuit writer may well have been correct in suggesting that what the man had said was a “local idiom.” However, it was hardly one of ridicule. Rather, it was a local custom of gift-giving and the man in the river may have been requesting that his friends bring home something for him from their sojourn to the church.

Furthermore, although the Jesuit letter-writer insisted the man in the river was “alone,” the foundation of the gift-giving and its very expectation is that “it is difficult for the Filipino to conceive himself as alone.” Hence reciprocity is a factor significant in Filipino culture whether in confession, riddling, storytelling, or as was the case here, in translating an understanding of the Resurrection. If we maintain that the church and the belly of the crocodile was (during this Lenten season) typologically speaking the “tomb” of Christ awaiting the Resurrection, the promise of a gift to come was what held them together in their respective spaces. If the man in the river represents a Tagalog Jonah, or even Jesus, then his friends could be seen as friends and family grieving his death. Indeed in one sense, the friends who leave the river for the church are

47 Although pasalubong has been written about in the context of contemporary immigration, to the best of my knowledge, this is the first time an early colonial text or utterance by an indio has been interpreted as a request for a homecoming present.

also “left behind” or remain behind by virtue of the death of their friend, and yet they
nevertheless present one another with reciprocal gifts or pasalubong. The friends left behind are
given the pasalubong of a sign of the Resurrection to come.

What could have driven them apart—aposiopesis—still keeps them together. We do not
know for sure if the man in the river was understood perfectly by his friends. Indeed so much of
Tagalog in both written and voiced forms require discernment by others; they require the listener
to finish the sentence or to supply the missing consonants in the script. Chances are they did
understand their friend even if his words seemed incomplete. And as a token of that
understanding, they each gave a gift of the miracle of ascribing wholeness to one another through
sign and storytelling. However, as written and interpreted by Jesuits, there is only mistranslation,
misquotation, misunderstanding, a broken sentence that another Jesuit (Pedro Chirino) tries to
add other words to in future versions even if it results in having to tear a community apart.

A New Jonah

Given that our story is first written in the context of a report on the status of Jesuit
missions in the Philippines, could not this story also function as a commentary on the plight of
Jonah who is sent by God to preach to the people of Nineveh? Could it be an attempt to draw a
parallel with a morose biblical figure who, only with great reluctance, proclaimed God’s message
to foreigners? Indeed the very story of Jonah goes against the stereotype of the missionary by
challenging the concept of mission itself and by showing his active resistance to the divine
commission. What this tells us is that the missionary’s own imitative acts, and the uses to which
the rhetoric of imitation were deployed were every bit as complex and ambiguous as with the
Christian neophytes to whom they ministered.

Therefore, at stake in this text as first presented in the Annual Letter are three
conceptions of wholeness:
• The body of a man who dared to speak in protest against performing penance is killed but kept whole.

• The body of the fledgling Christian community which protests against the letter-writer’s judgment preserves its integrity after the traumatic death of one of their own.

• But just as significant, the logic of the biblical story is also kept whole when we recognize the possibility that the missionary, like Jonah, violently protests his divine calling, questions God’s love and mercy for “others,” and yet nevertheless watches God’s work unfold.49

B. Marvel and a Confessional Divide: Jesuit Missionary Strategy

Unlike Jesuit annual letters, which may have been written for a restricted audience for administrative purposes, Pedro Chirino’s Relación de las Islas Filipinas published in Rome in 1604 was meant for broader readership following the precepts set in Constitutions of the Society:

Still another very special help will be found in the exchange of letters between the subjects and the superiors through which they learn about one another frequently and hear the news and reports which come from various regions. The superiors, especially the general and the provincials, will take charge of this, by providing an arrangement through which each region can learn from the others whatever promotes mutual consolation and edification in our Lord.50

In his compilation of reports from the Philippines, it was Chirino’s task to represent a flourishing mission field. While the Annual Letter of 1601 spoke of the challenges the beset Spain’s far-flung colony, including a great failed naval battle with Dutch corsairs the previous December (which entailed loss of life and fortune) and pleas for more support from Rome, Chirino’s Relación, includes much more information about local topography, history, culture and language as well as

49 Jonah 4:5.

50 Ignatius, Constitutions, 673.
detailed progress made by Jesuits in spreading the Gospel. Although in the Annual Letter of 1601, the story of the crocodile presented an enigmatic tableau of what Jesuit missionaries did and might yet encounter in the Philippines, Chirino’s Relación could be said to be laying out a different vision.

It is customary in San Juan del Monte to sing the Salve to Our Lady and on Fridays of Lent after the reading of the spiritual lesson to perform the discipline in church. It once happened that while some Indians were bathing in the river, as they are fond of doing, they heard the church bells announcing the Salve and discipline, and immediately most of them began to get ready to attend. One, however, was reluctant to do so, and as if in derision of the others told them in his own tongue, “Ako'y uiwian ninyo,” meaning, “Bring back something home to me,” which in their usage is an expression of mockery. When the others had left for the Salve and he was all alone, he was attacked and killed by a crocodile, before he could receive any assistance or make a confession. And what I marvel at most of all is that whereas this reptile is so voracious by nature that whenever it kills a man it devours him or at the least carries off one of his legs or arms, this man it left intact, though lifeless. He was later found dead by the Indians, to their great horror and their renewed respect for the disciplines and the Salve of our Lady.51

Perhaps the most striking feature of this version is its departure from the theme of encounter and resurrection to its emphasis on confession and its use of the “I.” As John O’Malley has pointed out, the uniqueness of the Jesuit attitude toward confession lay in the belief through confession one effects a thoroughgoing conversion of the soul.52 For Jesuits in the Philippines and elsewhere “conversion” is not limited to those who are not Christian. That is to say, Chirino’s strong “I” statement that he is the one marveling (rather than the man’s friends) signals a strategic move that makes this narrative a confession in itself. What Chirino “confesses” is the significance of the division that must be made between those who believe in right faith and those who do not; those who do not, are rendered “dead” and “lifeless.”

51 Chirino, Relación, 485 (emphasis mine).

This version stands in marked contrast to other “crocodile stories” that are triumphant either because the crocodile—a symbol of native idolatry—is slayed adroitly by one convert who, “turning preacher,” had convinced his wife and kinsfolk to convert also. The slaying of the crocodile, which he did, plunging into the river “alone” and stabbing it repeatedly until the reptile was dead but the convert emerged “alive and unharmed.” In this case, the convert’s “preaching” and his killing of a venerable object, represented a remarkable confession both in word as well as deed. Furthermore, in contrast to our main crocodile story, the convert above, though “alone,” combats the crocodile, and remains without that which once might have “consumed” him—indigenous “idolatry.”

From a practical perspective, dying in the act of confession is a fitting end to a life immersed in the examination of conscience from the moment of a novice’s entry into the Society. Whether through the Spiritual Exercises or the general confession, Jesuits are made constantly aware of both their wounds and weapons in spiritual warfare. The Spiritual Exercises call upon the practitioner to choose between serving under the banner of Christ or the devil in examining one’s sins; and for Jesuits, the weapon of confession and consolation are forged specifically in dialogue with God and other human beings. That the man in our original story died prior to confession and died in the act of mockery, stands as an insult to the sacrament of confession, both practical and theological.

To underscore the contrast once more, Chirino offered yet another story of a man who had been attacked and “nearly mangled” by a crocodile and who was in such “terrible agony he

53 Chirino, Relación, 485.
54 Chirino, Relación, 486.
could barely hear or utter a word.” As he was a catechumen, however, he was baptized, and as he was able to “utter twice very distinctly ‘Jesus, Jesus’” he was able to die in “great joy.”

Chirino also documented elsewhere the traditional practice of confessing one’s sins and its efficacy, as indeed the strategy, to be conveyed in this version of our main story is the necessity not only of instilling this practice into new converts, but of the dangers faced by the Philippine mission in terms of threats within and without of “other” confessions vis-à-vis heresy. Among the various “heresies” to be dealt with in the Jesuit relations are native idolatry in the form of indigenous “shamanism” which are expurgated through exorcism as well as “confession.” Additionally, there are constant threats to the stability of the colony itself from Dutch “heretic” corsairs, the regent of Japan and Chinese pirates. From the tableau of encounter presented in the Annual Letter, the picture that emerges from this version of the text is one that is entrenched, a plant more firmly rooted in its Catholic confession that would render its “enemies” dead and lifeless in the wake of disbelief.

In an essay on Jesuits in Peru, Sabine MacCormack looks at the humanist equation of grammar with virtue and applies it to the production of grammars in Quechua. The production of grammars in local languages as an aid to missionaries is seen by MacCormack as a project that initiated a reversal of roles between Jesuit priests and new converts such that Quechuans became teachers of their own grammar, thus opening the way for Jesuits to learn indigenous “virtue” from the Quechuan mouth. The beauty of MacCormack’s interpretation, however, is called into question (in the case of the Philippines) by the way Jesuits and missionaries from other orders then used native grammar to propagate Christian doctrine. Note Chirino’s reference to the advice given Jesuit Jose de Acosta when it came to learning languages: He wrote:

Some forms of expression and transpositions, which are different from ours (and which as Father Joseph de Acosta so well put it, in writing about this matter,

56 Chirino, Relación, 404.
have to be swallowed), once swallowed and the ear attuned to them not only cease to pose any difficulty but in fact facilitate and give grace [gracian] to language.57

Thus it seems that Chirino may have been struggling with a “crocodile” of his very own—that is the Tagalog language itself. The Spanish verb used here (se han de tragar) means to swallow whole, to drink, or to accept credulously. One could argue that Chirino may have wished to swallow the Tagalog language rather than be caught in its jaws—especially where the Gospel is concerned. Rafael writes that in the publication of doctrinas or works of catechism, the pervasive practice of leaving certain theological words untranslated, or translated into approximate local terms, rendered the familiar foreign to local ears. According to Vicente Rafael:

Breaking into the vernacular, these opaque words lent themselves to a semantic drift that did not guarantee the appearance of the message of Christianity. The point to be stressed here is the possibility of detecting a Tagalog response operating within the structure of their language … a response that would alternately invite and evade the force of the Christian message that the vernacular was conscripted to bear.58

The confessional thus became a space where the priest and the penitent out-riddled one another in verbal dexterity as one conundrum was exchanged for another. Not only did native penitents regularly engage in a game of riddles during confession, they were also wont to tell of the sins of their neighbors while boasting of their own goodness. Rafael says that according to one Jesuit priest, to hear a Tagalog confess was “to enter into a labyrinth without a clue.”59 The phrase is significant given a similar characterization of speech acts among late twentieth century Ilongots as “crooked speech” in opposition to the “straight speech” of missionized members of the tribe.60

57 Chirino, Relación, 278.

58 Rafael, Contracting Colonialism, 326.

59 Rafael, Contracting Colonialism, 337.

Before we examine additional examples of verbal exchanges between Jesuit priests and penitents in Vaez’ letter, we shall examine at Rosaldo’s analysis of Ilongot oratory for insights into native speech acts. Although the penitents of Vaez’ letter and the speakers of Rosaldo’s fieldwork are separated by time, geography and even tribal customs, the theories and practice of Ilongot speech may be able to inform us as to possible notions of speech among Filipinos in early colonial Philippines. More specifically, our experiment shows how the Ilongot notion of “eloquence” differs from the ‘eloquence of Christian humanism, and this in turn will shed light on our analysis of native confession. According to Rosaldo, among the Ilongots:

A poised command of witty and beautiful ways of talking means that one has knowledge, the right to leadership, and the political power which comes with an ability to persuade and understand.”61

It is worth noting that the characterization of an eloquent Ilongot orator is similar to the notion of the ideal orator of Cicero and sixteenth century humanists. The relationship between eloquence and power is similar; but eloquence construed as “crooked language” rich in “art, wit and indirection” is different from one of the humanist ideals of oratory: simplicity and brevity. Rafael has pointed out that missionaries wanted confessions to be as straightforward as possible; and he cites one confession manual requiring the penitent to “straighten his/her sentences.”62 A native penitent may believe s/he has given an eloquent confession according to this standard of “crooked language” but his/her indirection could be misconstrued as evasion, which in the context of confession could the come across as a sign of guilt or withholding. Indeed in Vaez’ letter, an Indian who withholds circumstances of certain sins has a vision of a beautiful child denying him communion saying, “Thou art indeed not worthy of the communion for in thy

61 Rosaldo, Nothing to Hide, 194.

62 Rafael, Contracting Colonialism, 333.
confession thou has *hidden* such and such a circumstance.”63 The Indian reveals the vision to a priest and repeats his confession. Intentional hiding or withholding of sins and their circumstances necessitates repetition of confession; but interestingly, hiding behind one’s words is a defining characteristic of Ilongot oratory.64

In Ilongot oratory, indirect speech and hiding behind one’s words are part of the performance, and part of the journey of discerning one another’s intentions. Even when speech occurs in prescribed, ritualized form, there is a movement toward mutual agreement and understanding—evasion stands as an acknowledgement of the opaqueness of the heart, which a skilled orator, like a good spiritual director, can attempt to discern but never penetrate. According to Rosaldo, Ilongots’ view “each man [as] his own master whose thoughts are private and intentions and motives difficult to understand.”

In Ilongot oratory, the effort of mutual discernment is a protracted process of allusions, metaphors and role-play, as participants take on and speak from prescribed roles (i.e., father and son) rather than individuated selves. Although the example analyzed by Rosaldo is the setting of a bride-price, a public as opposed to private event, her descriptions of the process whereby participants come to an agreement is in my mind, akin to the process of spiritual direction.

If this form of oratory is to be rightly understood in the context of the confession, if indeed this form of oratory speaks to an understanding of dialogue among indios in the sixteenth century, then there is more to the experience of confession than the exchange of riddle for riddle. Indeed, as Rafael points out, the game of riddling, misconstrued by the confessor as evasion, speaks to the level of mutual misunderstanding between priest and penitent, as well as the penitent’s attempt to negotiate his or her relationship with a person of authority in the Church. From Rosaldo’s fieldwork, however, we are able to make conjectures about the nature of the

---


64 Rosaldo, *Nothing to Hide*, 198.
misunderstanding and in Rafael’s analysis, we see how the native penitents circumvented the internalization of guilt and sin by ascribing it to everyone but themselves. The desire for dialogue and discernment is there, as is the commitment to reciprocal exchange, but for native penitents, the connection of confession to sin remains an ambivalent one. We shall have more to say about this ambivalence in our discussion of penance; but suffice to say, while both parties are committed to exchange in confession, the terms of the dialogue are far from fixed; and in spite of Christian imposition into native speech, the indios in the story can and do speak for themselves.

Based on Rosaldo’s findings regarding Ilongot oratory, the definition of confession in the following stories could be broadened to include a verbal examination of conduct with an underlying notion of appropriate behavior or ways of speaking.

*Confession: Persuasion or Compulsion?*

A certain father added that a sick Indian had lost the faculty of speech before he had confessed, so that he could not receive an exhortation to a pious death. Accordingly he urged him to attempt at least to pronounce the name of Jesus. The sick man obeyed, and uttered it obscurely so that he could scarcely be heard. The father continued to urge him to speak more distinctly. Finally with a moderate effort he uttered it with the greatest distinctness, made a complete confession, and on the following day, left his bed well.65

Having lost the faculty of speech, the Indian man in this story cannot confess, and without confession, he cannot die a good death. A pious death is thus predicated upon proper speech—proper speech that confesses the name of Jesus and acknowledges one’s status as a sinner. In this instance, the name of Jesus functions as a one-word confession of faith and a prelude to a confession of sins. What is particularly interesting in this story is the process by which the priest exhorts the penitent first to “pronounce” the name of Jesus, and then to “speak more distinctly” and how the penitent moves from a loss of speech to obscure utterance and

finally to uttering the name “with the greatest distinctness.” The emphasis on distinct pronunciation of the name of Jesus seems at first an unusual request to make of a dying man, and can strike the reader as coercion rather than consolation.

Returning to our story, in my view however, the Jesuit may simply be trying to persuade rather than coerce. The native penitent may have lost the faculty of speech; but he has not lost his reason, nor is his hearing impaired by illness. The Jesuit may command the penitent to say the name of Jesus, but it is with the understanding that the man is in possession of reason. There is at least one example of Jesuit concern that those who desire to be baptized had some capacity for understanding basic tenets of Christian doctrine, even if the finer points of theology elude them. In the example above, the Indian man, though sick and unable to speak, is still capable of being persuaded.

The progressive clarity with which the penitent enunciates the name of Jesus is not only a reflection of his faith, but a reenactment of conversion as he moves from no faith, to speaking/knowing Jesus obscurely, to finally declaring his belief in Jesus such that he is cured from his illness and “leaves his bed well.” The “end” of Jesuit persuasion is not the penitent’s successful articulation of the name of Jesus but the fact that the man recovered his speech, recovered from physical illness and through the act of confession, recovered from spiritual ills as well. Moreover, this incident is reminiscent of healing in the gospels, and thus we see a recasting of an early Christian healing in the context of the new world. Taking seriously the Jesuit motto “for the greater glory of God,” the resulting miracle is not then to be attributed to Jesuit persuasion but to the mercy of Jesus upon the faithful sinner. Thus, confession is not just

66 Vaez’s Letter mentions that among the multitude of indios who came to see them in the village of Dulac is an Indian woman 130 years old described as immovable as stone. Chirino’s Relación gives a more detailed account of the woman’s conversion—especially the priest’s concern that this woman show proof that she had reason. This is done through a native interpreter, a woman “who taught catechism in her own house,” in Chirino, Relación, 385.
professing faith in Jesus, but in praising His holy name, a name that has the power to heal, and
proves a consolation not only to the penitent, but to his Jesuit confessor.

Is it possible that the story is an example of what Michelle Rosaldo calls the voice of
compulsion rather than persuasion? Rosaldo writes:

Modern oratory represented by the speech of recently missionized Ilongots,
substitutes an ideal of simplicity and directness for the complex, evasive style of
traditional oratorical speech … while a superficial view may suggest that it
represents a shift in the direction of reason and clarity, we know from our own
tradition that a plain style—the avowed voice of science and democracy has often
been the voice of compulsion.67

In Rosaldo’s view, Christianity precipitates a change in native voice from persuasion to
compulsion. Evidence of this shift can be seen in another story Vaez relates—of a local chief who
refuses to believe in paradise; Answering the priest “as if had been possessed by a demon” the
man says he would rather go to hell because that is where his relatives and ancestors reside.

Shocked by his response, the priest does “not hesitate to attack the foolish fellow again and again
… [insisting] upon the horror and eternity of the torments with great vehemence of language.”68

The Jesuit here uses language to attack a man who spoke to him “as one possessed by a demon.”
The seeming demonization of native speech is followed by an attempt at “exorcism” through
passionate argument. The man refuses to abandon his ancestors to the point of clutching burning
coal to prove his endurance for hell’s fires. The priest concedes defeat; but is later surprised to
find the man’s mind “divinely changed” such that he requests baptism. To the consolation of the
priest, even though he fails in his efforts to persuade, God effects the conversion.

It is possible that this story represents a misunderstanding on the part of the Jesuit priest
regarding indigenous belief in the afterlife/underworld as told in Miguel de Loarca’s Relation

67 Rosaldo, Nothing to Hide, 195.
whereby (at least for the Yligueynes) they are taken to the inferno by one god (Maguayen) and transferred to the power of another (Sisiburanen) who keeps all but those who are rich enough to offer sacrifices on their behalf. According to Loarca, the fact that the poor are doomed to remain in hell accounts for the natives’ dread of poverty. Taking this into account, one can see the allure of conversion to Christianity as a possible means to both material and spiritual advancement, with the material advancement going alongside spiritual gains. By being persuaded of Catholic paradise, the man in the story does not necessarily abandon his ancestors and relations in the underworld. He can maintain ambivalence with regard to the connection of sin and hell, while taking advantage of the opportunity of a Christian paradise.

*Abah! Confession of Imitation as well as Difference: The native as hermit*

We now turn to another story where both native speech and behavior conform to the early Christian model of the hermit or ascetic. Although the story is not an example of a sacramental confession, the story nevertheless depicts an interview by a Jesuit priest and a native man regarding his manner of life.

There was found in one little village an old man leading the life practically of a hermit; and when our father asked him about his manner of life, he answered so wisely that the father was greatly surprised. Among other things he said that though his bodily life was passed on earth, yet his soul lived in heaven. He had no dreams at night except about the other life, and he was accustomed to see the blessed surrounded by great splendor, and one among them who excelled them all. And when the father gave him a picture of the Last Judgment to look at, in

69 This same belief is mentioned by Fenella Cannell and Vicente Rafael in a discussion about the allure of Christianity for indigenous Filipinos. But as of this writing, I have not come across any treatment of this belief in the context of the conflicts surrounding native clergy or how this view would affect religious vows of poverty.

70 It is possible that what I have interpreted here as “confession” by virtue of the Jesuit’s examination of the native man’s conduct and manner of life is an example of the Jesuit “devout conversation” a distinct type of dialogue and spiritual practice that Nadal had observed among his colleagues (O’Malley 110). Given my interests and the questions raised here about confession, this Jesuit spiritual practice merits further research.
which was expressed the glory of paradise, he asked him if his dreams agreed with this picture of the blessed life. The wonderful man answered, “Should I see nothing more but this, my father? Much more! Much more!”

The story above is also included in Pedro Chirino’s *Relación* from 1604. Chirino’s version speaks of a priest who goes to “examine” the old man, doubtful that he could have maintained a Christian life in the absence of a priest. The elements of the story above are also related by Chirino with the added detail of a Tagalog figure of speech which is preserved in the original dialect. The word is *Aba!* —an interjection, according to Chirino, of “surprise and as it were disdain” (Chirino, 13:165). In Chirino’s version of the story, the hermit says, “*Aba!* Should I see nothing more than this my father? Much More! Much More!” Chirino’s inclusion of a word otherwise excluded from Vaez’ *Annual Letter* suggests a subtle difference in the interpretation of native speech. Although the hermit is no less wonderful in Vaez’ letter, the preservation of the Tagalog phrase gestures to a particular attitude toward native speech.

Not only has the hermit “answered wisely,” he lives as aptly as he speaks—and he does both according to Christian ideals. Furthermore, he questions the priest, with an expression marking both difference and wonder. The possibility that an expression could contain both difference and wonder is particularly powerful in the context of this interview. Although the priest in Chirino’s story assumes he will find a man who has returned to the old ways, the old man impresses the Jesuit with his dreams of paradise that are very much in line with the Catholic view, and when the Jesuit proceeds to show him a print/picture of the Day of Judgment with paradise depicted, the old man says “*Aba!* Should I see nothing more but this? Much More! Much More!”

“Aba” is an interjection of difference that allows the speaker to assert his opinion, but *aba* is also an expression of affirmation, and an exclamation reserved for something marvelous. This is an especially nice moment in which the old man subtly corrects his interrogator, with an

---

appeal to wonder. The expression embodies a kind of creative tension, that lends support to a Catholic vision of paradise, but ultimately holds the old man's dreams as “much more” than one artist's and/or the Church's rendition. In other words, the old man, even as he embodies the Christian ideal of hermit in both habit and speech, engages in praise and blame. In this instance a local expression carves out a space for a native speaker within the narrative of Christian history and exemplarity. It is an expression that enables him to affirm someone’s opinion, as well as beg to differ. It announces the marvelous and proclaims the presence of a mystery.

C. Judgment

The third redaction of the story appears in a History, and genre must be taken into account; for history is understood as a repository of good and bad examples from which readers are supposed to learn and imitate. Unlike the Annual Letter which painted a tableau of encounter and of competing theories of resurrection and imitation vis-à-vis the figure of Jonah; and unlike in the second version, which presented readers a confessional divide, this final version contains all of these elements but trains its eye on a surprising subject.

Among the pious exercises practiced this Lent was that of singing the Salve to our Lady, at the end of which they usually read from a pious book Then they took the discipline which the men wanted to do. One Friday, the bells rang, at the usual time, while some Tagalogs were bathing in the river Dalig, on which we said Cainta is located near our church of San Juan. Hearing the bells some of them decided to go to church. One of them, not as devout, not only refused to go, but like the tyrant to Saint Dorothy, also said mocking the others “Ako obviam (sic) nimo (sic)” (Bring me some of the fruit you will gather by leaving). They went to the Salve, while he remained in the river, where a crocodile attacked him, as a lion did to another prophet, which proved the executioner was dispatched at that moment to execute with justice. It was a voracious beast, for, against its natural way, left the body whole, but lifeless, as punishment for such malice and lack of faith.


73 Chirino, Historia, 2: Book 4, ch.5.
This narrative is focused on men; all the men bathing in the river are seen to be converts to Catholicism, with the man who stayed behind described as being “not as devout,” but also compared to a “tyrant” from an early Christian story of a female Saint. The man is shown not to laugh but to mock his friends, implying a clear judgment of them for their decision to leave him behind for the church. The phrase uttered by this man is suspiciously corrupt in the text, but according to the simple translations of the other two versions, it could still mean Come home to me, Bring home something for me; or, interestingly, Tagalog grammar is so rich, it can sustain a third interpretation in keeping with the tone of judgment imbued by Chirino! Indeed, Michael Coroza has suggested, that if “ouian”/uiwan if the ‘u’ in “uiwan” is simply a glottal sound, the actual sentence is simply “ako’y iwan ninyo” or “iwan ninyo ako” which could be “leave me (alone).”

That said, however, Chirino’s deployment of early Christian exemplars who work a miracle of faith and a prophet from Scripture who is killed by a lion for his disobedience points to a different form of Christian witness. In the case of Saint Dorothy, not only was she known for her stance against idolatry, she was celebrated for the “fruits” of her martyrdom by which she was said to convert many. These “fruits” were actual physical, tangible fruits in addition to her death! Moreover, by these “fruits” she was said to have converted among many the scribe who had originally mocked her. The tactile “fruits” in addition to actual martyrdom plays an important part in Chirino and other Jesuits’ conception of missionary strategy during this period as Jesuits especially in Asia, questioned the prudence of martyrdom traditionally conceived (dying as a result of persecution in Christ’s name) and martyrdom through everyday mission. This is a question that would trouble Jesuits such as Jose de Acosta, Alessandro Valignano and Chirino in light of the Franciscan and Jesuit martyrdom in Nagasaki in 1597, (in which 26 people were

74 Michael Coroza, Ph.D. Correspondence, July 24, 2013.
75 1 Kings 3:20.
killed) a detailed (and painful) discussion of which Chirino enters into in his Historia—especially since the Franciscans who were martyred in Japan had come from the Philippines. It was a martyrdom, Valignano referred to merely as “putting themselves and all of Japanese Christianity in danger and gaining nothing.”

Rather Valignano emphasizes the importance of “making ourselves like natives, and all of us having come with the resolve to stay here til death….” This is a sentiment quoted by Chirino time and again throughout the Historia when he emphasizes the work of the missionary is not simply to baptize by the thousands and run, but in the everyday tasks, disappointments and loneliness to be “broken and annihilated…in imitation of Jesus Christ.” In the History, Chirino admits to jealousy, and to the persecution suffered by Jesuits both in Japan and in the Philippines as a result of the events leading up to and surrounding the martyrdom itself. Anticipating that his readers might wonder why he would choose to write about a primarily Franciscan “event” Chirino offers the following defense:

One who reads the previous chapters thinking they are a history of the Philippines will criticize the author of going beyond the limits of his subject. And he, who with human eyes looks at the crucified martyrs and their crosses, on the one hand, and our Fathers out of prison, surviving in Japan, on the other, will consider them miserable, and these fortunate. But since truly the fortunate are those who died in the Lord, so the living are not at rest, but face severe tribulations, which perhaps merited martyrdom for them [my emphasis]. Our Philippine Province has no small share in it and this is the reason why it behooved me in this history to include so much about Japan. On us has pegged the pestilence, if we may rightly call it, which with the love of a Father, God our Lord sends to bless His servants and be pleased with their suffering.

Chirino wants to make clear three things: That Jesuit and Franciscan missions in Asia are intertwined; that their decisions and actions affect one another, and that the Cross of Japan in all

76 Valignano, quoted in Moran, Japanese and the Jesuits, 80.

77 Valignano, quoted in Moran, Japanese and the Jesuits, 87.

78 Chirino, Historia, 314–315.
its glory and shame rests on all shoulders—if a little unequally, in his view. While it would seem, to human eyes, that the Jesuits were fortunate enough to have escaped suffering, unlike the Franciscan martyrs who endured crucifixion, Chirino not only flips things around to say that not only is it the martyrs who are the fortunate ones, having died so famously in the Lord, it is the living Jesuits who in the face of tribulations—are truly miserable and in so doing, merit martyrdom. Here Chirino places the tribulations that have resulted since the martyrdom on almost equal footing with the martyrdom itself. With the understanding of martyrdom as Christian witness, Chirino dares to claim the Jesuits’ share in martyrs’ crown—especially as he, as an historian (and Christian), is about to point out both its thorns and its glory. This last point is of particular importance for Chirino as he himself tries to “obey the laws of history” and give each one his due. In his particular case, In the History of the Philippine Province of the Society of Jesus, he is attempting to account for the makings of an exemplary Christian mission. In the preceding pages, Chirino writes:

Since history is a teacher and therefore should speak of everything to teach the present and future generations by means of past events, I shall not omit an incident how from painful lessons follow tricky ones and how much one ought to listen to the veterans. This incident is that in their holy zeal the unshod fathers prided themselves about the great respect and reserve Ours showed them, suggesting that they should accommodate themselves slowly to the times. This they called Jesuit prudence … contrasting their fervor with our tepidity, according to the wrong ideas of the time … In time God freed them and made them change their mind, such that the very things they condemned in us, they themselves imitated and embraced afterwards, as necessary for their good government and consolidation, not only in this but in many more things, as in changing their habit, in giving the Japanese presents and favors.79

It is with these things in mind that Chirino redacts the “crocodile story.” Chirino adds the figure of the disobedient prophet … from 1 Kings 20—who is punished for not being strong enough to stand against other prophets of the Lord, implying that perhaps Jesuits must be strong

79 Chirino, Historia, 303.
enough to stand against Christians of other religious orders in doing what is better for the spread of the Gospel, and strong enough to stand strengthen and encourage other Jesuits in this regard. In offering this example, in light of St. Dorothy, Chirino has made an interesting decision. Although a seeming indictment against native people is retained, the focus of message has really shifted. The Jesuit missionary strategy can thus be said to be one of Christian witness as martyrdom, but martyrdom understood as mission in all of its attendant complexities from an unwillingness or perplexity in attending to the Other (Jonah) to disobedience in attending to one another.

What then do we make of Jesuit missionary strategy from this scene at the bank of the river? What can we bring home from our analysis here? For this chapter, we explored Jesuit missionary strategy as Jesuits working in the Philippines might have explored them—using one story told in three different ways—that is, what does it mean to be lodged in the belly of a crocodile and spewed out whole? From the little that is provided to us by the Jesuit letter-writer, we can only make informed guesses as to what the man actually said, what meaning it might have had for his friends and for the Jesuit missionaries who wrote and read the text. There is indeed a struggle to re-evaluate and re-work accepted tradition through acts of imitation—acts that are at once a mode of protest and critique as well as a means of developing a missionary strategy that draw from a similarly creative and complex source.

Before we could begin to ponder questions of missionary strategy, we saw first, what might be a Jesuit missionary encounter in the context of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century. Indeed one version of our story allowed us to encounter competing visions of the afterlife, penance, imitation and obedience mediated through the biblical figure of Jonah and the whale re-configured in the context of the Philippines as an unnamed indio in the belly of the crocodile. Analysis of the second version of the same story saw a shift from talk of imitation and resurrection to confession, both practical and theological i.e., of life, of faith. The emphasis demonstrated a Jesuit strategy focused on settling new converts into a practice of regular confession, perhaps as a bulwark against heresy—protection against a relapse into native idolatry,
and a warning to prospective missionaries that the Philippines was also vulnerable to attack from all manner of “heathens” and “heretics” from other places (i.e., Dutch Protestants, the Japanese who were constantly threatening to invade, Muslims within and outside of the Philippines etc.) The third version offered that brought encounter and confession together into a more complex Jesuit missionary strategy, and perhaps a new vision for the age itself—that is Christian witness or martyrdom as Christian mission.

For just as Tagalogs are so named because they are Taga-Ilog or “from the river,” the missionaries with whom they came into contact could be said to come from that river too; for indeed the first Jesuits to the Philippines were said to have waded in swollen rivers as they made their way modo apostolico, on foot, accompanying Bishop Salazar to Manila in 1581. In their willingness to immerse themselves in the waters and landscape of the culture, these first Jesuits and those who would follow—men like Pedro Chirino, were aware that they were being sent “…forgetting their own excellent qualities and merits for high dignities [to] be annihilated and broken, in imitation of Jesus Christ….” From a Jesuit perspective, such imitatio Christi implied a missionary strategy of intensive labor to learn and teach a unique message using new grammar as thus abandon oneself to a new vision of martyrdom.

Erasmus of Rotterdam, in the Dialogue with the Ciceronians, argued that proper imitation is not about mimicking another’s gestures and words, but of knowing yourself and your subject matter so thoroughly that you are able to speak from your heart. Indeed it seems to address the concerns of the Tagalog converts of our story as well as our missionary, and maybe even the ancestral spirit embodied in our crocodile. “Your speech will not be a patchwork or a mosaic, but a lifelike portrait of the person you really are, a river welling out from your inmost being.”

80 Dialogus Ciceronianus, 133.
What I hoped to demonstrate in this chapter was how Jesuit mission re-framed as a new form of martyrdom affected the translation and transmission of the Gospel—with a renewed appreciation for its difficulties, the uses to which it could be put, and the mysteries of language and theology that eluded tongues both foreign and familiar. We saw how the story of a native convert swallowed and spewed forth from the belly of the crocodile evoked an abundance of rich thought for Jesuits; what is more surprising, however, is that in the confluence of rhetoric and exemplarity (embodied typologically in Jonah set forth in a new landscape) called forth an abandonment to martyrdom that required efforts to abandon or empty out the self.

From this perspective, Erasmus' concern to know your subject matter thoroughly that you are able to speak from your heart suggests that learning an Other's culture and language potentially converts Jesuits who arrive in the Philippines into virtual “Tagalogs” “or river men” with bodies experiencing a kenosis or self-emptying of the Gospel as translated in their very being and emptied out in the speech and language of another. Like Jonah, or the sea creature from whose belly he emerged, or Jesus himself whom they profess to imitate, the Jesuits who arrived in the Philippines arrived open-mouthed, in awe of God’s mercy, ready to announce the Resurrection.
II. Working Wonders: Jesuit Accommodation and the Bracketing of Authority

Totus mundus nostra fit habitatio.\(^{81}\) As part of an exhortation for missionaries and a Jesuit mirror of the Incarnation, Jerome Nadal’s words also reflected an era of global expansion as well as a humanist ideal regarding theology: its practice (as an academic discipline) and its analysis (as rhetoric) through the recuperation and translation of patristic and classical sources. Moreover, nowhere is the Jesuit exhortation, its praxis, its humanist ideals and its globe-encompassing objectives of *evangelium* as well as *imperium* more vividly expressed than in the art of printing and publishing, and where the Jesuits are concerned, in the publication of the *Spiritual Exercises*, the *Constitutions of the Society*, and the Jesuit *Relations*. The latter were reports culled from specific mission fields and made available to interested readers around the world, Jesuit or not.\(^{82}\)

In the previous chapter we saw the effects of translation on Jesuit missionary strategy through an analysis of three redactions of an extraordinary event from a Jesuit mission. It showed the significance of exemplarity for understanding the predicament of both convert and

\(^{81}\) Jerome Nadal SJ quoted in Ana Carolina Hosne, *The Jesuit Missions to China and Peru, 1570–1610: Expectations and appraisals of expansionism* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 3. Although Hosne does account for the profound differences in “colonial situations” as having an effect on “accommodation” in China and Peru, she continues to maintain a saintly view of Jesuit “accommodation” as practiced by Matteo Ricci in China and accommodation with a “dark side” as practiced by Acosta in Peru. This perspective stems in part from a lack of appreciation for the difficulties faced by Jesuits in Spanish colonies and for the nuances of humanist education and exemplarity which are explored here. As with Mignolo and other scholars, Acosta is still labeled “scholastic” in his thinking rather than humanist.

\(^{82}\) Ines G. Zupanov, *Disputed Mission: Jesuit Experiments and Brahmanical Knowledge in Seventeenth-Century India* (Oxford University Press, 2001). Zupanov looks at the deliberate editing of texts as one of the ways Jesuits not only hoped to “describe the world but to change it” p16. Additionally, Protestants such as Samuel Purchas (1575-1626) would make use of Jesuit information on China and other travels even when mocked Jesuit learning, missionary strategy and miracles. See *Purchas, his Pilgrim* (1619).
missionary as an utterance from the river—genuine Tagalog—was used to think through various situations: the calling of a missionary; disobedience to divine command; practical and theological confession, and the responsibilities of a missionary regarding his spiritual fruits. In the figure of Jonah in particular, we saw an example of reluctance, disobedience, even confession of utter surprise and wonderment at God’s mercy. We saw how Vaez, the original letter-writer and later Chirino would harness this “type” of Jonah and put it to good use in several genres of Jesuit writing in order to refine missionary strategy—with regard to how and why a Jesuit might be sent to serve others in a strange new world; what he might encounter; how he might translate the Gospel to others and the tension involved in (not) being consumed or swallowed entire.

In this chapter, we delve more deeply into one of the missionary’s tasks by examining his raison d’etre. The significance of place or locus will be explored in this chapter as we inquire into the concept of Jesuit accommodation and whether idols were tolerated therein. In the Philippines, Jesuit accommodation of indigenous religious practice and the conversion of indigenous shamans were negotiated more creatively than is commonly perceived. Pedro Chirino’s citation of a patristic source draws our attention to questions of authority in a colonial setting; focus on humanist rhetoric, printing and punctuation allow for surprising views on Jesuit accommodation as we examine the use of parenthesis (thus) in an analysis of Christian exemplarity and idolatry in oscillation (typologically and typographically).

In the eighth chapter of the Jesuit Relación de las Islas Filipinas from 1604 Pedro Chirino wrote:

Diré sólo ahora que al cabo de diez años yo solía decir (á imitación de San Gregorio Taumaturgo) que daba á nuestro Señor muchas gracias, porque cuando entré allí hallé apenas cuarenta cristianos, y al cabo deste tiempo no había cuatro infieles...

I will say for the time being that, at the end of ten years, I used to say (in imitation of St. Gregory Thaumaturgus) that I gave thanks to our Lord, for when
I entered the place, I found hardly forty Christians, and at the end of that time there were not four infidels.83

Is Chirino paraphrasing a saying or invoking a life, and what does either mode contribute to our exploration about Jesuit exemplarity? Chirino was in Rome as Vice-Provincial for the Philippine Province between 1602 and 1604 and working on the Jesuit Relations when the Society of Jesus in Germany published Gregory Thaumaturgus’ works. This suggests that Chirino and other Jesuits could have read the *Life of Gregory Wonderworker* as written by St. Gregory of Nyssa even though what Chirino imitates is a paraphrase of a saying that comes from the Roman Breviary of Gregory Wonderworker’s Feast Day on November 17.

There is evidence that that the works of Gregory Thaumaturgus—together with the vita by Gregory of Nyssa was published in Greek and Latin in Mainz in 1604 by Antonii Heirat and Balthasar Lippium. Although we cannot know for certain that Chirino read this version of Nyssa’s life of Gregory, Chirino’s presence in Rome at the time of its publication as well as the presence of the Jesuit crest on the title page suggest the possibility that Chirino and other Jesuits could have had access to the text prior to its printing.

What is more, there are indeed parallels between Chirino’s narrative and legends associated with this early Christian saint and bishop from Pontus (ca. 213–270) with regard to the spiritual landscape and the manner in which conversions were wrought and described. Although Chirino mentions St. Gregory Thaumaturgus or Wonderworker’s example only once, Chirino’s sojourn in the Philippines as a missionary imitates that of his predecessor several times—and in the first instance it does so typographically. Indeed St. Gregory Wonderworker’s successful accommodation of a pagan temple (where demons were

worshipped) into a place where a Christian might spend the night was represented visually by the *lunulae* or parenthetical marks which had been converted by Pedro Chirino (*á imitatio* de S. Gregory Taumaturgo) into lodgings for the Wonderworker’s name, to indicate to the reader whose example he has been following. These simple strokes of punctuation provide a modest but wonderful view of Jesuit accommodation not simply as “safe space” but as a locus of argument.

In A. Conversion by Miracle or the Mundane, we begin this chapter with an overview of the local topography—the colonial re-setting of St. Gregory’s wonderworking. As we shall see, Pedro Chirino appears (like other Jesuits) to be quite comfortable in embracing and critiquing and surpassing those whom they imitate (their type), indicating to their readers that “something greater is here.” In Chirino’s case, we shall see him critique St. Gregory’s miracle-working in favor of more ordinary missionary labors while upholding the means with which St. Gregory achieved his first and greatest conquest: The conversion of the former temple custodian by means of writing.

Then in B. The Catolona as Spiritual Warrior and Wonderworker as well as C. The Male Catolona as the New Magdalen we shall conduct an analysis of the conversion of two indigenous shamans—female and male—in light of St. Gregory Wonderworker’s story. The two conversions highlight the special concerns of spiritual power especially as it relates to idolatry (the antithesis of true Christian worship) and male, Catholic priestly authority (the opposite of female shamanic practice) which nevertheless, is complicated by unique features of Jesuit clerical masculinity. Written and spiritual authority coalesce in both the story of St. Gregory and in the Jesuit Relations—exemplified by Jesuit accommodation with and without parenthesis. Although we cannot know for certain whether the placement of lunulae was the work of the author or the printers and publishers, the parenthetical marks that cage demons

---

84 Matt. 12:40–41.
and evoke Mary Magdalen are visible in Jesuit Relation of Chirino’s as published in 1604 to the present day. Its continued preservation therefore in a Jesuit text (regardless of “author’s intentions”) raises questions about Jesuit accommodation in light of humanist printing, printers, publishers in an age of global expansion.

Jesuit accommodation is a far less understood term. In contemporary scholarship about Jesuits, “accommodation” brings the Jesuit missions in Japan and China to mind, especially the figures of Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606) and Matteo Ricci (1552–1610). These are distinguished from the more “coercive” tactics of Hispanicization associated with Jesuits like Jose de Acosta (1540–1600). Although scholars such as Ana Carolina Hosne rightly acknowledge the profound difference in governing power by Europeans in Latin America and Asia, and how Jesuit accommodation was determined and conditioned by these and other factors, scholars uphold an all too simple view of Ricci and Valignano while failing to appreciate the complexities faced by Acosta in Peru whose own proemium to De Procuranda Indorum Salute uses the word accommodaté in describing the missionary’s dire task.

Ricci’s accommodation of Confucian philosophy and other Chinese customs as a way to appeal to the scholarly elite of China has often been acknowledged, as has Valignano’s missionary strategy of adapting to cultural differences. His “awareness of the Jesuits’ impotence in Japan” is taken as motivation and even as justification. This has led to an idealized understanding of accommodation as somehow making space for, or celebrating the “other” – and in so doing, losing hold of the Latin meaning of the word accommodatio


86 José de Acosta, De Promulgando Evangelio apud Barbaros: sive De Procuranda Indorum salute, Libri sex (Laurentii Anisson, 1670); Mignolo’s preface in Acosta.

87 Hosne, Jesuit Missions, 68.
and how it might serve as rhetorical category for argument: in other words, how one might adapt one’s speech and self so as to speak well and aptly (*dicere aptius*) to others and about others, or indeed how to practice “imagining an other”88 in light of intense, challenging encounters, in an inhospitable place, ill-suited for evangelium, in order for the Gospel to bear fruit.

By professing the difficulty of “speaking well and aptly” In his prologue to *De Procuranda Indorum Salute*, Jose de Acosta was not merely making a complaint about fellow missionaries. He was submitting the missionary project to the moral and literary demands of *vir bonus dicendi*, the Perfect Orator dreamed of by Cicero and whose education was outlined by Quintilian.89 Moreover, in reminding his readers of the wisdom, even the necessity of accommodation in the face of exceptional uncertainties, Acosta ought to be given credit for acknowledging that he was not only caught between a rock and a hard place, but that *accomodatio* might also be brought to bear on the toughest theological questions and experiences within a specific colonial context. While Acosta is not the subject of this chapter, his influence on other Jesuits and on the Philippines was keenly felt.90

In recounting St. Gregory Thaumaturgus’ first “conquest,” his ancient biographer Gregory of Nyssa wrote that the saint had “felt an inner impulse toward the city in which he would have to organize a church for God. He knew that the whole region was held fast by the

---


89 See Patrick Provost-Smith, “Macau, Manila, Mexico and Madrid: Jesuit Strategies over the Christianization of China (1580–1600)” (Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 2002).

90 Chirino refers to *De Procuranda Indorum Salute* in his discussion of the Tagalog languages in Chapter 14 of the *Relación* (discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation).
deception of demons.”

Likewise in the Philippines, Chirino and other missionaries strove to build churches to rival the little houses dedicated to local anitos (sacred ritual objects) and to perform rites and cures to rival those of the catolonas or indigenous shamans/healers, many of whom were women. While Gregory won converts with marvelous deeds such as bidding a huge rock to move, drying up the waters of a lake to settle a dispute and commanding demons to come and go where he chose, Chirino and his fellow-missionaries work miracles through the sprinkling of holy water and the use of relics and other holy objects including the printed image of Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus, who at the time had not yet been made a saint. Indeed at Chirino’s behest, the inhabitants of an entire village moved—church, cross and all—to higher ground, and they did so with great speed for fear of sleeping in the old village now presumably occupied by demons.

This holds an echo of the greatest story associated with St. Gregory Thaumaturgus:

According to Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory Thaumaturgus, traveling on a night of heavy rain, sought shelter in a pagan temple; invoking the name of Christ, the Wonderworker drove the temple demons away, and with the sign of the cross, purified the air polluted by pagan sacrifice. The following day, the temple custodian arrived to find demons complaining about how they had been barred entrance (my emphasis) into the temple by Gregory. To prove the power of God to the temple custodian, Gregory proceeded to tear a piece of paper from a book in order to write a note to the demons to allow them to enter into the temple again. With the words, GREGORY TO


92 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 13:189.

93 Chirino, Relación, 256.

SATAN: ENTER inscribed on a section of a book, the demons re-entered the temple to the amazement (and eventual conversion) of its former guardian.95

Chirino, writing in Rome about Jesuits the Philippines, and inspired by the example of Thaumaturgus, also composed what we might consider a “message to demons”: Indeed he wrote about having dared them to enter the old village, sure of God’s power and secure in the knowledge that the custodians of the village (that is, the chiefs or datos that govern different districts) will move with him and abandon their old “idolatrous” ways—going so far as to refuse to sleep where they once did for fear of old demons occupying a space where the Church and cross had once been.

The act of writing the Relación thus effects for Chirino a kind of exorcism whereby indios are wrested from their idols. Indeed through the writing and storytelling of conversions and miracles, he assures the Superior General of the Jesuit order that “All are freed from error,” that in particular villages there is no trace of idolatry left, and that in fact “they have turned their false superstition to true religion and Christian piety.”96

Writing is also a battleground for authority itself, as Chirino first praises the indigenous Tagalogs for their ability to write—both men and women—and then reprimands them for the uses to which they put these skills. In this way, Chirino appears to imply that writing must have a purpose, a Christian purpose, in order to be truly good, truly wonderful. What is written should be inspired by God and profitable to our doctrine;97 the Relations should be understood as a faithful commentary not on the textual scripture but on the world as given for our interpretation.

Such “praise and blame” as is assigned to those indigenes who can write closely fits the description of epideictic rhetoric. This is the rhetoric that mediates between the text and the

95 Slusser, St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, 58.
96 Blair and Robertson, The Philippine Islands, 13:89, 72.
97 2 Timothy 3:16.
world, that points from the text to what is out there; that points from principle and precept to example and precedent of action and behavior. As in our discussion of idolatry and accommodation (to which we will return), it is worth insisting that Chirino’s praise for indigenous script and its practice ought to be appreciated in itself; the criticism he issues may have less to do with the Tagalog culture in particular than to his own hesitant negotiations over the power of writing in a new, unfamiliar, and colonial context.

The very presence of so many assurances may indicate just how threatened the missionaries felt; Chirino’s reliance on ancient sources does not limit his unique experience of the present moment. Despite his admiration of Gregory and the proliferation of miracles wrought, there is an underlying critique of his ancient predecessor and of “wonderworking” throughout Chirino’s report.

A. Conversion by Miracle or the Mundane?

The method by which Gregory Thaumaturgus eventually wins the conversion of the temple custodian (for he was duly impressed by the Gregory’s first feat, but desired more proof) is by performing more wonders “so as to be convinced of the faith through an event.”98 Hence in the New World and in the Philippines, the proliferation of the marvelous and the miraculous include accounts of women recovering the power of speech99 and a spectacular vision of the cross that was witnessed by inhabitants of more than one village.100 These are but a few of the many recorded wonders that result in Catholic conversion or occur as a result of an act of faith, either by the indio, the priest, or both. However, perhaps the true “wonder” performed by Gregory, is mission and (the resulting) conversion itself, in spite of the personal risks involved. At least that is

98 Slusser, St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, 58
99 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 13:135.
100 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 13:154–155.
how Chirino and other Jesuit missionaries might have seen it. In the following passage, Chirino describes the heroic efforts of one Jesuit:

The road thither was hard to descry in the darkness of the night, and abounded with serpents which were continually encountered, stretched out in the road. In addition to this, a very broad river must be passed, with rapid current and full of crocodiles—which when they become ravenous, rush upon anything. Yet all these obstacles were of less importance than one soul redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ.101

In this passage, the physical terrain poses its own challenges, as do the distances that need to be travelled between communities, and the darkness and solitude of the journeys. As we have already seen, the crocodile itself held sacred meaning for indigenous Tagalogs so not only must the missionary navigate the topography and survive the physical and natural dangers but he must also attempt to negotiate whatever cultural or spiritual significance these dangers may hold for potential and new converts. The work of conversion is ongoing, and subject to constant negotiation, accommodation, re-assessment, purgation, control, “raids,” bonfires. It is the persistent ministry of the fathers, their sincere concern for the welfare of both body and soul that wins converts, but this is not enough. The community must be built up through translation, transculturation, and friendship, in which missionaries and converts can share experiences of genuine trust and intimacy. And this must involve the missionaries showing respect for the cultural significance of, inter alia, crocodiles. They may be dangerous, but they may also be sacred, and must thus be treated with respect. “Accommodation” thus recognizes the persistent value and danger of the sacred in pagan terms, even among those who have converted. Just as the missionaries practice accommodatio, so they do not expect their converts to renounce non-Christian values even when they inhere in crocodiles.

101 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 13:167.
Therein lies Chirino’s “wonderworking” and his own subtle but significant critique of his patristic exemplar and predecessor. While Chirino and his compatriots delight in the miraculous and are affected by the zeal with which native Filipinos display their desire the faith, Chirino assures his readers that the fathers display caution before granting baptism, requiring of the catechumens proofs of understanding and free will. Indeed, he warns prospective missionaries time and again of the dangerous assumptions regarding missionary life and Christian conversion—that is, that the work is easy, and that conversion happens instantaneously, and is over and done with in an impassioned but impetuous act of baptism. His missionary reports spoke constantly of the more mundane stuff of mission. Thus, the ecstasy of conversion is checked by reason and the narration of the wonderful is tempered by the ordinary. Although miracles and wonderworking fill the pages of Jesuit reports, there are many more pages that recount anxiety, encounter, negotiations between and within oneself and others.

For Chirino, the real work of the missionary is not to be found in miracles, but in ministry to the poor, the sick, the dying, and most importantly, in the difficult, anxious labor of eradicating “idolatry” by means of preaching and setting a proper Christian example. In particular, he uses the case of “idolatry” and its “relapse” in the region of Taytay and the neighboring town of San Juan del Monte as an opportunity to reach prospective missionaries about what kind as well as to “temper the fervor of the new ministers.” He compares them to gold-diggers who come to India in search of riches: such impassioned but uninformed men “think that one only has to arrive and baptize millions, and with it form model Christian communities, without any effort or difficulty.”

___

102 This is how Ferdinand Magellan was killed. After he “discovered” the Philippines, he apparently “preached” and baptized indios by the thousands; he then challenged the neighboring (and yet unyielding chiefs) to a battle in which he died.

103 Chirino, History, 80.

104 Chirino, History, 80
not found easily, and neither is faith: not that lasting faith which springs forth from the more mundane work of mission and which apparently Saint John Chrysostom considered a miracle.  

In this way, Chrino, rather deftly positions his own narrative in terms of both his ancient exemplar and his local situation: there miracles and miracle-working with respect to Catholic missionary work are not denigrated, and maintain their holy status, but they are also subject to critique. Miracles and wonders are not marvelous in and of themselves. They are a means to an end, and are subject to the ultimate Christian purpose. In other words, we begin to see just how the imitation of Gregory Wonderworker in early colonial Philippines is not simply a grafting of old onto new. As one of the missionary’s special tasks (after preaching the Gospel), the eradication of “idolatry” is another way Jesuit missionaries in early colonial Philippines sought to establish their spiritual authority. And yet that authority will also be established by not condemning idolatry or other pagan practices in an outright and absolute manner. The difference between Gregory in the 4th century and the Jesuits in the 16th century may be located in shifts in writing practices.

We shall investigate two instances where spiritual authority is contested and converted by writing. In what follows, the act of writing and of conversion are a multivalent, textured, re-structuring of the local social order: The first example appears to be the Jesuits’ forceful attempt to oust a powerful female authority figure and healer or catolona; the second example looks at the curious conversion of the leader of a group of male catolones. These episodes offer remarkable opportunities not only to raise questions about power and spiritual authority but also to challenge and refine ideas about Jesuit practices of accommodatio.

---

105 Chirino, History, 80 (my emphasis).

106 Rather like Gregory the Great with his disciple in the Dialogues, Chirino schools his readers into subordinating the miraculous, as the least of the ways one might choose to imitate Jesus Christ in favor of simple word and deed.
B. The Catolona as Warrior and Wonder Worker

In the town of San Juan del Monte, Chirino reported, “This most secret plague continue[d] enslaving the town to the point where there was no sick person whom [the catolonas] did not immediately visit.” Chirino wrote of an entire group of priestesses, but focused his attention especially upon one of them, a woman of tremendous prestige, power, and family connections in the community, who could “lure the timorous and…make even the resolute dissemble with her so much as not to expose her guilt for fear of personal harm.” 107 It took another Jesuit’s zealous persistence and the dismantling of her very house to discover her anito hidden in the bamboo pole that supported the roof of her home. Even though the priestess eventually converted, Chirino seemingly deviated from the ancient narrative of Gregory Wonderworker, by recounting how the catolona continued to be tormented by old demons even after she considered becoming a Christian. Despite her efforts to “convert herself,” Chirino wrote:

[The demon] was so disgraced and aggrieved by this ridicule that (unable to do anything else by way of vengeance) he spent the next night (with many others of his kind) tormenting the poor Catolona (who disillusioned by his lack of power and was trying to convert herself and to abhor him and to ask for mercy) with cruel visions and threats. 108

In contrast to other conversion stories where sick unbelievers are cured and converted, or the mute are converted and regain the power of speech to preach the Gospel, the once powerful priestess does not receive any immediate benefit. Instead, she pleads for mercy and, more importantly, it is as if the Relación itself has served as a written record that allowed the old demons to re-enter the catolona’s mind (her temple, as it were) to torment her—a rather negative twist on Gregory Thaumaturgus’ writing the demons a permission slip to return to the temple!

107 Chirino, Relación, 302.
108 Chirino, Relación, 304.
Indeed, the temple and temple custodian in Gregory’s case are conflated in the very mind and body of the catolona whereupon history is being re-written and made to serve as a palimpsest\textsuperscript{109} for spiritual warfare.

If the story is interpreted in terms of the battle between God and Satan, Chirino displays a confidence in the final outcome; but on the level of the contest between priest and indigenous shaman, the earthly duel continues.

Although her conversion was ultimately successful, albeit with the help of the cross, at its inception, she suffers for her decision, and it even appears to be momentarily undercut by the painful experience of her former anito’s cruel threats and visions. What could have been an example of a new convert’s triumph over the “demon,” and what might have been used as an example of a new Christian’s courage, especially female courage, is instead seen as an act of condemnation and judgment from two forces—both former and new allies. Furthermore, whereas Chirino writes of native boys who are taught rudimentary rites to perform in the priest’s absence,\textsuperscript{110} in the case of the catolona there is evidence of continued rivalry and a lingering anxiety that “vestiges of evil which they have sucked from their mothers’ breasts are not so easily forgotten.”\textsuperscript{111}

From Chirino’s perspective it relays all elements of the wonderworker story succinctly, and, more importantly, any lingering presence of “idolatry” must be read as a sign of Christian power. Indeed as with Gregory, Chirino has appropriated and inverted “pagan” religious presence to serve Christian ends. Thus, in this case, the presence of demonic power, within the catolona and the persistence of idolatry within the margins of the Jesuit missions

\textsuperscript{109} The image of indigenous women as “palimpsest” appears to be very generative; consider for instance La Malinche in the context of the Templo Mayor in New Spain.

\textsuperscript{110} Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands}, 13:81.

\textsuperscript{111} Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands} 12:262.
is less a proof of Christian weakness than a show—perhaps even divinely ordained—of Christian strength.

In the case of our catolona, Chirino reports that armed with a cross she is able to convert, and eventually does so. More specifically, he uses the phrase convertirse, to convert herself ("mas con una cruz que se le dio por defensa") armed with a cross. While it appears as if she has been abandoned by male Roman Catholic clergy in her hour of trial, and in her conversion, this follows Gregory’s story more closely, and even the issue of “evil vestiges” from the breast may have less to do with the denigration of native women than upholding ancient analogy between nursing and eloquence\textsuperscript{112} and the mouth and virtue.\textsuperscript{113}

Let us now consider the story in light of Jesuit accommodation and in view of the parenthesis:

[The demon] was so disgraced and aggrieved by this ridicule that (unable to do anything else by way of vengeance) he spent the next night (with many others of his kind) tormenting the poor Catolona (who disillusioned by his lack of power was trying to convert herself and to abhor him and to ask for mercy) with cruel visions and threats.\textsuperscript{114}

If we recall this moment as the catolona’s conversion, the text indicates a closer imitation of Gregory Wonderworker’s conquest when he sought lodging in a pagan temple and with the cross purified the air that had been polluted by sacrifice to demons. It is important to note that lunulae (as Erasmus referred to them) had been in use since the late fourteenth century,\textsuperscript{115} and that as marks that surround text they can function in numerous ways. According to the OED, Quintilian used parentheses (the rhetorical device, if not the marks themselves) to

\textsuperscript{112} Quintilian Book 1.1. ln. 4.

\textsuperscript{113} Acosta, \textit{Promulgando Evangelio}, Bk. 4 ch.9.

\textsuperscript{114} 3 Chirino, \textit{Relación},304.

insert an example or an aside. However, Quintilian warned that the use of parenthesis must not obscure the meaning of the passage. In *The Orator’s Education*, he observes:

> Again, parenthesis, so often employed by orators and historians, and consisting in the insertion of one sentence in the midst of another, may seriously hinder the understanding of a passage, unless the insertion is short.\(^{116}\)

As readers of Quintilian, Jesuits not only heeded his advice, but in our case, the parenthetical marks create a visual representation of the juxtaposition and combination of both exemplarity and accommodation in the work of conversion. Jesuit accommodation is vividly displayed within and without the parenthesis, but its wondrous work is most cunningly demonstrated within the punctuational and rhetorical device. When one reads the passage and passes over the sentences in the parenthesis, one reads a different event: It would say that the following night, the aggrieved demon came tormenting her with cruel visions and threats. That is to say, the power of the demon lay outside of the parenthesis and was permitted to conduct spiritual warfare in the temple of her mind; or alternatively, the demon was released from the newly converted temple where he was found, lurking at its borders, attempting to transgress, complaining and unruly. Notably, outside of the parenthesis, the demon is only one.

However, if we look at the *catolona’s* conversion event within the parenthetical marks, a rather different story emerges: The demons within the parenthesis are plentiful but powerless against the soul of the *catolona* then already disillusioned and engaged in conversion. Here we must view the parenthesis as the pagan temple itself where they have been “sent back” (in writing, in the Jesuit *Relación*) by virtue of the *catolona’s* very decision to convert herself, armed with the cross as per Gregory Wonderworker’s story. Indeed in so doing, she is already in the midst of not only transferring her allegiance against her former spiritual allies but converting the very space she had once bid them enter and take possession.

\(^{116}\) Quintilian, Inst., Book VIII. ii. 15.
[the demon] (unable to do anything else by way of vengeance) … (with many others of his kind) … (and who disillusioned by his lack of power and was trying to convert herself and to abhor him and ask for mercy).

The parentheses here serve to contain and curtail demonic power and action against the female shaman without robbing her of the opportunity to conduct spiritual warfare. Indeed in allowing the catolona to fight the demons herself and to convert herself, armed only with the cross and without the interference of male clergy, two things are achieved: She is enabled to follow Gregory’s example in driving out the demons; more importantly, it is ultimately God who works the wonder of conversion, not the priest. As in the example of St. Gregory, it is God’s power that is made manifest, even though it is the missionary, the priest who reports the story, who does the writing. What we have then, is both the female shaman and the Jesuit priest negotiating the tense space of conversion within and outside the boundaries formed by the parenthetical marks.

Although the goal of evangelism was to convert indigenous “religion” and its practitioners to Christianity, Jesuit accommodation was informed by a rhetorical theology that combined the wisdom of Scripture, the Church Fathers, their classical predecessors (orators and philosophers among them) and holy women and men such as St. Ignatius, St. Francis, along with other eminent thinkers of their time including the controversial Erasmus of Rotterdam. As we have said, accommodatio understood as a rhetorical device along the lines of “dicere aptius” is to adapt one’s argument “carefully and fittingly” (atque in tanto, hominum rerum que discrimine, accommodare, ac certo). Often conjoined with military conquest that the missionaries themselves condemned, the task of preaching the Gospel was made all the more difficult by clashes with colonial government and the shock of confronting anything new.

117 Acosta, José de. De Promulgando Evangelio apud Barbaros: sive de Procuranda Indorum salute, Libri sex (Laurentii Anisson, 1670), I am thankful to Stuart McManus for his help in understanding this passage via private correspondence, March 19, 2014.
Therefore, to accommodate someone or something does not mean to offer safe haven, or even that the space ought to be “private.”

If we are to follow the example of the Wonderworker’s night spent in the pagan temple, we observe that his stay as described by Gregory of Nyssa is not of one seeking peaceful slumber. Rather, it is described as “conquest” and Gregory himself as “like a noble soldier through whom the momentum is changed when he joins the battle line.” Moreover, after terrifying the demons and purifying the air with the name of Christ and the sign of the cross, he passes the night, but does so “keeping vigil in prayers and hymnody so that a house made abominable by the blood on its altars and its images was transformed into a house of prayer.” In similar fashion, the accommodation made to indigenous religious practice is far from passive. However, it shows us that on closer reading, Chirino acknowledges the example of Gregory Wonderworker in converting a powerful female shaman—and the wonder that Chirino works may be seen in the representation of her struggle in parenthesis.

C. The Male Catolona as the New Magdalen

Although indigenous healers were predominantly female, there were also male priests or catolones as well. Chirino reports a conversion story of a group of catolones involving the Jesuit Fr. Almerique:

Their leader told us that his anito (which is what they call their idols) was acknowledged to be greater than those of the others and for this reason they recognized his ascendency. The devil had possessed him whenever he had been offering his despicable sacrifices, contorting his face most hideously and knotting his hair, which he wore long like a woman’s in token of his profession. He now took the initiative of shearing it off publicly (like the Magdalen) and with it the power of the devil that had held him captive, and being baptized made the others

118 Slusser, St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, 56.
119 Slusser, St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, 56.
follow his example do the same, which they did consigning their idols to the flames where they were all consumed.120

It is possible to interpret this passage as an attempt at disempowerment, as a contestation (symbolically, castration) of authority occurring on multiple levels: By the cutting of his long hair, which is identified a healing profession dominated by women, the leader is stripped of his indigenous, female-centered spiritual authority. And yet the paradox of the exemplar is that what is symbolically disempowering in pagan terms may be typologically empowering in Christian terms. Here, the shaman is seen by the priest to follow the example of Mary Magdalen, to whom he is indeed likened in parenthesis: (como la Madalena). The Magdalen is iconographically identified by her long hair, which she used to wipe the feet of Jesus with tears of penance;121 from her Jesus is said to have cast out seven demons.122 Although his conversion results in a break with female centered indigenous spiritual authority, the shaman in that very process acquires a new identification with a female Christian authority, the exemplary penitent, Magdalen. With one decisive cut (of his hair) he effectively casts out the demons of his pre-Christian past (as per the Gospel narrative).

Does the leader fail to achieve full male status in the eyes of the author and/or readers? The leader is not assigned Jesus as an exemplar, nor an apostle nor even a male saint. Indeed, it can be argued that he stands somewhere betwixt and between; no longer within an indigenous female-centered spiritual authority he is denied full manhood or male spiritual authority. This is in

120 Chirino, Relación, 294 (My emphasis).

121 The figure of Mary Magdalen has a complicated history, but it is in 591 A.D. as a result of a sermon by Gregory the Great that Mary Magdalen is conflated with the long haired weeping penitent sinner. Katherine Ludwig Jansen and American Council of Learned Societies, The Making of the Magdalen: Preaching and Popular Devotion in the Later Middle Ages (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), 32.

122 Luke 8:2
many ways a seed of what is to come, given the controversy surrounding native clergy that would rage for decades.

As an emerging order, the Jesuits are an interesting case in terms of gender and the attributes associated with Spanish masculinity and its supposed renunciation by Saint Ignatius Loyola. According to Allyson Poska, looking into ideals of Spanish masculinity and femininity in the Spanish Golden Age, class plays an important role: prescriptions of the elite were appropriated differently and/or were plainly opposed by other classes of society in ways that complicate assumptions about a homogenous ideal of Spanish masculinity. Poska points out that the ideal Spanish man of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century was one who could defend a woman’s honor or, more importantly, his own, to the point of violence; he was noble, gentlemanly, handsome, and could wield a weapon to kill (without much ado) if necessary.123

Poska argues that the married Spanish man that stays home is not a man. Just as Ignatius’ haircut signals a new form or a newly-invigorated form of masculinity for Jesuits, so setting forth from Europe in mission and exploration was another expression of masculinity, a test of spiritual virility, and one superior to that of the Conquistador because, as a missionary, the Jesuit would be journeying as a soldier of Christ. There is clearly an intense masculinity about Jesuit ‘exploits’ and ‘endeavors,’ a sort of Renaissance heroism that it is the task of the Relations to record and celebrate. Theirs is a very different sort of self-fashioned gendering from that of St Francis and his followers, who instead of grand Relations must make do with little flowers.

According to Ulrike Strasser, the Autobiography of Saint Ignatius Loyola provides Jesuits with a striking model for emulation that converts images of an otherwise noble, secular Spanish manhood (taken from Ignatius’ own life) into a rhetorical instance to be imitated by his followers. Strasser writes that for Nadal, foremost among the early Jesuits, it was the conversion process

modeled by Ignatius himself in the Autobiography that “renders the Society possible.”

Wounded at the battle of Pamplona in 1521, Ignatius was forced to embrace a different ideal of masculinity, one of discipline and chastity. Moreover, given the reality that his wounds would further prevent him from imitating the gallant knights of Spanish romances, he set himself famously to the task of imitating the Saints Francis and Dominic, and substituting the Blessed Virgin Mary for the courtly Spanish lady whose honor he might otherwise have wounded or defended. Strasser makes an interesting point regarding the presumed power of the Autobiography on its readers: “In the same way that the reading of religious texts sparked Ignatius’s desire to imitate the religious life and facilitated a rapid transition into a chaste, clerical manhood, the reading of the Autobiography held the promise for other men.”

Thus it could be argued that the writing and reading of Jesuit Relations would produce a similar effect, in terms of molding and preparing prospective missionaries for what they would encounter in the New World and the Philippines. Of particular interest to us in this chapter is how the ideals of disciplined masculinity, specifically Jesuit, and specifically within this historical and colonial context, was informed by Christian precedents while departing from them. On the one hand, it is important to emphasize that Jesuits were not merely “improvising” a feminine stance to supplant indigenous female healers.

Furthermore, one must caution against assuming that comparisons to the Magdalen signal any demotion of spiritual status, especially given the popularity of the cult of the Magdalen in Spain and throughout Europe during the Middle Ages and in the Renaissance. Indeed in the later Middle Ages, the figure of the Magdalen reached the height of exemplarity as the apostolorum


\[125\] Strasser, “Form and Grace,” 53.
“apostola” “apostle to the apostles”: the woman, who in three of the four gospel accounts had proclaimed the resurrection to Christ’s male followers.\footnote{Mark:16:9–10; Matt 28:1–10; John 20: 1–18 as noted in Jansen pp. 18–23.}

Examined parenthetically, the conversion of the male indigenous shaman offers a different view of Jesuit accommodation as \textit{(como la Madalena)} becomes a locus for future discussions concerning native clergy. Although Chirino may not have supported the idea of indigenous men becoming priests, if we look closely at this conversion story, its punctuation indicates that an argument (not necessarily his) is presented as much visually as logically. As with the use of parenthesis in the conversion of the indigenous female shaman, the use of the parenthesis as a visual aid for the reader is concise but full of meaning. Keeping Gregory’s story in mind, the \textit{lunulae} and what is within represent an image of the pagan temple from whence as well as from whom demons had been cast out \textit{(como la Magdalena)}. And in this story we have a native male shaman who has cut off his hair \textit{(como la Madalena)} having acknowledged and disavowed his old ways; having cast out the demons from the temple on his own volition.

Furthermore, the parenthesis indicates a far more significant event than Gregory’s wonderworking. \textit{( )} is the opening to the empty tomb on the Third Day. (John 20.1) It is a tomb that once held the body of a man crucified, now Resurrected. The empty tomb of the parenthesis is now filled with the Magdalens’s sacred figure whose eyes once gazed with tears at the empty tomb and who would, having seen her Teacher, also announce the Resurrection.

That the indigenous shaman is likened to the Magdalen in this manner signifies Jesuit accommodation in an extraordinary way; for it signals the possibility that the Gospel might one day be heard from the lips, and from a figure seen \textit{(como la Madalena)} in the Philippines.
D. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown the productivity of ancient Christian sources in the hands of a late sixteenth century Jesuit missionary whose act of self-patterning and imitation of St. Gregory Thaumaturgus not only enables him to learn from the past, but to see the particulars of his own unique situation in the Philippines. Indeed at first glance we see Chirino’s treatment of female catolonas fits into a classic scenario whereby male spiritual authority is clearly threatened by female power, and the question of who ultimately has the power to command and to heal is dealt with (seemingly) swiftly and decisively.127

As we have seen however, Jesuits, even in the Philippines, prove to be accommodating, and in surprising ways. For Chirino, accommodate is not simply to be held as a “safe space” for “others” but as topoi or loci filled with the Word or words in contrast and in constant tension within and without; its implicit presence in parenthesis further suggests that while the concept of authority is perpetually contested, “wonder grasps at anything.”128

Chirino appears to engage in an act of imitating Gregory across several chapters and through multiple situations in an effort to sort through not only their shared history and responsibilities as Christian missionaries, but more importantly, the distance and difference129 that separates their unique and remarkable situations. If one of the goals of the entire dissertation is to understand these sources in light of the history of Christianity as well as a

127 Contemporary evidence suggests that Roman Catholic missionaries failed to remove all traces of “idolatry” as indigenous religious practices and rituals continue to survive and thrive as a result of transculturation and hybridity. Also according Philippine scholar and essayist, Luis Francia, there are organized groups of female priests in the region of Banahaw who refuse to be categorized along gender lines.

128 Gregory of Nyssa.

129 Following the advice of my committee, this chapter is limited in scope and does not engage in a comparison between the fourth and early seventeenth century missionary landscapes.
particular colonial context, this chapter focuses on Chirino’s specific (and rather rare) reference to himself, with regard to imitation and his missionary work.

In both cases, demonic interaction and gender-ambiguity—hallmarks of indigenous religious practice to begin with—are re-distributed or re-appropriated according to Spanish Roman Catholic Christian ideals, but in such a way that draws our attention to the missionary’s own peculiar gendered subjectivity.

In Chirino’s treatment of the male catolones, (and male converts in general) we find a complex, creative negotiation of gender, imitation and priestly authority that opens the door to questions of transculturation, hybridity and ambiguity—not just for the male catolona but for Catholic priests as well. Although we cannot presume to know the Jesuit as subject, the example of the indigenous male catolona as Magdalen suggests that Chirino and other Jesuits may have been attempting to forge a bond with these indigenous male priests, a bond that registers on a wholly different level, one that perhaps might remain unseen to the uninitiated. Disciplined clerical masculinity is, after all, a mode of being in the world that seeks to render desire (and its powers, generative, erotic, whether masculine or feminine) utterly transfigured.

Let us return to the legend of Gregory Wonderworker and the former temple-custodian, now deacon, who are reported to have eluded their persecutors by standing so still in prayer that they appeared as “two trees standing a short distance apart.” 130 In imitating Gregory, Chirino styles himself as a wonderworker in a marvelous new world, able perhaps to blend into his new environment by virtue of a common faith that allows him—however briefly—to conceal difference in times of danger, while at the same time keeping a critical distance and maintaining their separate identities in time, space and history. Chirino’s perceived affinity with an important figure in the early Church clears a narrative path, as it were; but one that allows him nevertheless

130 Slusser, St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, 79.
to plot his unique and particular place in a new spiritual wilderness—analogous both to that of his Christian predecessor, as well as to his “newly begotten” in Christ.

In light of the physical and spiritual violence of the Spanish conquest of the Philippines, this image of Gregory and the temple custodian may seem offensive; but it offers a complex view of Jesuit “accommodation” that might otherwise go unnoticed, especially where imitation and exemplarity are concerned. Whereas by the end of the Spanish colonial period in the late nineteenth century, “imitation” would eventually come to mean mere mimicry, for Chirino writing in the early seventeenth century, holy imitation is still to be read as a kind of knowing, an intimacy that ideally brings Christians old and new closer to one another in and through the imitation of Christ and his first followers. Although his treatment of indigenous female shamans may appear dismissive, Chirino’s own imitation of Gregory Thaumaturgus allows one to see something small and wonderful at work. Indeed within the call to imitate Christ was issued (as in parenthesis) an invitation to another, to the new convert, to disregard the barred entrance, to be with him as two trees standing a short distance apart, and to experience with him, a peculiar and perhaps even painful state of kinship: What is visible about a tree is that it is upright, unmoved and unmoving; what is invisible is the movement of holy desire in communion, in prayer.

As we look toward our next chapter, we move beyond the confines of the Philippine mission to see the Jesuits struggle as soldiers of Christ in different guises. Indeed their very (in)visibility is challenged when the writing of history is brought to bear on the question of amor-proprio or self-love, courage in the face of battle and true witness in the face of persecution. Whereas in the chapter above, we encountered exemplarity and indigenous religion negotiated parenthetically, in the following chapter, The Martyr’s Farewell: Jesuits, Self-Love and the Writing of History, we shall examine the ways Jesuits conducted accommodation and reframed martyrdom as the Spanish colonial government attempted to fortify its position as a viable colonial presence in the Pacific.
A. Saving Morga’s Mission

The Martyrs’ Letter and the Sinking of the San Diego

On the morning of December 14, 1600 the Spanish trading ship, San Diego, hastily refitted for battle, weighed anchor from Miraveles in the Philippine Islands in pursuit of Dutch corsairs that had been preying upon Manila. The Spanish soldiers were confident of victory, fearing only that the enemy might escape before they had the opportunity to engage. As one soldier later remarked, however, “In a little while they were made to see the difference between fighting in imagination and actually using their hands in earnest.” Indeed by the afternoon of the day of the battle, dozens of men had died and the San Diego was sinking.

Although the San Diego had successfully grappled the Dutch flagship Mauritius (under the command of Oliver Van Noordt), and the enemy had struck their colors early in the battle, the proclamation of victory for King Philip III of Spain was tragically premature. Despite the Dutch surrender, symbolized in the capture of the enemy standard, the battle between the San Diego and Mauritius would rage for six hours with heavy losses on both sides. What is more, the San

131 Among the primary sources evaluated in this chapter include: Antonio Morga’s Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas (1609) and Pedro Chirino’s Historia de la Provincia de Filipinas de la Compañía de IHS (1610) and Relacion del martyrio qve seys padres Descalços Francisco y veynte Iapones christianos padecieron en Iapon. Hecha por Fr. Iuan de Santa Maria Prouincial de la Provincia de S. Ioseph de los Descalços ; van añadidos en esta impression tres capitulos de Francisco Peña, Auditor de Rota, donde se muestra que aquella muerte fue verdadero martyrio (1599); Historia del Archipelego y Otros Reynos por Marcelo Ribadeneira OFM (Sixteenth cent.).

Bartolome, the Spanish fleet’s almiranta (or second in command) had gone off in pursuit of its Dutch counterpart, leaving the Spanish flagship to fight alone; now, shortly before two o’clock, the men aboard the San Diego were faced with a grim choice: Board the enemy ship which was then on fire or cast themselves into the sea.

An impassioned plea came to Doctor Antonio de Morga, the fleet’s commanding general: Escape, your Grace, the ship is sinking—an offer that he refused as ill suited to a man of his reputation. Yet even Morga’s show of bravery could not quell the mounting chaos and fear onboard which seemed to match only the cowardice and avarice of many of the ship’s men. One man sent for a gold chain and other jewels so as not to lose them while others “huddled together in fright as they saw their ship filling with water.” God had indeed disturbed men’s minds and deserted them; for no one, it seemed, could come to a decision.

It was at this point that Father Diego de Santiago, the 29-year old Jesuit confessor of many high-ranking officers including Morga, took a crucifix in hand and exhorted his countrymen: Where is that courage of yours? See this is the cause of God! Die! Die like good soldiers of Christ! Thus risking friendly fire, a group of Spaniards boarded the Mauritius, and

136 Regarding Fr. Diego de Santiago—for your information, a passage from Chirino’s Historia p. 273: “Fr. Diego de Santiago was from Badajoz, Extremadura, the son of Dr. Santiago, proto-physician of King Philip II. He died at 29 years of age, 15 in the Society. He came to the Philippines from the Province of Andalusia where he joined the Society, made his first and second probations, finished the humanities and theology with good success, and became a good preacher, well listened to. But his main virtue was his compassion and in hearing confessions, really bewitching people with his fine approach to people, for which he was well-known. Castilians and Tagalogs, whose language he knew very well, went to him in crowds, and vied among themselves and attracted one another to place themselves in his hands. I could mention many individual cases of how he treated them very familiarly.” Chirino, Historia, 272.
137 Blair and Robertson, ed., Philippine Islands, 11: 162.
believing that the *San Diego* could still make it to Fortune Island about a half a league away, cables between the two ships were cut as the bodies of the dead and drowned were seen floating up from between decks.\(^{138}\)

One account of the battle says that upon seeing these dead bodies, Morga, at the urging of his servant, stripped off his clothing and dove into the sea.\(^{139}\) Contemplating the same move, Father Santiago was called back by a captain to hear his last confession.\(^{140}\) The Jesuit priest heeded the dying man’s request and drowned in the act\(^{141}\) while Morga swam for four hours carrying the Dutch standard as proof of Spanish victory.

The death of Father Diego is told in the opening pages of an *Annual Letter*\(^ {142}\) by the Jesuit Francisco Vaez to Superior General Claudio Aquaviva on June 10, 1601. Although two different narratives of the battle attest to Father Diego’s courage, Morga’s actions are hotly contested; with the publication of Morga’s history entitled *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* in 1609, however, he too comes out a hero, albeit by his own account.

\(^{138}\) Blair and Robertson, ed., *Philippine Islands*, 11: 162.

\(^{139}\) Blair and Robertson, ed., *Philippine Islands*, 11:162.


\(^{141}\) Pedro Chirino in the *Historia* (written a few years later than Vaez’ “Annual letter”) supports the story that Father Diego de Santiago was called back to hear a man’s confession; instead of drowning in the act, however, he goes on to say that “trying to jump into the sea after the General and others, while he tore his cassock from top to bottom, the boat swallowed him [Father Diego] and his companion; so that although other corpses floated and were buried in Manila, those of these two were not found.” (Chirino, *Historia*, 271) Is this “difference” worth exploring? There seems something equally symbolic in the rending of the cassock and being swallowed by the boat/sea never to be spewed back up.

\(^{142}\) The *Jesuit Annual Letter* written by Francisco Vaez S.J. was printed in Italian and included in a book by Diego de Torres S.J. entitled *Relatio Breve* in 1603. It was also published in Latin by John Hay and included in *De Rebus Iaponicis, Indicis* etc. in 1605. Blair and Robertson do not know for certain in which language the letter was written, but made their English translation from the Latin. First editions of both Diego de Torres and John Hay’s books that include this letter are available in Houghton Library at Harvard University.
In light of his contested heroism both in battle and as a high-ranking colonial official, Morga’s *Sucesos* appears to offer not an admission of guilt, but a profession of his innocence. Morga’s history recounts important events during the discovery, conquest and conversion of the Philippines including those in which Morga played a part in his capacity as Lieutenant-General and oidor of the Manila Audiencia. According to humanist views on the writing of history, true history is that which teaches prudence and provides useful models of Christian morality and piety.¹⁴³

Whereas previous chapters focused on Jesuits situating themselves in the Philippines and using exemplarity and rhetoric with which to view, negotiate and critique their present situation, in this chapter, Morga takes center state (at least at first) with Jesuits and Franciscans acting as wiling or unwilling pawns of the Spanish colonial government in its dealings with Japan and as active or passive agents in threats to its immediate commercial, political and spiritual interests. In keeping with this view, Morga turns to ancient history and contemporary events for examples. Drawing upon Timothy Hampton’s thoughts on exemplarity,¹⁴⁴ this chapter looks at Morga’s work in light of humanist notions of history and exemplarity. Who are the models Morga professes to imitating, and how do his choices affect the *Sucesos*’ narrative voice? What clues do they offer readers in terms of how to interpret the persona that emerges from the text?

To answer these questions, we will examine two references Morga makes to Roman history in his dedicatory letter to the Duke of Cea and in his preface to the reader. In addition, a summary of wildly different characterizations of Morga culled from various colonial documents, as well as an examination of testimonies of Morga’s conduct in the battle against the Dutch should make clear, what’s at stake in Morga’s self-presentation in the *Sucesos*. Among the


narrative tools deployed by Morga in the *Sucesos* are letters from kings, governors and other officials attesting Morga’s service to the king and his good character.

Of all of these letters, the most significant is the one written to Morga by Franciscans, Jesuits and Japanese converts condemned to die in Nagasaki on February 5, 1597. As a *relic* and a political document the martyrs’ letter not only offers a window into how confession of faith and exemplarity functioned in the Philippines during the early colonial period, but also shows how to read Morga’s account of martyrdom and *reproduction* of the letter addressed to him serves to silence his critics and exonerate him of charges of avarice, cowardice and incompetence in military affairs.

The significance of the martyrs’ letter, however, goes beyond Morga’s efforts to acquit himself of cowardice and rehabilitate his political career; indeed, the letter itself served a purpose for its writer, Martin Ascenscion, and his fellow martyrs. For the six Franciscans, three Japanese Jesuit brothers and seventeen Japanese lay converts (among them three children) condemned to die, drafting a letter of farewell prior to their execution is a calculated risk as well as a significant gesture in imitation of Christian martyrs past, aimed to save not only Morga’s “mission,” but perhaps that of many others, especially the Catholic missions in Japan and the Philippines. However, the unity achieved by that writing body belies fierce political and religious rivalry, particularly between Jesuits and Franciscans in Japan and the Philippines. Issues of political diplomacy complicate the question of imitatio Christi and mission. Trade and the question of cultural accommodation to indigenous customs and practices versus Christian zeal and “concrete examples” are also at stake and come at grave political and spiritual cost.

The goal in this chapter is thus two-fold: First is to investigate the use of the martyrs’ letter in Morga’s work; secondly, to examine the martyrs’ letter in terms of Jesuit–Franciscan relations in this period and missionary context. The work of this chapter anticipates what will be done in the next—that is to examine the Franciscan apologia written as a sermon on a sleeve of a
Franciscan robe by Martin Ascenscion, one of the martyrs—the very Franciscan who penned the Farewell Letter to Morga on the martyr’s’ behalf.

The first task outlined above affords us a view of the letter in the life of one man and in the administration of a particularly vulnerable colonial government. Morga’s own use of the letter in defense of his own actions mirrors Spain’s beleaguered colonial administration of the Philippines as well as its own defensive stance in light of Spanish–Portuguese relations, threats of Japanese, Chinese and Dutch piracy, intra-Catholic intrigues, as well as Counter-Reformation politics, piety, and economy.

For the second task mentioned above, I explore accounts of the Nagasaki martyrdom from contemporaneous Jesuit and Franciscan sources including Marcelo Ribadeneira O.F.M.’s late sixteenth century/early seventeenth century Historia del Archipelago y otros Reynos and Juan de Santa Maria O.F.M.’s Relación of the martyrdom published in 1599, as well as a Jesuit account written by Pedro Chirino in the Historia de la Provincia de Philipinas de la Compañía de IHS, completed in 1610 (a year after Morga’s Sucesos was published). Indeed the convergence of history, spirituality, and politics in the letter itself and in the very circumstances that gave rise to its writing as well as in its re-telling in the above-mentioned “histories,” illuminate the complex relationship between imitation and mission in several ways:

1. It focuses our attention on the question of martyrdom as imitatio Christi par excellence, the ultimate proof of Christian courage, suffering and witness, and perhaps the highlight of a

145 The only dates I have for Ribadeneira are that he was born in 1560 and died sometime after 1610. Neither Hollis, nor the 1970 introduction to his book contain any information about him other than what I have noted in this chapter. I will have to do more research.

146 Houghton Library has a copy of Relación del martyrio que seys padres Descalços Franciscos y veynete Iapones christianos padecieron en Iapon /hecha por Fr. Juan de Santa Maria Prouincial de la Prouincia de S. Joseph de los Descalços; van añadidos en esta impression tres capitulos de Francisco Peña, Auditor de Rota, donde se muestra que aquella muerte fue verdadero martyrio. It appears to conform to Ribadeneira’s narrative in terms of its portrayal of Pedro Baptista (as a contemplative) and of the Jesuits.
Christian missionary career. But when does such courage count as foolishness? And when can seeming cowardice manifest as real Christian courage? Morga’s claim to martyrdom, Chirino’s critique of Franciscan zeal and its consequences (however honorable they may be) as well as Franciscan acknowledgment of this very weakness (as strength) or “Holy Impudence” give us an opportunity to examine shifting perspectives on the value of martyrdom within the spectrum of imitatio Christi. As shall be argued in this chapter, there is more at stake in Morga’s “testimony” than the emotional manipulation of his readers; as for rivalry between the Jesuits and Franciscans, martyrdom and mission are intertwined in distinct ways that are reflective of the order’s foundation, founder and perspective on the Incarnation and exemplarity. For Franciscans, physical martyrdom might still function as the Gospel writ large—as well as extension of Saint Francis’ mission and suffering—onto the body of his followers; for the Jesuits, however the very (mundane) stuff of mission is martyrdom itself, and the slow, laborious, transformation of the missionary to accommodate another culture redefines Christian witness.

2. It highlights the inherently diverse roles missions and missionaries can play in a diplomatic scenario and the connection between martyrdom and diplomacy. Why do Jesuits so jealously guard their Japanese mission field? Why are Franciscans missionaries “sent” to broker diplomacy on behalf of Spain? What lies behind these “double missions”? How does one measure the success of such missions? Is martyrdom in this particular case a sign of success

147 Even in a nineteenth century hagiographical account of a vision by Fr. Pedro Baptista, Kenners portrays him as having to temper his impatience regarding the construction of a Franciscan church in Japan. Likewise, scholars Mary Elizabeth Berry and Charles Boxer both paint the Franciscans as a little too excited for their own good. To be fair, this problem existed within Jesuit ranks as well (see Boxer), but apparently, they had Valignano to keep them in line.

or failure? The answer to this question could depend on the respective Order’s approach to Christian imitation or accommodation, and as some scholars have argued, their missionary strategy plays a significant role. 149 Indeed, I shall argue that the respective Order’s approach to evangelization and its main mode of Christian imitation together influence how one could interpret the Nagasaki martyrdom in general and martyrs’ farewell letter in particular.

3. It draws symbolic parallels across Christian salvation history that helps shape the immediate re-telling of the martyrs’ story. It is worth asking, for instance, what role the Japanese regent Toyotomi Hideyoshi takes on in this “passion play?” Seen alternately as tyrant and as benefactor to Japanese Christianity, Hideyoshi often seems to steal the show in this intra-catholic struggle; his rhetoric of perpetual invasion of the Philippines 150 provides a surprising opportunity for economic trade as well as a spur for spiritual sportsmanship. However, it also exposes both Philippine and Japanese mission fields to economic, political and spiritual strife.

After an exploration of the martyrs’ letter from Morga’s, the Jesuit, and Franciscan perspectives, we shall see what possible connections can be drawn between imitation, mission, martyrdom, and the writing of history. Given the contentious testimonies offered by the various parties, it might be worth revisiting our various authors’ notions of history, and in particular its connection to the trait of self-love (amor proprio) as introduced by our first “historian” Antonio


150 According to the sources consulted for this dissertation, the threat of invasion seems to have been believed and prepared for—at this stage, Spanish hold on the Philippines was especially threatened by multiple forces. However, I agree that the rhetoric of invasion (both by Japan and by Spain) needs to be examined further along with the seeming perpetual call for ambassadors. How real was the Japanese threat? At the time Hideyoshi was fighting a war in Korea, possibly in a bid to invade China. There are sources that say Hideyoshi bragged about the threats, but was not otherwise serious. Permission was given to attack after the martyrdom, but the plan failed because it was not financially feasible. Apparently, another embassy was sent and Hideyoshi acknowledged the unfortunate martyrdom, but reminded the ambassador about his prohibition against Christianity.
de Morga. With martyrdom commonly defined as a testimony to Christian faith, and often understood to mean one willing to die as witness to the Gospel, martyrdom is also implicitly understood as a selfless act for the love of God and one’s neighbor in imitation of Christ, the apostles, converts of the early Church, and indeed the then more recent saints of the reformation and counter-reformation in Europe.

However, global expansion, cross-cultural encounters, as well as trade and war of so grand a scale as we have in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries greatly affect the understanding of theological terms, such that martyrdom as an ideal of selflessness is called into question. Under these circumstances, and given the divergent ideals of mission, imitation and exemplarity among various Catholic orders, the martyrdom of the Franciscans in Nagasaki (together with Japanese Jesuits and converts to Christianity) might have required an apologia in the form of the Martyrs’ Farewell written by the future St. Martin Ascencion.

B. Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas

As a high-ranking Spanish colonial official, Antonio Morga’s own mission in the Philippines involved the careful administration of the military, political and spiritual conquest of the Philippines and surrounding areas. The death of Antonio Morga’s own confessor in a battle Morga himself commanded brings us to an evaluation of Morga’s conduct as general of the fleet. Even if he may have inadvertently contributed to Father Diego de Santiago’s martyrdom in a “just war against heretic pirates,”151 as commanding general of the fleet, the “lack of system and concord”152 onboard Morga’s ship contributed to the death of more than two hundred men and the loss of hundreds of thousands of pesos in goods. Although the Dutch almiranta is later captured by Captain Juan de Alcega, and Spain emerges the victor by virtue of the captured flags, Morga’s

152 Blair and Robertson, ed., Philippine Islands, 11:160.
victory rings hollow as complaints are waged, accusations made and lawsuits brought before the court. Indeed Morga is at pains to maintain his reputation; and the writing and publication of *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* provides Morga an opportunity to tell his side of the story and to vindicate himself before a wider audience.153 Indeed, even before the *Sucesos* proper begins, Morga’s work is endorsed by a letter of commendation written by a Jesuit named Juan Sanchez who praises Morga for having “obeyed the laws of history” in its arrangement, concise style and “true exposition of the subject matter.”154

That Morga chose to publish a *history* rather than a simple letter is telling. His choice of genre alerts us to rhetorical conventions that serve to guide readers in interpreting Morga’s version of events. As a book of history, Morga’s *Sucesos* conforms to the humanist view that a successful history provides readers with useful moral examples and that a good historian dispenses appropriate doses of praise and blame.155 But this is complicated by the fact that Morga is an active participant in the historical events he describes. Morga writes in his preface to the reader Morga writes in his preface to the reader that his “design and chief intent has been to give each one his due.” But who will give Morga his due?

Operating with the understanding of history as a repository of models, Morga not only draws upon ancient history for sources to imitate, but also writes of exemplary men from his own times. In disclosing particular models for imitation, however, Morga also lays out the material

153 de Morga, A., *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*, ed. Cummins, J.S. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971). In his introduction, Cummins speculates that Morga wrote the work as a defense of his own actions in the battle against the Dutch (See pp.17-23 of his edition); to my knowledge however, the martyrs’ letter and its presence and purpose in Morga’s work has not received critical attention beyond an acknowledgment by Cummins that Morga had a personal interest in the Franciscans, and that at the time of his death, he possessed a statue of Anthony, one of the Nagasaki martyrs (Cummins, 22 with reference to Retana’s edition of Morga’s *Sucesos*, 161).

154 Morga, 31.

with which he builds his textual persona; and in shaping his very readers’ interpretation and interaction with those models, he is likewise shaping the readers’ perceptions of him. The relationship between exemplarity, writing, and readership explored by Timothy Hampton (using other Renaissance writers) is helpful in understanding what is at stake in Morga’s project. Hampton writes:

The evocation of the exemplary ancient in a Renaissance text is distinct from other rhetorical gestures of citation and allegation in that the exemplar makes a claim on the reader’s action in the world. Allusion to the virtuous or heroic model sets up an implicit moral comparison between modern reader and ancient exemplar…Thus the evocation of an exemplary figure constitutes that textual moment at which the authority of the past is brought to bear on the reader’s response to the text.\textsuperscript{156}

Not only is the reader of \textit{Sucesos} invited to compare the deeds of Philippines’ first governors in light of the past, but by virtue of Morga’s own position in colonial government, he is likewise to be compared to heroes and historians of old. In his dedicatory letter, he cites Democritus and in his preface to the reader, he alludes to Roman tribunes Cato and Marcius. From Morga’s allusions to Democritus in the dedicatory letter and Cato and Marcius in the preface to the reader, we see a conscious patterning of the \textit{Sucesos} with Roman history. Not only does Morga place his own work within the context of ancient history, \textit{he places himself} as one who follows in the footsteps of these great figures as both a historian and statesman. This admission works on three levels: First, we are given a clue to Morga \textit{as a reader and imitator} of these histories by which we can evaluate his actions in the world. Secondly, just as Morga’s reading of ancient history guides his (narration of) actions in the world, the readers of \textit{his} history are guided in their actions toward \textit{him}. Thirdly, it is not just the allusion to ancient and contemporary historians and statesmen, but Morga’s praise and blame of them that form the finer guiding principle in reading the \textit{Sucesos}.

\textsuperscript{156} Hampton, \textit{Writing from History}, 3.
Upholding Spanish colonial administration as exemplary while engaging in praise and blame is a politically delicate operation, especially for one with so many interests to protect. Indeed Hampton says that humanists were all too aware of to the “practical risk” involved in the “application of past deeds to present actions.” Nevertheless, Morga wrote under this idealized notion of history even at the cost of self-exposure. It is in his imitation of ancient sources tempered by his particular praise and blame that we uncover *Sucesos* as a *confession* under the guise of history. In other words, in relaying the deeds of others (and holding them up for praise and blame), Morga has unwittingly made his own deeds vulnerable to judgment even when he has published the most praise-worthy version of himself.

In his preface to the reader of the *Sucesos* Antonio de Morga wrote:

As fearful am I for the imperfections which will be found in this work, as I am persuaded that they deserve forgiveness, since my design and chief intent has been to give each one his due and to present the truth without hatred or flattery, which has been injured in some current narratives. The latter is a fault to be severely reproved in those who relate the deeds of others, in as much as it was prohibited by Cato and Marcius, tribunes of the Roman people, established for those who, in relating their own deeds, overstepped the truth—although this seemed less worthy of punishment, on account of the self-love which intervenes in such a case.158

What appears as a trope of humility is significant for multiple reasons. The figures he alludes to are significant; and the *Sucesos*’ first readers are not likely to miss the implications of citing Cato the Younger (ca. 95 B.C.E– April 46 B.C.E) and Lucius Marcius Philippus—both known for their stance against corruption and the tyranny of Gaius Julius Caesar. By admitting himself as a reader of Cato and Marcius, he projects them as guides for his actions. For a statesman periodically accused of corruption and nepotism, Morga’s literary alliance with Cato and Marcius equips Morga with necessary armor to withstand initial criticism.

157 Hampton, *Writing from History*, 12

158 Morga, *Sucesos*, 40
Secondly, although neither flattery nor hatred is appropriate to the writing of history, especially in telling the deeds of others (as Morga is about to do), Morga subtly corrects ancient authorities by suggesting that to engage in flattery in relating one’s own deeds may be “less worthy of punishment, on account of the self-love which intervenes in such a case.” (my emphasis) Not only does Morga admit to imperfections in the work, he feels they deserve forgiveness and pins the blame on a common, human frailty that is, self-love (amor prorpio). From Morga’s view, self-love makes him a less perfect judge of his own actions; but self-love also leads him to expect the good will of his dedicatory patron and readers.

Indeed in his dedicatory letter to the Duke of Cea, Morga admits to “self-love—that infirmity of the human mind” as a reason to hope for the Duke’s favor (and perhaps protection) in concealing the imperfections of the work; and that the very virtues of his patron in dispensing favor to those who merit and correction to those who do not rest the welfare of the state such that Democritus speaks aptly when he says “Reward and punishment are true gods.” In referencing Democritus, and bringing up the notion of just rewards and punishment, not only is Morga gesturing toward civic virtues as it relates to the administration of government, but more significantly, he is saying that in imitation of his patron, he will dole out justice as he sees fit in his narrative of events. However, as a major player in his own history, he is under the same sentence.

Following a biographical sketch of Morga drawn from various colonial documents, we will look at his actions in the battle against the Dutch and his attempt to defend himself against accusations of cowardice and incompetence. Next, we will turn to the Sucesos itself and examine the various narrative tools Morga deploys, specifically, including the letter written to him by the missionaries in Nagasaki in 1597.

159 Morga, Sucesos, 34.
Antonio de Morga was born in Seville in 1559 and graduated from the University of Salamanca in 1574, and at Osuna in 1578 he was examined and awarded a doctorate in Canon Law. Appointed Lieutenant Governor of Manila by Philip II in August of 1593, he journeyed from Cadiz to Mexico in 1594 and commanding the San Felipe and the Santiago, he arrived in the Philippines in June 1595. Morga served under Governors Luis Perez Dasmarinas (1593–1596) and Francisco Tello de Guzman (1596–1602). In 1598, Morga resigned as Lieutenant Governor to assume the position of oidor in the newly re-established Manila Audiencia. Morga left the Philippines in 1603 to become an oidor and alcalde mayor del crimen in the Mexican Audiencia. He was also appointed adviser to the viceroy in military affairs and as counsel for the Holy Office of the Inquisition in Mexico. In 1615, Morga ventured to Quito to become the president of the Audiencia in Peru, an office he held until 1625 when he was investigated for corruption. He was relieved of his duties in 1636 and was apparently fined for lewd conduct and extra-marital affairs. He died the same year. 160

As Lieutenant Governor and senior oidor, Morga wielded extraordinary power and garnered a fair share of praise and blame in the administration of the colony. A brief summary of Morga’s duties in these two offices in light of the Manila Audiencia’s history enables us to appreciate Morga’s role as a leading official in the Philippines.

The Manila Audiencia was established in 1583 as a tribunal with judicial, legislative, administrative and ecclesiastical functions. Prior to its establishment, Manila was officially under the jurisdiction of the viceroy of New Spain and the Mexican Audiencia; 161 but owing to its

160 Cummins, Introduction, 12.

isolation as the furthest of Spain’s colonies, and its political vulnerability (vis-à-vis China, Japan and the Dutch) the formation of an Audiencia was sought not only to bring immediate justice to distinctly Philippine concerns, but also to counteract abuses stemming from the absolute power of the governor—especially with regard to his power to grant *encomiendas* and the encomenderos’ their treatment of the Indians.

In the case of Manila, it was the outspoken Dominican Bishop Domingo de Salazar who pressed for the establishment of an Audiencia as a mitigating force between civil and ecclesiastical authorities: “to check the encroachments of the governor on the prerogatives of the church, for the protection of natives, and for the safeguarding of the royal interests.” As with audiencias in Spain and its colonies, the Manila Audiencia, comprised of *oidores* (hearers) and a *fiscal*; *oidores* heard and tried criminal and civil suits, supervised *alcaldes mayores*, heard cases of appeal from lower courts, inspected towns and provinces, visited prisons, and most importantly, acted as advisers or privy council to the governor. Granted the authority to enforce laws and intervene in matters of government, the Audiencia garnered criticism for meddling in the governor’s and bishop’s business.

According to Cunningham, the first Audiencia of Manila was dissolved in 1589 partly because of conflicts arising from vaguely defined roles that enabled the Audiencia to act as co-administrators of the government alongside the governor. Although the Manila Audiencia was dissolved in 1589, by 1593, there were calls for restoration, owing once more to concerns about the abuse of power by the governor who had sole authority over judicial, administrative and ecclesiastical matters. As a step forward in this direction, reform measures were passed that not only better defined judicial process in the Philippines, but strengthened the position of Lieutenant Governor in anticipation of the Audiencia’s reestablishment.

---


163 Cunningham, *Audencia*. 

90
Cunningham reports that upon the dissolution of the Audiencia, in 1589, “the administration of justice remained entirely in the hands of the lieutenant governor and assessor. [In this role] Morga succeeded to the same judicial duties and enjoyed the same prerogatives as had formerly belonged to the audiencia.”\(^{164}\) Cunningham also says that as Lieutenant-Governor Morga was not only “successor to the audiencia in judicial matters, but also attorney-general, and sole legal adviser to the governor.”\(^ {165}\)

As Lieutenant Governor, therefore, Morga effectively stood in place of the Audiencia and according to Cunningham it is Morga who ultimately pushed for its restoration. Morga’s resignation as Lieutenant Governor in in, did not necessarily mean a decrease power but a shift in office that set him in a different relationship to governor and ecclesiastical authorities. The scope of Morga’s work is evident in his 1598 report on conditions in the Philippines. Morga’s report\(^ {166}\) on the conditions in the Philippines includes assessment of “instruction and instructors of the Indians,” ecclesiastical judges and prelates, secular government, justice, military affairs. He reports on everything from “the evil example set by the religious” to the increased price of vegetables, the scarcity of rice, the state of streets and public works as well as navigation to New Spain. Morga recommends stricter controls on the trade, settlement, and dress of the Chinese, laments the influx of black slaves brought by the Portuguese, and warns “Those in authority must not give the companies or other garrisons into the charge of their relatives, friends, or servants, especially if they are mere youths and of but little experience.”\(^ {167}\)

The latter complaint is particularly interesting given that in 1601, the Cabildo of Manila accused Morga of the very act he rails against in his report. Indeed the Cabildo’s complaint

\(^ {164}\) Cunningham, *Audencia*, 317.
\(^ {165}\) Cunningham, *Audencia*, 74.
\(^ {167}\) Blair and Robertson, ed., *Philippine Islands*, 10:90.
blamed the awful conditions in Manila not upon God’s righteous Judgment (as does the Jesuit
*Annual Letter*) but upon the misgovernment of men such as Morga who, not only were unwilling
to carry out royal decrees, but in some cases directly violated them.\(^{168}\) Among other things, the
Cabildo complained that Morga has grown rich and powerful through trade and commerce while
*oidor* in the Audiencia and that he has given away important military posts to relations, namely to
“a certain Pedro Cotello de Morales.” This man is the first cousin of Morga’s wife, and apparently
a “mere youth” who has “never fired an harquebus and was not skilled or experienced in war.”\(^{169}\)
While the Cabildo accused Tello of protecting Morga, the governor himself had once filed his
own complaint against him. In a letter to the king of Spain dated July 14, 1599, Governor Tello
wrote:

> Although in all things, I have always been favorable to Doctor Morga—who was
> my lieutenant general, and who is now auditor of this royal Audiencia—I have
> been informed by many persons that he has spoken ill of my proceedings, and
> has even opened the way for others to write evil to your majesty.\(^{170}\)

Not only had Morga incited others to criticize the governor’s actions, but Tello suspected
Morga himself is the *secret author* of some of the letters. Tello continued, “I have another which
was written this year, at the port, to the auditor (*oidor*) Don Antonio Maldonando in the name of a
friar. The handwriting of it must be Doctor Morga’s although it is disguised.\(^{171}\)

In this manner, Morga appeared to be taking advantage of the delicate relationship
between civil and ecclesiastical authorities by pitting friar against governor, governor against an
*oidor*, as well as one *oidor* against another. The element of secrecy and disguise is in marked
contrast to Morga’s self-presentation in the *Sucesos* (of which more will be said later) and gives

---

\(^{168}\) Blair and Robertson, ed., *Philippine Islands*, 11:229.

\(^{169}\) Blair and Robertson, ed., *Philippine Islands*, 11:240.


\(^{171}\) Blair and Robertson, ed., *Philippine Islands*, 11:124.
us a picture of the intrigues and territoriality that marks various branches of colonial government. It comes as no surprise then that Morga’s appointment to captain-general of the Spanish fleet against the Dutch was met with rancor from some of the old captains who “thought it unjust that the auditors (oidors) should take part in the affair.”

Although the document is entitled the “Commission to Doctor Morga” and Morga’s appointment appears to be a natural decision, the Cabildo’s complaint against him detailed behind-the-scenes campaigning on the part of Morga against the appointment of Don Joan Ronquillo, commander of the galleys and naval affairs. Through his “machinations” and “through scheming and plotting, and by authority of his office” Morga wrested command of the expedition from Ronquillo; and even though the latter had more experience in warfare, Morga was placed in charge not only of refitting trading ships for war but, more importantly, of leading the attack against the Dutch.

“With the least possible delay” Morga was ordered by Tello to “start in pursuit of the enemy in order to engage and fight him, until, with our Lord’s help, he is killed or sunk.” And if the enemy should flee even beyond the Philippine Islands, Morga was ordered to pursue the enemy “as far as possible.” While Morga was placed in charge of the fleet and is placed in command of the flagship, the San Diego, Captain Joan Alcega is placed in charge of the almiranta, the San Bartolome. Among the orders given by Morga to Alcega prior to the battle, Items 4 and 5 have particular relevance:

4. Item: Upon overtaking the ships of the enemy, efforts shall be made to grapple and board their flagship, here their force is carried. This same effort shall be made by the flagship of this fleet; but in case the flagship of the enemy cannot be

173 Blair and Robertson, ed., Philippine Islands, 11:143.
174 Blair and Robertson, ed., Philippine Islands, 11:143.
overtaken, and their almiranta is in such a condition that something may be done with it, it shall be attempted.

During the battle the San Diego (the flagship under Morga’s command) did grapple the Dutch Mauritius, and when the Dutch almiranta flees, its Spanish counterpart, the San Bartolome (commanded by Alcega) pursued it according to orders.

5. Item: Should our fleet attack the enemy and grapple, both ships—the almiranta and the flagship shall endeavor to grapple on the same side. But if that cannot be done, care shall be taken that our artillery and arquebuses are not turned on our own ships and me. In this the greatest possible are and precaution shall be observed.

The Spanish almiranta did attempt to board the enemy flagship according to orders, but was told by the Spaniards aboard the Mauritius that the Dutch had struck their colors, victory was won. Moreover, there were pleas from the Spaniards not to fire upon their own men; so accordingly Alcega assuming Spanish victory, pursued and easily overcame its Dutch counterpart. Other accounts of the battle attested to lack of order on the Spanish flagship that contributed to several fatal mistakes in battle. For instance, although it would have been to their advantage to board the enemy ship in large groups, “Instead of taking such good counsel, they boarded in parties of threes, while the enemy continued to wound and kill them.”

Our men, flushed with the exultation of the victory which they had won at first, and confused by much shouting, did not hasten to repair the damage; for they were people who did not like to be ordered, and their general could do nothing with them, as they were all captains and men of distinction.”

As to Morga’s personal conduct in battle, the Cabildo complained that:

When they had killed one or two of ours, as the latter had no one to command or direct them—because the said Doctor, as soon as they came in to close quarters with the enemy had thrown himself behind the capstan of the ship with a number

175 Blair and Robertson, ed., Philippine Islands, 11:160.
176 Blair and Robertson, ed., Philippine Islands, 11:160
of mattresses—the troops became demoralized that no one was able to accomplish anything.\textsuperscript{177}

With regard to the moment when Father Diego de Santiago—crucifix in hand—urged people to board the enemy ship, according to the Cabildo’s complaint against Morga, the Jesuit priest told Morga that he should go over to the \textit{Mauritius} along with the other men. But that Morga “would not do it.”\textsuperscript{178} Instead Morga apparently “threw the mattresses with which he had fortified the capstan into the water, in order to go to the small islet which lay near and escape, as he did.”\textsuperscript{179}

The other account has Morga jumping into the sea at the sight of dead bodies floating up from between decks. In these, less flattering accounts of battle, no mention is made of Morga swimming for hours carrying the Dutch standard. Both stories end with the death of 137 Spaniards killed and drowned, “not counting more than 100 “negroes and natives beside.”\textsuperscript{180}

Although Morga attempts to bring a suit against Juan Alcega for abandoning him in battle, it goes nowhere, and Morga’s grief and shame upon his return to Manila is such that he takes to bed and even believes he is at death’s door.\textsuperscript{181} He writes a letter to Philip III asking to be “withdrawn from this exile” and transferred to a place where he can “spend the rest of my life in greater peace in the service of Your Majesty.”\textsuperscript{182} Accordingly in 1603, Morga leaves the Philippines for Mexico. He writes the \textit{Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas} soon thereafter and it circulates in manuscript form until its publication in 1609.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{177} Blair and Robertson, ed., \textit{Philippine Islands}, 11:245
\item \textsuperscript{178} Blair and Robertson, ed., \textit{Philippine Islands}, 11:245
\item \textsuperscript{179} Blair and Robertson, ed., \textit{Philippine Islands}, 11:245
\item \textsuperscript{180} Blair and Robertson, ed., \textit{Philippine Islands}, 11:245
\item \textsuperscript{181} Cummins, 8.
\item \textsuperscript{182} Morga, “Letter to Philip III” in Blair and Robertson, ed., \textit{Philippine Islands} 11:255.
\end{itemize}
The Sucesos detail the challenges of colonial government, overseas expeditions that fail, as well as the political struggles between governor and bishop. The Sucesos also includes information on the status of missions and contains an interesting chapter on native customs as was common in other “histories” of the period. As a history, Morga’s Sucesos has been praised for its insider knowledge into the workings of colonial government; but at its core is a personal defense of Morga’s actions in battle.

With regard to the battle with the Dutch, Morga includes copies of his commission, his orders from Governor Tello, and Morga’s orders to Joan Alcega. Not surprisingly, he portrays himself the hero of the battle. No mention is made of mistakes in clearing for action, or in boarding. No mention is made of the mattresses with which he barricaded himself from enemy fire. Moreover, he emphatically denies trying to escape the battle. Morga writes:

The auditor did not abandon ship…when the ship sunk the auditor swam constantly for four hours, with the quarter colors and the enemy’s standard which he took with him. He reached a very small desert island, two leagues away, called Fortuna where a few of the ship’s men who had more endurance in the sea also arrived in safety.183

It does not come as a surprise that in Morga’s own account, he would emphasize how he did not abandon ship, and only dove into the sea after the San Diego had already sunk.

What is more, he highlights, for the reader, his physical strength and endurance in swimming for hours carrying the enemy standard. Furthermore, safety and “victory” were assured for those who also (like Morga) had the strength and stamina to save their own lives and swim to Fortune Island.

If proof of physical strength were not enough to prove Morga’s manliness, he offers glimpses into his moral character—as seen by others, of course. One of the most striking features of Morga’s history is the number of letters written to him by a variety of people from the kings of

183 Morga, Sucesos, 229 (my emphasis).
Cambodia and Terrenate to captains and diplomats of significant overseas missions and military campaigns. These letters, which variously praise Morga’s efforts at diplomacy or plead for his intervention in sensitive political matters, showcase Morga’s power and prestige in the Philippines.

These letters are a striking contrast to letters complaining about Morga and exposing his cowardice in battle. Whereas Governor Tello had once complained to the king about Morga’s intrigue against him, it is interesting to note that with regard to the battle, Tello stands behind his former lieutenant governor. Tello writes:

In all the above, the said auditor (oidor) acted with great diligence and valor, exposing himself to all the risks of the battle and afterward of the sea. He did not receive any reward for his services, nor any salary, expenses, or any other recompense. On the contrary, he contributed and spent his own property to provide all the necessary equipment for the said expedition and also assisted some volunteers who went with him. Of the booty taken from the corsair’s almiranta, which was brought to this city, he refused to take nor did he take anything; on the contrary, the share which should have fallen on him, he ceded and passed to the king, our sovereign, and to his royal exchequer.184

Even if Morga admits to self-love, in the narrative of his own deeds he takes great pains to show his attempts to overcome self-love by virtue of his service to Spain as oidor, diplomat and soldier. Although Morga’s enemies accused him of arrogance and of being driven by purely selfish interests, the letter from Governor Tello here offers proof of Morga’s selflessness. According to Tello’s testimony, not only does Morga fund the expedition himself, he refuses to take booty from the captured Dutch almiranta as was his due. Evidence of Morga’s selflessness is crucial to his narrative, because according to the logic of self-love that he puts forth in his preface to the reader, selflessness is a criterion for truth. In other words, if self-love leads Morga to paint a flattering account of his conduct in battle, his selflessness suggests that even the flattering account is true.

184 Morgan, Sucesos, 237.
To bolster his image as a selfless servant of the state, Morga’s *Sucesos* includes the letter written to him by Franciscans and Jesuits condemned to die in Nagasaki in 1597. Telling the story of martyrs was an appropriate choice for Morga to make in writing his history, not only because the martyrs embody Spain’s spiritual prerogative of conquest but because they are the *ultimate models of courage in the face of persecution*. Indeed, Juan Luis Vives writes, “we are inflamed with a desire for enduring bravely all things for the glory of Christ rather by the examples of the martyrs than by the admonitions of the theologians.”

In July 1596, just as Governor Tello entered office, the *San Felipe* which was headed for New Spain encounters so many storms that it was forced to throw its cargo overboard; and with the loss of its rudder 600 leagues from the Philippines, the officers of the *San Felipe* decided to risk sailing to Japan to make necessary repairs. Grounded near the port of Hurando and despite repairs to the ship, the *San Felipe* was forbidden to leave without permission from “Taicosama” (Toyotomi Hideyoshi 1536–1598) then Regent of Japan, who in 1587 had issued an edict prohibiting Christianity and sending the Jesuits into exile (albeit not strictly enforced). An embassy was sent to Taicosama’s court in Miaco, where according to Morga, the Franciscans had a house and hospital “under Taico’s sufferance.”

Report of the *San Felipe* reached Hideyoshi and apparently “kindled [his] greed” whereupon the Spaniards were imprisoned and their goods confiscated. Attempts to remedy the situation by Fray Pedro Baptista (the superior of the Franciscan order) “only served to intensify

186 Morga, *Sucesos*, 121.
the evil”188 and angered Taicosama such that “like the barbarous and so avaricious tyrant that he was, he gave orders to crucify them all and all the religious who preached … in his kingdom.”189

Although this decree originally includes the officers and crew of the ship, it was later moderated to six Franciscans, three Japanese Jesuit brothers190 and 17 Japanese lay converts serving with the Franciscans. Prior to their execution, they were paraded through the streets of Miaco, Fugimen and Usaka with their right ears cut off191. According to Morga, the martyrs were crucified—the religious in the middle and the coverts on either side—“high on crosses with iron staples at their throats, hands and feet, and with long, sharp iron lances thrust up from below and crosswise through their sides.”192

On January 28, 1597, seven days before they were martyred, one of the Franciscans, Martin de la Assumpcion (also known as Martin de Aguirre as well as Martin Ascensión) wrote a letter to Morga on behalf of his fellow prisoners, as a testimony of their impending martyrdom and as a testimony to Morga’s advocacy and support “toward the affairs of this conversion.”193 Indeed Morga was known to have supported the Franciscan mission to Japan as a peace-keeping measure. How much Morga encouraged the Franciscans to go beyond their diplomatic capacity to preach and minister to Japanese converts, against the Regent’s express prohibition remains to be

______________________________

188 Morga, Sucesos, 120.

189 Morga, Sucesos, 121.

190 Charles Boxer says these Jesuit Brothers are condemned by mistake; Chirino says one of the members of Hideyoshi’s own court reminds him of his cordial relations with the Jesuit vice-provincial and this list was amended.

191 According to Cieslik, the plan was for both ears and the nose to be cut, but one of the governors of Kyoto, Ishida Mitsunari intervened and only the right ears were cut. He is also responsible for reducing the number of potential martyrs. Cieslik’s article on p. 44 of Funakoshi’s 26 Martyrs of Nagasaki.

192 Morga, Sucesos, 123.

193 Morga, Sucesos, 124.
investigated. Based on the martyrs’ letter alone, it would appear the Franciscan presence served to promote Christendom in Japan, a cause for which a fair number of people including children were about to die.

Once more, then, readers are introduced to a death in which Morga has played a part. And yet this death, it would seem, is unambiguously good. The presence of the martyr’s letter to Morga in which he is praised for his efforts to ensure the spread of Christianity introduces the idea that even though Morga deserved blame (in whole or part) for the sinking of the San Diego, he merits praise for something ultimately greater than Spain’s commercial and political interests. Having furthered Spain’s claim as a defender of the Catholic faith, he gains spiritual and political advocates in the martyrs, they wrote to Morga:

> Since you are a father, and look with favor upon all things which may concern the mission of the religious in this conversion, so may your grace find one who will protect and intercede for you before God in time of need. 194

Thus, even if he was accused by others as guilty of the sin of self-love, the martyrs as imitators of Christ’s selflessness become Morga’s advocates before an audiencia of a different sort. Whereas he once judged others as senior oidor of the Manila Audiencia, Morga as a historian, is a less than perfect judge of his own deeds and must plead his case before a different tribunal. The martyrs’ letter bears witness to Morga’s character, good intentions and efforts toward the spread of (Spanish, Roman Catholic) Christendom. If he has failed as a commander against Dutch “heretics” in a battle at sea, he has apparently not failed in his support of the Catholic martyrs’ cause in Japan. Indeed, the martyrs themselves appear ready to advocate for Morga not only before human judges, but before God, in his time of need.

Moreover, Morga’s account of the martyrdom and the inclusion of their farewell letter functions also as a literary absolution for the historical “imperfections” which Morga confessed to

194 Morga, Sucesos, 124.
in his dedicatory letter and his preface to the reader. In rendering his own deeds with even a modicum of the “hatred and flattery” he condemns in the writing of the deeds of others, and in portraying himself as a conscientious and gallant soldier, the sin of self-love has contributed to an imperfect history of events which in turn reflect the author’s own shortcomings.

However, what could easily be interpreted as shameless self-promotion on Morga’s part is in fact a kind of confession. Even if he was not forthcoming in admitting his mistakes in battle, Morga has submitted himself to the judgment of his own readers who were familiar with the facts of the case.\(^\text{195}\) Moreover, in his association with the martyrs, Morga has upheld them as exemplars not simply for his readers, but for himself as well.

In their imitation of Christ, the martyrs fulfill the kind of selfless behavior that Morga can only \textit{approximate} (yet another example of how imitation is never perfect). Whereas Morga puts up all manner of literary and political defenses, the martyrs do not have recourse to such self-protective measures. And yet, if writing history naturally entails drawing moral comparisons between readers, writers and their subjects, Morga’s \textit{Sucesos} may function less as a form of self-defense, than (and perhaps more boldly) as an act of penance. To fully appreciate Morga’s penance in the writing of \textit{Sucesos} let us consider another detail from the Cabildo’s complaint against Morga:

The majority of people through all this city have been hurt and injured, from the time when he came to this country, by the procedures of the said Doctor Morga, both in his actions and words against them, and in letters which he has written treacherously regarding the circumstances of various people, signing false names to them and disguising his handwriting. Afterward he showed copies of these to other persons in order to give the impression that he is not the author of them.\(^\text{196}\)

\(^{195}\) According to J.S. Cummins, “the debate over the Van Noordt battle was still rumbling on in the Council of the Indies as late as August 1608, a year before the \textit{Sucesos} appeared;” see Antonio Morga, \textit{Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas}, J. S. Cummins, ed. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 18.

\(^{196}\) Ronquillo in Blair and Robertson, ed., \textit{Philippine Islands}, 11:249.
The passage is especially poignant when compared to Morga’s aims and strategies in writing the *Sucesos*. First, according to the Cabildo, people have been hurt by Morga’s deeds and words. In particular, Morga is said to inflict injury in the form of letters written in a disguised hand and signed with a false name. Next, Morga shows these letters to others in an attempt to prove he is not the author of them. In contrast, Morga is the avowed author of the *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*. Although the work circulated in manuscript form prior to its publication, it is not anonymously penned. Morga’s stated aim to “give each one his due without hatred or flattery” is in marked contrast to his writing “treacherously regarding the circumstances of various people.” Moreover, by signing his name to the history of events in the Philippines, he bears both the fame and burden of authorship.

Writing the *Sucesos* is a form of penance because to write is to be exposed, and it means perpetual vulnerability to praise and blame. Even as he lauds Spain as the “defender of the Christian faith” and its Philippine governors and administrators (himself included) as exemplary statesmen, writing the book makes Morga politically vulnerable—especially since he writes a book of history. With history understood as a repository of models, Morga invites comparison with those he attempts to imitate: Cato and Marcius stood against corruption, whereas Morga is often suspected of it and is later charged with it. The martyrs die in their efforts to preach the Gospel in Japan, Morga escapes death (through fear and confusion) in his fight against Protestant Dutch corsairs. And yet the beauty of Morga’s history resides in the elastic nature of exemplarity that allows readers to also view Morga as a “martyr” in the service of the King of Spain. He bears witness to the counter-reformation as it plays out in the Pacific and to the spread of Roman Catholicism in the Philippines, Japan and surrounding areas. In the *Sucesos*, we see the interplay of history, imitation, mission and martyrdom on both a grand scale as well as a more intimate one. It is not just a question of personal pride or political reputation, but a matter of moral justifications for one’s actions, for which models of exemplarity serve as approximations of ideal
situations in which idealized men of action do good work in the service of the kings of Spain and heaven.

For this work, the deployment of “martyrdom” in various ways is thus rhetorically significant, and there is support from multiple sources that the battle between Morga and Oliver Van Noordt was seen very much in terms of spiritual and moral warfare. Pedro Chirino’s *Historia* uses the word “heretical” several times to describe Dutch corsairs including Morga’s nemesis.\(^{197}\) What is more, not only is Van Noordt “heretical” by virtue of his representing the Protestant Dutch, his status as a corsair, (that is a pirate, albeit sometimes operating with “official sanction”) makes him doubly suspect.

From this perspective, Morga, as a colonial administrator, officially commissioned to engage in the battle to fend off preying ships, was thus morally on higher ground. Piracy was a constant threat to Manila,\(^ {198}\) and to the bitter end Morga would argue that had he *not been abandoned* (by the *almiranta* and its captain) he would have succeeded in his mission to rid Manila of this Dutch menace. By reproducing the martyrs’ letter, in the *Sucesos*, he obeys the laws of history while securing for himself the ultimate advocates who will never abandon him. What is more, the *San Diego* may have been sunk by the Dutch, but a “victory” can still be claimed by Spain for the twelve souls restored to Roman Catholicism.

Indeed, among those who might claim to have “benefitted” from Morga’s mishandling of the battle are some of his very enemies. According to Chirino, of the thirteen men captured by Juan de Alceaga, only the Vice-Admiral died a Protestant. The other twelve prisoners, however, made:

…public testimony of the Holy Roman Catholic Faith, protesting they were dying in it, abominating the heresies of Calvin, Luther, Zwingli, and other

---

\(^ {197}\) Chirino, *Historia*, 269.

\(^ {198}\) *Reis Correia*, 82.
heretics and asking pardon from all. They died two days later with rosaries around their neck and the Bulls of the Holy Crusade (with which they were absolved) sewed to their shirts, each with a crucifix in his hands, which he devoutly adored, embraced everyone with deep joy that they were atoning for their sins with that death. 199

In this way, Morga could be said to have contributed to the “martyrdom” of many. However, even when Chirino and Morga both cast the battle of the San Diego as one against heresy, and Chirino was by all means fair regarding his report of Morga’s actions (including Morga’s brave swim to Fortune Island carrying the two enemy flags), Chirino had a different history to write. While Morga’s detractors do not even mention the flags or his courageous effort even in the face of defeat, Chirino took care to do so; however, Chirino gently relates how later the enemy standard Morga bore became a “trophy from the enemy, but not of victory.” 200 Moreover, Morga’s misfortune was treated by Chirino with an eye toward the bigger picture—that is with a concern for the lessons it could teach future readers, especially prospective Jesuits missionaries.

In this chapter, the tragic loss of the Spanish galleon and worse, the loss of a valiant Jesuit, Diego de Santiago, in a battle that could have been won (alluded to in the Jesuit Annual Letter discussed in Chapter 1) was rewritten as history and confession from a different perspective—that of a colonial official—who nevertheless used religious and political exemplars in order to mitigate accusations of cowardice in a costly battle. In this chapter, we have seen Jesuits interacting with colonial government and see them in a somewhat marginalized position as Franciscans emerged the favorite to represent the Philippines in a special embassy to Japan. Their subsequent martyrdom along with Japanese lay Jesuits transformed them into immediate advocates for Morga who needed their help to rehabilitate his reputation after the battle. In the

199 Chirino, Historia, 273

200 Chirino, Historia, 272.
reproduction of their letter to him in his *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*, Morga was able to proclaim Spain’s double mission of *evangelium* and *imperium* a success—even if these were the very points which apparently caused Hideyoshi such distress that he ordered the execution of the Franciscans he had once favored along with Jesuits native to Japan.

In the next chapter, we shall see how Fray Matin Ascensión, the Franciscan letter-writer who wrote the martyrs’ farewell letter that Morga would deploy in his defense, would also come to the aid of his own order with an *apologia* of his own. Not only was the sense of mission and martyrdom hotly contested, but also the mode of how Christian imitation and accommodation to other cultures was to be practiced. Moreover, the question of self-love (as it relates to mission and martyrdom) continues to be explored in the following chapter as we investigate a fascinating account of a sermon that is believed to have been penned on the sleeve of a Franciscan habit.
IV. Sermon on the Sleeve and the Heart in Hiding

A. Mission and Martyrdom from the Jesuit and Franciscan Perspectives

In the preceding pages, we investigated the presence of the martyrs’ letter in Antonio de Morga’s *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* and provided an analysis of the rhetorical purposes served by the letter insofar as Morga hoped his readers would see it as a mirror reflecting his conduct in battle and in office in a more heroic light. However, the martyrs’ letter deserved to be examined on its own terms (apart from its presence in Morga’s book) and in anticipation of a Franciscan sermon that was supposedly written on the sleeve of a Franciscan habit prior to martyrdom in Nagasaki. Moreover, this chapter focuses the question of martyrdom, mission and exemplarity on Jesuit-Franciscan relations even as issues of colonial politics continue to play their part in history.

Beginning with an overview of the original Franciscan embassy from the Philippines to Japan in 1593, the next sections will provide some background information on the Nagasaki martyrs (who were canonized by Pope Pius IX in Rome, June 8, 1862) and culminate in an analysis of the letter itself: Its style and contents will be examined in the hopes that a close reading of the letter in its context will further illuminate conversations about acts of Christian imitation for Franciscans, Jesuits and their fellow-martyrs.

To this end, the next two sections will also look at the events leading up to the martyrdom as well as the portrayal of the martyrdom and its consequences from both Jesuit and Franciscan perspectives as yet another way of framing discussions about imitation and its relationship to Christian evangelization at this particular time and place. An analysis of the event from multiple perspectives allows us to see diverging ideals of imitation and exemplarity among the Jesuit and Franciscan orders, and how these in turn affected approaches to evangelization and the interpretation of martyrdom within missionary life. As certain scholars have suggested, the tensions between Jesuits and Franciscans in Japan may have been the result of a clash of
medieval, messianic, and humanist ideals\textsuperscript{201} transplanted with varying degrees of success in the New World and Asia (which we will explore later in the chapter). Further complicating matters is the political or diplomatic aspect of the missionary’s role for which he is often “doubly” sent by the Church, and by the colonial Governor (or King).

Indeed one of the salient features of the martyrs’ letter for the question of mission is the blurred line between the roles of Christian missionary and Spanish ambassador—the diplomatic and political concerns of the one, versus the spiritual prerogatives of the other. In fact, the very circumstances that allowed Franciscans to enter and work in Japan in the first place—that is, as ambassadors of the Spanish Governor of the Philippines—would contribute to their martyrdom.

Undoubtedly, making clear distinctions between ambassador and missionary is challenging precisely because the line between embassy and mission is blurred, often on purpose, with various things at stake theologically and politically depending on which side of the line one stands. While it would appear necessary to separate (as much as it can be separated) “embassy” from “mission,” it seems in the Spanish context, these roles are at times so interchangeable that they may in fact be inseparable—and more importantly, as we shall see, they are made inseparable for strategic reasons. However, in our evaluation of the Franciscan “mission” to Japan, it would be important to understand the ways these roles are subtly distinct in function, perception and reception, because therein lies the trap that the Franciscans fell into—in entering Japan as \textit{ambassadors} of the Spanish Governor of the Philippines, preaching there as Catholic \textit{missionaries} against the Edict of the Japanese Regent, and in their mishandling of the \textit{San Felipe} affair—in which, it can be argued, they muddled both offices and meddled in ways they should not have, a move that ultimately led to their (un)timely demise.

According to several primary sources, the original demand for ambassadors came from the Regent of Japan himself, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who had threatened to invade Luzon if they were not sent. Fearful of an invasion for which the Philippines was unprepared, Governor Gomez Dasmarinas had originally sent Dominican friar, and sinologist, Juan Cobo to Japan; he unfortunately perished on his return voyage to Manila in 1592.

Responding to Hideyoshi’s further threats, communicated by another envoy named Faranda (named Harada in other accounts), in May of 1593, Dasmarinas sent Franciscans already working in the Philippines as his ambassadors to the Japanese court. Heading the group of Franciscans was Fray Pedro Baptista who had just been elected Bishop of Camarines. Not surprisingly, Emmanuel Kenners calls theirs a “double mission,” since its original purpose was to negotiate peace and trade with Japan. Given the various states of conflict in which Japan was then embroiled (including a protracted invasion of Korea), Franciscan “peace” would come to mean many things over the course of their mission.

Charles Boxer claims another ulterior motive behind Hideyoshi’s request for and the Governor’s sending of Franciscan missionaries—a mutual attempt by Spain and Japan to create economic competition in order to break the Jesuit-Portuguese monopoly on trade via the Great

202 Apparently the Japanese requested specifically that Franciscans be sent, but this is according to Franciscan sources: (Fray Juan de Santa Maria. 1599, Fray Ribadeneira, 16thc. and Kenners in 1862). Charles Boxer, Pedro Lage Reis Correia, M. Berry all note that the Japanese Regent, Hideyoshi, had his own interests at stake in pitting the Spaniards against the Portuguese, the Jesuits against the Franciscans.

203 The request of Hideyoshi’s is both true and not true: the letter from Hideyoshi that was carried by the Dominican friar Juan Cobo perished with him, and the “memorial” that Faranda/Harada presented to the Philippine Governor-general was, according to Moran, written by Harada himself: see J. F. Moran, The Japanese and the Jesuits: Alessandro Valignano in sixteenth-century Japan (New York: Routledge, 1993), 92.

204 Emmanuel Kenners, The Japanese Martyrs: or, A Brief Sketch of the Lives and Martyrdom of the Franciscan Saints, who were Canonized at St. Peters, in Rome, by Pope Pius IX, on Whit-Sunday, June 8th, 1862 (Manchester, 1862), 55.
Ship. 205 Pedro Lage Reis Correia supports the same view and says that Hideyoshi was interested in engaging in trade with Spain and Manila in order to drive down the price of silk and gold (Reis Correia, 83). Prior to sending the embassy of Franciscans, Japan had not only been the exclusive mission territory of the Jesuits by papal decree of Pope Gregory XIII on January 28, 1585 (which was engineered by Alessandro Valignano, S.J.), but also an almost exclusively Portuguese trading center by virtue of the Portuguese colony of Macao. Indeed Reis Correia aptly describes the situation in which Japan found itself as being “on the frontier of the Portuguese and Spanish areas of influence.” 206

According to other reports, believed even by Jesuits (of which more will be said later in the chapter) Faranda (Harada) utilized a combination of deliberate mistranslation and Hideyoshi’s megalomania to lure the Franciscans to Japan as part of his own opportunistic scheme. It would appear, however, Faranda and Hideyoshi were not the only ones attempting to “translate” anew express decrees and wishes. Several scholars agree that Spain’s colonial administration in the Philippines felt hard-pressed to re-interpret the Jesuits’ exclusive claim on Japan, not only because it felt especially vulnerable to military attacks, and in need of a potential Asian ally, but it also sought new avenues for trade and preaching in the more glorious mission fields of China and Japan.

The obstacle of Pope Gregory XIII’s papal brief was overcome at a meeting of lawyers and members of the mendicant orders gathered in Manila at the governor’s request. According to


Marcelo Ribadeneira O.F.M., the governor overrode the papal brief on six grounds\textsuperscript{207} including his discretionary power to act in the name of the King of Spain in a pressing matter requiring him to send an urgent reply to the “King of Japan.” Thus, first and foremost, the affair was treated as a political matter of State. Of particular interest to us are two further grounds for establishing the embassy—that is, Franciscans were apparently specifically requested by Hideyoshi “for the famous virtues of poverty and humility would easily establish peace and friendship between the two rulers,”\textsuperscript{208} and “Japanese Christians who accompanied Faranda on the goodwill mission, recounted the exile of the Jesuits by Taicosama, because the people believed their teachings and way of life as evil.”\textsuperscript{209}

The Franciscans’ invitation to Japan in spite of the papal brief prohibiting all other religious orders except the Jesuits, and their presence there in spite of Hideyoshi’s own 1587 edict prohibiting Christianity, together with the Regent’s initial “favor” of the Franciscans seemingly over and against the Jesuits, followed by their eventual horrific yet glorious martyrdom not even four years into their mission are either marvelous or scandalous depending on one’s perspective.

Understandably, the Franciscans, in their own accounts, would cling to the virtues of poverty and humility while painting the Jesuits in a different light.\textsuperscript{210} These points, especially when contrasted to the supposed Jesuit example, will be key to understanding the Japanese

\textsuperscript{207} The Six grounds for quick reference: 1. An urgent reply is needed and can be provided based on discretionary power of governor 2. Specific request that Franciscans be sent 3. Japanese Christians say Jesuits were exiled because their teachings were evil 4. According to partition of the world by Pope Alexander VI Japan belonged to Spain 5) Pope Sixtus V modified Gregory XIII brief, confirmed by Pope Paul III. 6) opinion of Franciscan bishops—they were exempt from episcopal control “in the preaching of the Gospels to the neighboring countries of the Philippines,” M. de Ribadeneira, \textit{Historia del Archipiélago y otros Reynos} (Manila: Historical Conservation Society, 1970), 665.

\textsuperscript{208} Ribadeneira, \textit{Historia}, 665.

\textsuperscript{209} Ribadeneira, \textit{Historia}, 665 (my emphasis).

\textsuperscript{210} See Moran, \textit{Japanese and the Jesuits}, 105 for a discussion about Jesuits’ difficulty with practicing the ideal of religious poverty and humility in Japan.
embassy/mission of the Franciscans—*their* view of the apparent state of spiritual and political affairs at the time of their arrival in Japan as well as the apparent failure of the Jesuits in *their* mission—and in what ways the Franciscan “double mission” can be said then to have succeeded and/or failed.

The rivalry between Jesuits and Franciscans in Japan has already been written about by several scholars including Pedro Lage Reis Correia who examines divergent concepts of evangelization in the late sixteenth century by inquiring into Franciscan and Jesuit views of “what the Church should be in relation to the outside world.”\(^{211}\) In his analysis, Reis Correia suggests that a Franciscan missionary’s cultural accommodation to the pagan world is viewed as “sinful” (such as Jesuit participation in Japanese ceremony, or dress); he combines this perspective with the order’s messianic impulse in Japan and contrasts it with the missionary approach of the Jesuits which apparently grew out of Valignano’s humanistic education and which stressed the importance of experience as a guiding principle, with knowledge seen as a “conditioning factor of the missionary process.”\(^{212}\)

Together with the rationale set down by lawyers and members of other mendicant orders as outlined above, we shall consider Reis Correia’s thesis with evidence specific to the Nagasaki martyrdom\(^{213}\) in order to gain a new perspective on the long-standing rivalry between the orders and how their divergent theories and methods of mission and imitation affect how they perceived, performed and interpreted acts of martyrdom.

We will now view the Nagasaki martyrdom, the events leading up to it, and its consequences, from a Jesuit perspective. In particular, we will consider the martyrdom as retold

\(^{211}\) Reis Correia, “Valignano,” 79.

\(^{212}\) Reis Correia, “Valignano,” 96.

\(^{213}\) Reis Correia mentions the martyrdom briefly in “Valignano,” 84–85, but does not dwell on it.
in the *History of the Philippine Province of the Society of Jesus*, by Pedro Chirino, S.J. The perspective is a significant one, for not only did all of the Franciscan martyrs first serve in the Philippines before going to Japan, the relationship between the religious orders in the Philippines appears to have been far more cordial than was the case in Japan. Still, the effect of the Nagasaki martyrdom reverberated throughout the Islands and the mission and reputation of each of the respective orders in both Japan and the Philippines would be tested in the aftermath.

Even as the Nagasaki martyrdom was heralded as a kind of victory for all of Catholic Christendom, the Jesuits had their own interests to protect. While admiring the work of Franciscan Superior Pedro Baptista and other Franciscans—even going so far as to defend his decision to devote several chapters to them in his *History of the Philippine Province of the Society of Jesus*—Chirino also admits to jealousy, and to the persecution suffered by Jesuits both in Japan and in the Philippines as a result of the events leading up to and surrounding the martyrdom itself.

Anticipating that his readers might wonder why he would choose to write about a primarily Franciscan “event” Chirino offers the following defense:

One who reads the previous chapters thinking they are a history of the Philippines will criticize the author of going beyond the limits of his subject. And he, who with human eyes looks at the crucified martyrs and their crosses, on the one hand, and our Fathers out of prison, surviving in Japan, on the other, will consider them miserable, and these fortunate. But since truly the fortunate are those who died in the Lord, *so the living are not at rest, but face severe tribulations, which perhaps merited martyrdom for them*. Our Philippine Province *has no small share in it* and this is the reason why it behooved me in this history to include so much about Japan. On us has pegged the pestilence, if we may rightly call it, which with the love of a Father, God our Lord sends to bless His servants and be pleased with their suffering.²¹⁴

Chirino wanted to make clear three things: That Jesuit and Franciscan missions in Asia are intertwined; that their decisions and actions affect one another, and that the Cross of Japan in all

its glory and shame rests on all shoulders—if a little unequally, in his view. While it would seem, to human eyes, that the Jesuits were fortunate enough to have escaped suffering, unlike the Franciscan martyrs who endured crucifixion, Chirino not only flips things around to say that not only is it the martyrs who are the fortunate ones, having died so famously in the Lord, it is the living Jesuits who in the face of tribulations are truly miserable and thereby merit martyrdom or at the very least merit the praise of martyrdom. Here Chirno places the tribulations that have resulted since the martyrdom on almost equal footing with the martyrdom itself. With the understanding of martyrdom as Christian witness, Chirino dares to claim the Jesuits’ share in martyrs’ crown—especially as he, as an historian (and Christian), is about to point out both its thorns and its glory. This last point is of particular importance for Chirino as he himself tries to “obey the laws of history” and give each one his due. In the History of the Philippine Province of the Society of Jesus, he is attempting to account for the makings of an exemplary Christian mission. In the preceding pages, Chirino writes:

Since history is a teacher and therefore should speak of everything to teach the present and future generations by means of past events, I shall not omit an incident how from painful lessons follow tricky ones and how much one ought to listen to the veterans. This incident is that in their holy zeal the unshod fathers prided themselves about the great respect and reserve Ours showed them, suggesting that they should accommodate themselves slowly to the times. This they called Jesuit prudence… contrasting their fervor with our tepidity, according to the wrong ideas of the time… In time God freed them and made them change their mind, such that the very things they condemned in us, they themselves imitated and embraced afterwards, as necessary for their good government and consolidation,215 not only in this but in many more things, as in changing their habit, in giving the Japanese presents and favors.216

215 Ribadeira O.F.M. references an interesting example of Fray Pedro Baptista softening their own rule of poverty by allowing one room in the Franciscan convent to be comfortably furnished for the purpose of entertaining Japanese nobility and dignitaries in Ribadeneira, Historia, 2:676.

216 Chirino, Historia, 303 (emphasis mine).
As with Morga, in the passage above Chirino invokes history as a pedagogical tool, but the examples he holds up for praise and blame are Franciscans and Jesuits working in both the Philippines and Japan. Briefly telling his readers about a Franciscan sermon once given in Manila, in which the Jesuits were ridiculed, Chirino then flips things around to show how times have changed, how Jesuits are now the ones held up for imitation, especially (Chirino might argue) since the martyrdom in Nagasaki (writing about a decade or so later) in whose wake the mission and prudence of members of both orders are called into question.

Like Morga, Chirino addresses the issue of martyrdom. Yet whereas Morga does so for political reasons and casts martyrdom in terms of the political, religious, and economic tensions between the Spaniards and the Dutch, Catholics and Protestants, and makes an emotional appeal to martyrdom to save his own skin, Chirino enters into different territory—not just intra-Christian, but intra-Roman Catholic domain. While imitation of Christ and evangelization is the undisputed goal, the best model, the best example, and the best way of proceeding is highly contested.

There is no doubt, even in Chirino’s perspective, that the achievement of martyrdom by Franciscan missionaries, Japanese Jesuit brothers, and Japanese converts to Christianity is an example of *imitatio Christi*. And yet, even amidst his genuine praise of Fray Pedro Bautista and his fellow-martyrs, there lies an implicit critique of martyrdom and its place as the possible goal of any Christian mission.

This critique, which runs throughout Chirino’s works, is in keeping with Jesuit efforts to understand the profound difficulties facing missionaries *anywhere* in the world. Where do they go? To whom are they sent? What must they do or say? How do they do it? Pedro Lage Reis Correia argues that between Jesuits and Franciscans, differences in missionary strategies could be accounted for in part by their different attitudes toward experience and cultural

---

accommodation. Moreover, according to Reis Correia, Franciscan missionary strategy had a messianic strain. This is certainly evident in New Spain but this was apparently case in Japan as well; we will take this up shortly.

In terms of the Philippines, the Franciscans and the Jesuits appeared at least on equal footing. The Franciscans arrived in the Philippines in 1577 prior to the Jesuits in 1581. Even before Chirino covered reports the story of the martyrdom in Japan, he began in Chapter 8 with the story of the work of the Franciscans in the Taytay-Antipolo mission where there were “some baptized … everyone a catechumen” and there were “700 families or tributes grouped into four villages.” In other words, in the Philippines, the two orders labored in the same field, but as it would appear from reading the Historia, the Franciscans abandoned Taytay-Antipolo to the Jesuits who would (so it would seem) till ground and later the reap the harvest. In Japan, at least according to the Franciscan narrative, it would be the opposite.

When it came to Jesuit missionary approach in Japan, the standard interpretation of many scholars of Valignano is that Jesuits in general valued cultural accommodation as a necessary component of evangelization; and that insofar as local custom or ceremonial system did not interfere with Christian practice, it could be tolerated even used to the missionary’s advantage. Particular knowledge and experience of the “other” (i.e. in terms of language and culture) was not, in other words, something to be deemed unnecessary or alien to the preaching of the Gospel; according to Reis Correia, Valignano “did not seek to protect the Church from potentially

220 Reis Correia, “Valignano,” 98
contaminating contact with a sinful pagan world.”

However, Jesuit willingness to adapt and accommodate oneself to human diversity and local mission territories did not necessarily translate into an acceptance of models of Christian diversity, especially not in the case of evangelizing Japan. The rationale behind this exclusivity is fundamentally about proper imitation and exemplarity. With so many models of Christ to follow, who is to say which model is best? With so many ways to imitate Christ causing discord among the “established” Christians, how much more confusion and conflict might there be (which ought to be avoided) for the newest and most fragile of Christian converts? Ought there not be uniformity in Christian teaching and example?

The Jesuits pursued nearly forty years of relative peace and prosperity in Japan seeing the unification of the archipelago under Hideyoshi’s command and seeing for themselves the complex workings of the social hierarchy which necessitated utmost study and care of the other in ways that the society and power structure functioned. This meant challenges when it came to practicing holy poverty and humility, but it also meant being able to maintain the status quo in spite of the seeming reversal of fortune caused by the Edict of 1587.

The Edict of 1587 prohibiting Christianity and apparently sending Jesuits into exile is interpreted by scholars as an edict that was never strictly enforced and according to Mary

221 Reis Correia, “Valignano,” 98.

222 Reis Correia, “Valignano,” 95.

223 See Valignano’s 1583 Sumario, specifically the chapter, “On why it is not convenient that other religious orders should come to Japan” as discussed in Boxer, Church Militant, 156.

224 Moran, Japanese and Jesuits, 109

225 The Edict as quoted in Berry: It is the judgment of the Lord of the Tenka that since the Bateren [padres] by means of their clever doctrine amass parishioners as they please, the aforementioned violation of the Buddhist law… has resulted. That being outrageous, the bateren can hardly be allowed to remain on Japanese soil. Berry, 92
Elizabeth Berry as one that was targeted only toward certain “evangelical band of priests who sowed disorder” in Kyushu.\textsuperscript{226} Hideyoshi still maintained individual Japanese Christian daimyo among his ranks, and acknowledged the necessity of having to deal with European Christians for trade. Still, the edict was not without its effect on the morale and missionary functions of the Jesuits in Japan. According to Charles Boxer, Valignano had his own way of interpreting the surprising twists and turns of Jesuit fortune in Japan especially with regard to its mercurial Regent. Boxer quotes Valignano as saying that God in His Wisdom even “wanted to unmake what the fathers were making.”\textsuperscript{227}

In the \textit{Historia}, Pedro Chirino writes:

\begin{quote}
It did not take long to feel the weight of the Cross in Japan and the pricks of the thorns. Even if they had already been felt in 1589,\textsuperscript{228} in 1592 it began to weigh heavier that it began to inflict wounds, as we saw in chapter 8 [sic error in English, should be 9] and the following year, that of 1593 broke out such as to leave wounds that were incurable and fatal. It is a story as long as it is noteworthy that it is necessary to look into and delay ourselves with both joy and pain at once.\textsuperscript{229}
\end{quote}

With a slight correction in dates (see footnote) I believe Chirino refers to pricks and thorns of 1587, 1592 and 1593. Even if the 1587 edict against Christianity was not strictly enforced, there were repercussions for the Jesuits in Japan and the Philippines; their reputation was being sullied by information about the Society then circulating among traders to and from

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Boxer, \textit{Church Militant}, 137.
\item As of the time of writing this dissertation, I am still uncertain regarding what 1589 refers to; if it is a typographical error, I am tempted to think it refers to 1587. And that the dates in general in this paragraph refer to 1587 (the Edict) 1592 (the first embassy which sent the Dominican Juan Cobo) and 1593, (the second embassy which sent the Franciscans) research may have to be conducted to see what happened in Japan or to the Jesuits in 1589.
\item Chirino, \textit{Historia}, 292.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Japan. This information tended to be inflammatory in nature as were rumors coming from the Parian (Chinese) district of Manila about a possible invasion by the Japanese. By 1590, Hideyoshi had unified Japan and was interested in trade and further conquest. Having united Japan for the first time in a century, and having launched an invasion of Korea, even as “Taicosama” (Retired Regent—a title of even greater honor and influence) he held great power and still had to be taken seriously. Hoping to gain Hideyoshi’s favor in 1592, an opportunistic schemer named Faranda approached Valignano for letters of recommendation in order to pursue a target like Manila. Recognizing his scheme, Valignano wrote to the Jesuits in the Philippines (Fr. Sedeno) telling them to secretly warn Governor Gomez Perez Dasmarinas against this man. Although the Governor is sufficiently warned, Manila’s defenses are such that he cannot help but “receive” Faranda (albeit with coolness) and send an embassy to Hideyoshi asking for clarification about his intentions. The man the Governor sends for this important purpose is a Dominican Juan Cobo. Although he is instructed to respect “especially the Portuguese no less than those of the Society,” the Jesuits in the Philippines are duly insulted, “for it was to set us aside, as though we were traitors to the royal Crown.”

1593 was, of course, the year that the Jesuit’s exclusive hold on Japan was broken by the second embassy to Japan made up of Franciscans. Such are the pricks and thorns of the years

---

230 Ribadeneira, Historia, 665.
232 Chirino, Historia, 284.
233 Chirino, Historia, 284
234 All of the Mendicant Orders apparently support the Franciscans going first to Japan. Chirino wryly remarks that years later, not only are the Franciscans imitating the Jesuits in Japan, but all the other orders (including the Dominicans and Augustinians) come through Manila to ask the Jesuits for help and apparently “cannot continue in Japan without this temporal help from here the Philippines.” See Chirino, Historia, 304.
235 Chirino, Historia, 284.
leading up to up to the martyrdom of 1597. Using such imagery, Chirino invokes in his readers Christ’s crown of thorns, and leaves no doubt that he intends to claim the Jesuits’ share in the martyrs’ crown as well. Interestingly, Chirino refers to the Cross of Japan as inflicting wounds that would be incurable and fatal, but he also speaks of taking his time with a narrative that brings both “joy and pain at once.” One cannot fail to appreciate Chirino’s choice words and his sensitivity to the complex mixture of anguish, splendor and shame in the events that would befall his brethren in the Society, the Franciscans, the Portuguese as well as the new Christians in Japan.

Given the consequences of the martyrdom, the “incurable and fatal wounds” of which Chirino speaks, it is difficult to determine what if anything he means when he says “joy.” Ever the temperate man, however, Chirino praises Pedro Baptista, the Franciscan friar who would become the Superior of the order in Japan as “sainted and learned man, an eloquent preacher … utterly prudent” and one whom he knew “very well” [“Santo, Letrado, y gran Predicador, y que como persona de gran prudencia”236]. It is interesting that he would use the word prudencia in describing Pedro Baptista because later in the narrative Chirino reports that the friar would eventually be warned against preaching and celebrating mass so openly and of “the danger they were risking to themselves and to that entire Christian community, for having so provoked and disgusted the Governors of that city and kingdom.”237 It is almost as if to say that when Fray Baptista departed the Philippines for Japan, he would take his saintly, learned and eloquent preaching with him but leave his prudence behind.

Indeed, this virtue, prudence, Chirino saves for the Historia and for its readers; for even as Chirino reports of the many good works the Franciscans do in their short mission to Japan, and the speed with which three churches and three hospitals are built in Miaco, Osaka and Nagasaki, he also speaks of the Franciscans’ ignorance of “the land and of the people and their native

236 Chirino, Historia, 293.

237 Chirino, Historia, 304.
temperament.” Moreover, he says in their fervor and zeal, the Franciscans began even to suspect the advice and suggestions given to them by Jesuits “who loved them from their heart…”238 Apparently, the advice went unheeded, even though it was given by those who “came to know so well the mood and condition of that people and the way to deal with them.”239

When the galleon San Felipe ran aground in the port of Hurando in 1596, the Franciscans took it upon themselves to intervene on behalf of the imprisoned crew and to petition for the return of the galleon’s cargo. Charles Boxer writes that according to Jesuit sources, the Franciscans not only refused Jesuit help in the San Felipe affair, they advised the galleon’s crew to do the same, and chose to place their trust in the wrong man, who unfortunately, double-crossed them.240 This view follows Chirino’s own report.241

Following Correia’s line of argument, it would seem the Jesuits would have handled things differently had they had experience with Japanese culture and law. However, the Franciscans (and we shall see this in Ribadineira’s account) not only trusted their intuition, they seemed to handle the situation straddling two roles (friar and ambassador) for which they were duly punished. What is more, one of the stories widely circulated at the time is of an unfortunate interview between Hideyoshi and the Spanish Pilot-Major of the galleon who is believed to have told the Hideyoshi that the King of Spain typically conquers lands by sending missionaries first.242 Suddenly, the Franciscans’ persistent intervention in the case of the San Felipe, their demand for the release of the crew, and the return of the confiscated cargo, along with the recollection of their first arrival as “ambassadors” of the Spanish Governor of the King of Spain, in addition to their preaching

238 Chirino, Historia, 303.
239 Chirino, Historia, 303.
240 Boxer, Church Militant, 164.
242 Boxer, Church Militant, 166.
openly against his, the Regent’s, very Edict, seemed to support not only the Pilot-Major’s ill-timed boast, but what Hideyoshi’s anti-Christian retainers had been trying to tell him all along.

And yet, given the irony of Hideyoshi’s original request for an embassy made up of Franciscans (or else he would invade the Philippines), his ire seems a bit misplaced. Unfortunately for the Franciscans, the initial action that the Spanish Governor had taken to avert Japanese invasion and preserve the relationship between Japan and the Philippines would be seen later as a strategic opening move in the Spanish conquest of Japan.

Hideyoshi then ordered six Franciscans crucified as “violators of the law of the realm and disturbers of the public peace” along with seventeen Japanese converts and three Japanese Jesuit brothers. The European Jesuits themselves were spared due to the intervention of a local governor. Boxer says, Hideyoshi also realized that the Jesuits were still indispensable for trade with the Portuguese, so he could not afford for all missionaries to be executed as he had originally ordered. According to Fr. Cepedes S.J.’s account provided in Chirino’s Historia, sparing Jesuit lives had its good and bad points:

The tyrant in answer then said that he had not ordered the execution of Ours, but only those who had come from Luzon. We lost a good mouthful with this, although our Lord did not want us totally deprived and fruitless with such fortune. The tyrant permitted the imprisonment of three Japanese Brothers of our Society before he mitigated the sentence, after which no one could make him change his mind. Blessed are they, friars and their companions for they had gone ahead of us, enjoying such a priceless crown, and leaving behind to us, the living, quite a feeling of jealousy with such a good example.

Here the reader senses the “shame” of being spared martyrdom even if, and perhaps especially because Hideyoshi held the Jesuits in some esteem. In Cepedes’ account, we detect a longing for the glory and “fame” of martyrdom and the awesome power of setting such an

---

243 Boxer, Church Militant, 166.
244 Chirino, Historia, 312-313.
extraordinary example. Cepedes goes on to narrate the martyrdom of the Franciscans, the Jesuit brothers and the Japanese converts in detail, but does not neglect the opportunity to give special attention to one convert in particular:

…some changed the psalms and others preached excellently from the cross, with much charity especially our Bro. Paul Miki245, the best preacher we had in Japan. He spoke words with much charity and love for God, which won the admiration of all—they say they would be more than four thousand who witnessed that spectacle there.246

Even unto death on the cross the rivalry between the Jesuits and Franciscans continues, and the Jesuits who witness the martyrdom, like Cepedes, cannot help but fall under the spell of what the Franciscans would call a “concrete example” of the Gospel. At the end of his account, Cepedes asks Chirino to “to pray for the martyr’s crown for me if it will be for God’s greater glory.”247

Even as Cepedes longs for martyrdom, he quickly checks his desire by following it with the Jesuit motto. Yet Chirino’s aim in all of the Historia is to check this desire (for all prospective Jesuit missionaries) in favor of obedience to the more quotidian (if less spectacular) demands of everyday mission that for Chirino and his colleagues involve the willingness to suffer the “persecution” of a reputation damaged by rumor rather than a famed “tyrant’s” prohibition and condemnation. Following Cepedes’ more fabulous account is an example of the other kind of martyrdom that Chirino and the other Jesuits of the Philippines and Japan undergo as a result of the events at Nagasaki:

245 Although Paul Miki is a Japanese Jesuit lay brother, and is known as such today; in Ribadeneira’s account, he is made a lay Franciscan and is accorded this status by Franciscan superior, Fray Pedro Baptista in the final hours prior to the martyrdom! See Ribadeneira, 2:753.

246 Cepedes’ account in Chirino, Historia, 313.

247 Chirino, Historia, 314.
The passengers of the galleon the *San Felipe*—disconsolate and feeling as everyone can imagine, and besides, afflicted from witnessing the painful spectacle of the martyrdom of so many saintly men … they arrived in Manila spreading a thousand bad things, at least by the two we have indicated. We thus were deeply pained and scandalized all these Islands, and the rumor reached even Mexico and Castile.248

Apparently, the passengers of *San Felipe*, spread rumors about the Jesuits’ unwillingness to assist the Franciscans in their cause both in the affair of the *San Felipe* and in their imprisonment and martyrdom. According to the rumors, the Jesuits were to blame for the loss of wealth and the death of the Franciscans and Japanese. The fact that the European Jesuits were spared only made matters worse. And yet Chirino empathizes with the passengers of the *San Felipe*, for the trauma of what they have endured as prisoners in Japan and as witnesses to a gruesome scene. Some relief comes when the Jesuit Vice-Provincial of Japan writes a letter to King Philip III of Spain who accepts his version of events as true. What is more, Chirino goes on to report that other kindly, “prudent” men including friars, among them an Augustinian preacher from Cebu (and one of the passengers) who swore by the Blessed Sacrament that the story being told about the Jesuits was a lie.249

Still the “persecution” continues in the form of letters and reports that continue to be circulated against the Jesuits, but Chirino makes clear that while he could write even more about them, he prays for his persecutors instead, letting Fr. Valignano and others write an *Apologia* and History of Japan to take care of these accusations. Instead, Chirino returns to the heart of the story and of the *Historia* proper—that is on Philippine missions and the everyday work of the Jesuit missionary. When compared with Chirino and Cepedes’ accounts, Valignano’s reaction to the martyrdom in Nagasaki is stark and cold:


249 Chirino, *Historia*, 316.
They were putting themselves and all of Japanese Christianity in danger and gaining nothing.\textsuperscript{250}

From Valignano’s perspective, the martyrdom at Nagasaki accomplished nothing and damaged what the Jesuits had labored so long to build. The bitterness is palpable, and runs along the recognizable fault-lines of divergent missionary concepts touched on above. From Chirino and Valignano’s perspective, \textit{physical} martyrdom seems less valuable than the annihilation or transformation of the self to be experienced in one’s accommodation to another culture, or in mundane persecutions suffered through the habit of missionary life and its ensuing alienation away from “home.” Indeed in the opening pages of Chirino’s \textit{Historia} we read the following words:

[New missionaries] throw themselves eagerly, cheerfully brave the seas and, after crossing such wide oceans over so many dangers, appear unknown in new lands. And forgetting their own excellent qualities and merits for high dignities, be annihilated and broken in imitation of Jesus Christ…\textsuperscript{251}

In a similar vein, just prior to the influx of other mendicant orders to Japan Valignano writes an anxious letter to Fr. Diego Garcia SJ, Vice Provincial of the Philippines in 1602 decrying the chaos that would ensue if more religious orders were to come from Manila. Valignano describes the Jesuits’ long and patient labor in Japan:

…when we were the only ones in Japan, and we came from Macao, where there were no armies, and we had no power, and behaved with such consistency, and were so careful to provide no grounds for suspicion, accommodating ourselves to such an extent, to the customs and the way of life of Japan, \textit{making ourselves like natives}, and all of us having come with the resolve to stay here til death and therefore setting ourselves with such diligence to master the language…\textsuperscript{252}


\textsuperscript{251} Chirino, \textit{Historia}, 2.

\textsuperscript{252} Quoted in Moran, \textit{Japanese and Jesuits}, 87 (my emphasis).
We see in the passage above an emphasis on consistency, on accommodation in transformation of the self and integration into the local mission territory, including the need to master the language, and even “go native” if necessary—(an act which requires imitation) not just as mere strategy for evangelization, but as the heart of mission itself. Together with the “resolve to stay here ‘til death,” Valignano spells out a mission principle that portrays a different kind of Christian witness, thus redefining martyrdom for Jesuits in this time and place.

B. Holy Impudence: The Nagasaki Martyrdom from the Franciscan perspective

Xapon is kept quiet by the presence of the Franciscan religious whom we have there. They have built churches and hospitals; and in March they wrote to us again, telling how they preached publicly and have made a large number of converts. They are fearful lest the fathers of the Society of Jesus will insist they leave the country. Such a change would disturb everything for the king loves them on account of their poverty and charity.253

This passage from Morga’s letter to King Philip II shows contact between Morga and the Franciscans in Japan and how much the Spanish colonial government in the Philippines believes that the work of the Franciscans is helping to “keep the peace” between Japan and Manila. It is little wonder then, that Morga is singled out by Franciscan Martin Ascensión and thanked personally in a letter just a few days before his martyrdom.254

The passage also shows the tensions between the Jesuits and the Franciscans as well as a persistent theme or image “poverty and charity” that the Franciscans invoke throughout their mission and missionary accounts. Their use of these words and the image they invoke is but one of the ways the Franciscans sought to distinguish themselves from the Jesuits. Such an image

253 Morga’s letter to King Philip II 1595 detailing Franciscans in Japan in Blair and Robertson, ed., 9:263.

254 Ribadeneira mentions that Fray Martin writes two letters to be sent to individual persons in thanksgiving for what they have done in Ribadeneira, Historia, 754, though he does not mention to whom the letters are addressed. Thus far, this is the closest mention I have to any such letter written by Fray Martin and sent to Manila at the time of the martyrdom.
would enhance their claim that the mission in Japan as the beginning of a new era in which the martyrs of Nagasaki would be the “first fruits.”

We now turn our attention to the Franciscan side of the story, specifically focusing [for the time being] on the portrayal of their mission to Japan as told by Marcelo Ribadeneira O.F.M. in his *Historia del Archipelago y otros Reynos*. As with the Franciscans who were martyred in Japan, Marcelo Ribadeneira came from the Philippines, but in 1594, a year following the original embassy headed by Pedro Baptista. Ribadeneira was not among those who were martyred, although he mentions himself as among the Franciscans imprisoned to whom Fr. Pedro Baptista wrote “short endearing notes recommending us to God.” His account of the Franciscan mission and martyrdom touches on familiar points including Hideyoshi’s request for an embassy consisting of Franciscans, their arrival in Japan and audience with Regent, the building of churches and hospitals, the Franciscans’ preaching and missionary work followed by “mishap” and glorious martyrdom which is celebrated and followed by miracles and unusual events.

In reading Franciscan accounts, especially Ribadeneira’s, one finds both continuities and differences from Jesuit and other colonial sources that illuminate the question of relationship between imitation, martyrdom and mission. For instance both Ribadeneira and Chirino portray Pedro Baptista, the Superior of the Franciscan order, as a saintly man. Chirino goes so far as to compliment him and call him “prudent,” before the more familiar accusations of Franciscan “zeal” enter the narrative. While Chirino dismisses Hideyoshi’s specific request for *Franciscans* as all part of the ploy by the scheming Faranda, he respects the superior qualities of his Franciscan colleague and as a historian gives praise when praise is due. The Governor’s letter to Hideyoshi presenting Pedro Baptista as his *ambassador* to Japan is no different; moreover, it offers us strong evidence of the “double mission” entrusted to the Franciscans in 1593.

---


256 Ribadeneira, *Historia*, 2:753
At present, to clear up doubt and uncertainty, I am sending Father Fray Pedro Baptista, a most serious man, of much worth and character, with whom I counsel and advise in the affairs most important to my King; in short he is my comfort and my consolation as he is to all the people in this state… He has the power from me to establish the peace and amity which are offered in your royal name and requested from us by Faranda; and the treaty shall be held in force and observed until such a time as the king my lord, advised of the facts, shall order me what to do… This man is one of most strict and holy life, which alone would make him worthy of veneration.  

In sum, Pedro Baptista is described as counselor in matters of State and spirit; he has been vested with the power to establish peace and he is a holy man besides. What is most interesting, in my view, is that upon arrival in Japan (and indeed throughout their time in that land), it appears as if it is the Franciscans’ particular mission that this holiness, this saintly life be seen, anywhere, everywhere, out in the open and in daring contrast to their Jesuit counterparts. This begins with their audience with Hideyoshi when Pedro Baptista and the other Franciscans apparently refused to ride the splendid horses sent for them:

The Franciscans in the true spirit of St. Francis’ joyful poverty, preferred to walk through the muddy streets, to the admiration of all who witnessed the scene.  

Ribadeneira seems to revel in the spectacle they cause and with joy announces that as “ambassadors of good-will,” they were warmly welcomed wherever they went, enjoying a peculiar freedom both politically as a result of Hideyoshi’s seeming favor, and spiritually (according to how Ribadeneira tells it) that the Jesuits do not have. The spectacle of the Franciscans who stand out in their habit and habits are in stark contrast to the Jesuits who were known for their efforts to try to integrate themselves into Japanese society as much as possible.

257 Blair and Robertson, ed., Philippine Islands, 9:56-57.
258 Ribadeneira, Historia, 2:668.
259 Ribadeneira, Historia, 2:674.
260 Ribadeneira, Historia, 679, 697. Apparently, the Franciscans had a permit to travel throughout Japan that the Jesuits did not have.
Whereas Jesuits kept a low profile, even when the Edict was not strictly enforced, the Franciscans not only built churches and hospitals, they preached openly, and observed a regulated life.

Ribadeneira reports:

Although we were by ourselves, we observed the same rules and regulations of prayer, fasting, abstinence, self-discipline, and mortification as well as silence. Our heathen neighbors who were constantly but surreptitiously watching us, marveled at our regulated life, and being edified by our behavior, started gradually to ask questions about the Christian God, and even requested the Blessed Fr. Leon, a brilliant preacher, who happened to be with us to deliver little sermons about this God. The king learned about all our daily life, devotions and religious observances and we were told that sometime during the night he himself would go over and watch cautiously outside our quarters, so that he might have a first-hand observation of our mode of life.261

Observe how Ribadeneira seems to delight in his neighbors watching them and in being edified by what they do, and how what they do, and their behavior, their Franciscan rule, seemingly unadulterated, unfiltered, unchanged by their being in Japan performs the work of conversion. Indeed throughout Ribadeneira’s narrative, he constantly refers to providing “concrete examples” as the “best way to win over the heathen with [the example of] their lives” and how the life of the Franciscans in fasting, praying, abstaining, mediating “was a replica of the holy life of their glorious founder, St. Francis of Assisi.”262

In contrast to the Jesuits who wear Japanese dress, celebrate Mass behind closed doors,263 proceed with all caution, and study the Japanese language diligently with a resolve to stay in the land ‘til death, the very visibility of the Franciscan mission must have appeared extraordinary, a paradox, an “unmaking” to use Valignano’s interpretation of events. According the Reis Correia,
their mission in Japan was also infused with messianism and seen in a providential light,\textsuperscript{264} for how else could one account for Hideyoshi’s request for Franciscans after the Edict, and what other explanation was there for the martyrdom other than as yet another concrete example—of the Gospel writ large—for which intimate, diligent, laborious knowledge of the Japanese was not necessary.

As with Jesus on the Cross and St. Francis with the stigmata, the Franciscans and their fellow martyrs preached the Gospel with their very bodies, on a hill, out in the open, for all to see. In this way, their mission to preach the Gospel to thousands of spectators succeeded, and by virtue of the miracles performed by the relics collected from the site, and the unusual events that occurred in the aftermath, the martyrdom could not help but be seen as Christianity’s triumph over tyranny. And yet even as Ribadeneira’s account closes with various letters of “congratulation” for the martyrs’ victory, there is still the matter of a nagging post script in the Martyrs’ Farewell letter to Morga. The Franciscans, it seems, could not keep peace, after all. In light of the all that has been considered thus far, what could the letter possibly mean?

\textit{The Martyrs’ Letter and Sermon on the Sleeve as Apologia}

At the heart of Antonio de Morga’s \textit{Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas} is an effort to account for his own actions as commanding general of a spectacular failure of a battle in which the Spanish flagship is sunk, almost 200 men die, and several million pesos in goods are lost. An important component of Morga’s defense is not only the genre in which he chooses to write (a history), but the models he professes he claims to imitate. Claiming the place of honor in his book is a letter written to him by the Franciscan, Martin Ascensión, one of 26 martyrs crucified in Nagasaki in 1597.

\footnote{Reis Correia, “Valignano,” 85.}
Franciscans were sent to Japan from the Philippines as “ambassadors” at the apparent request of the Regent Hideyoshi in 1593 in spite of his own 1587 prohibition against Christianity, and in spite of the papal decree that Japan be the exclusive mission territory of Jesuits. They were sent as “ambassadors” because the Regent of Japan had apparently threatened to attack Luzon if they are not sent. The Franciscans “succeeded” in that mission insofar as an “attack” was averted, but they proceeded with their “other” mission—setting up churches, convents and preaching openly in spite of the Regent’s edict against it. As a result of their intervention in a political affair involving the galleon San Felipe, the Franciscans were martyred along with Japanese Jesuit brothers and Japanese converts to Christianity. One of the Franciscans, Martin Ascescion wrote a letter to Morga beforehand thanking him for his support of the Franciscan mission in Japan, but the letter also ended with a warning that Hideyoshi intends to attack the Philippines sooner or later.

The latter remark was puzzling but considering the circumstances of how the Franciscans came to be in Japan in the first place, and considering the intrigues that led to their martyrdom, it now appears that the Martyrs’ Farewell operated simultaneously as a testimony of *imitatio Christi*, of fait accompli, *as well as an apologia for a failed diplomatic mission*.

Jesuit accounts especially Chirino’s certainly engage in good old fashioned praise and blame of the Franciscans—pitting Jesuit prudence against Franciscan zealousness, and the Franciscans do the same, challenging the Jesuit way of proceeding with constant (seemingly inflexible) evocation of classic Franciscan values of poverty, and humility. Moreover, they seemed to taunt the Jesuits with their openness and the *very visibility* of their mission. Here is where I see a real difference in their ideals of imitation and exemplarity. For the Franciscans in Japan, martyrdom is the *end* of the mission, the testimony, *the wordless sign*, For the Jesuits, Mission means something else altogether. Mission is slow work. Mission is about transformation, *incarnation*. Martyrdom is less about the spectacle of *imitatio Christi* be it observing a Rule or
dying on a cross. It is about bearing witness to the work of conversion both of oneself and another, perhaps even of oneself into another as per a different form of *imitatio Christi*.

As a way of bringing Morga’s text and the martyrs’ letter together, an exploration of the concept of self-love might be worth pursuing—especially in the case of the tension between idealized Christian martyrdom and the political prudence Franciscan martyrdom. Although the Nagasaki martyrdom was glorious from a certain perspective, it may have been imprudent, perhaps even self-indulgent. There is, after all, the bigger picture to consider (of Empire, economy, trade, the stability of Spanish presence in the Philippines) and the Franciscans may have endangered this by acting too quickly and too zealously in the face of Hideyoshi’s Edict. Although the Edict was not strictly enforced, there was also no reason to openly defy it. The question then arises: how is imitation of Christ to be regulated? Are there appropriate times/places for martyrdom? Is there such a thing as a more prudent stand against “tyranny”?

Does the letter itself, function as a relic, as a link to Christian literary tradition and martyrs’ past, a “self-protective measure”? While there is no denying any real courage, insofar as the letter itself is a literary event/edifice, there may well be a “defense” on the part of the Franciscan martyrs and that the appeal for advocacy does not go *one* way as others may perceive. The Franciscans, especially, may have been appealing to Morga for help as much as Morga appeals to them later in his own hour of need.

According to Jesuit sources cited by Charles Boxer, the handling of the *San Felipe* affair was badly managed by the Franciscans, who not only refused Jesuit help, but angered a mercurial ruler of a powerful empire with whom they were supposed to have secured peace. With yet another threat of invasion, the “peace” with Japan Morga praised so highly to the King was now in grave danger, perhaps as a result of a little pride and self-love on the part of the Franciscans.
**Sermon on the Sleeve**

Accused of endangering Christian mission in Asia, what more could the Franciscans do other than pay the price of martyrdom? However, if they were to be unjustly accused for causing scandal in Asia with their “concrete example” of Christian imitation, their indiscrete preaching and their marked “habits,” the Franciscans, it seemed had one more trick up their sleeve! According to Ribadineira: “Later on, while in prison, Fray Martin managed to write a short sermon on the long sleeves of his holy habit.”

For a Franciscan condemned to die to write a sermon on the sleeve of his “holy habit” takes text and exemplarity to new heights: Through his sermon, his speech on his robe, he is able to reproduce the seamless garment of Jesus (John 19:23-24) as a response to accusations of rending of the fabric of Asian Christianity. Furthermore, although some of the paintings of the martyrdom at Nagasaki depict the martyrs in their typical gray or brown robes, at least one painting depicts some of the martyrs dressed in white. One 1698 account²⁶⁵ speaks of the 1597 martyrs as “se vistieron de unas ropas blancas (al modo de las de los ajusticiados)” or “dressed in white robes (in the manner of those condemned).” Although this was apparently customary in Japan, this did need not have offended Franciscan loyalty to their own ideals of imitation, since as potential martyrs, they may have been looking toward the white robes worn by the martyrs of the apocalypse.²⁶⁶

As a sermon written by the same friar who wrote the Farewell letter to Morga, it is clear, Fray Martin would like to have the last words on the subject of martyrdom, and the sleeve may be the ideal place to wear one’s heart or conceal the perfect weapon or both. As a defense, the sermon lays out three main points:


²⁶⁶ Rev. 6:11.
Gratitude for having been chosen “from countless other souls” to become martyrs. Indeed not even their great St. Francis was granted the favor. As if anticipating Valignano’s scathing remark that by their martyrdom the Franciscans achieved “nothing,” Fray Martin asserts that dying for Christ was and is still desirable—especially since their founder St. Francis desired it himself, and did not receive it, but was pleased to share in Christ’s crucifixion through the stigmata.

Yes, their deeds led them to it. In a bold move Fray Martin asserts: “and what are we, or what deeds have we done to merit this great honor of dying a death like unto Christ’s death.” (my emphasis.) He knows the deeds of the Franciscans will be questioned, but in the context of this sermon, and after they have won the martyrs’ crowns, would anyone dare to criticize their deeds or words?

An appeal is made to the example of the Ancient Christian martyrs who were “beheaded, fried alive in boiling oil; … drowned in freezing pools of water, … hacked to pieces.” Although Fray Martin aligns himself with them, he dares to say he and his fellow martyrs have been granted the “highest honor” for unlike these ones, and even St. Francis, they will be granted the share of dying a death on the Cross.

According to Ribadineira, “Like drops of dew, Fray Martin’s words renewed afresh the hearts of the blessed martyrs, with vigor and strength, preparing them for a perfect martyrdom.”

C. Concluding Remarks

When Antonio de Morga penned Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas, he was praised by a Jesuit as obeying the laws of history, and indeed Morga set out to offer readers not only an exemplary account of Spain’s administration of the Philippines since its conquest of the Islands, but also of its spiritual concerns. As if by chance, Morga has found himself at the heart of the intersection between evangelium and imperium, and haunted by his own conduct in a battle whose outcome was contested, this former colonial judge appeals to the very laws of history and exemplarity for
judgment. Appealing to ancient models of Roman statesmen and a Greek philosopher for human sympathy with regard to self-love, he also appeals to greater advocates—the martyrs of Nagasaki who wrote a personal letter to Morga just prior to their execution. As paragons of selfless love, they stand for the antithesis that Morga might be accused of, and yet Morga’s proximity to them, might be all that he needs to save his reputation.

However, as the previous chapter and this one has shown, the complex relationship between Jesuits and Franciscans in Asia, not least of which involve the complex negotiation of the meaning of mission and embassy, has called into question the motives as well as differences behind the missionary strategies behind the two orders. For Jesuits in Japan and the Philippines it would seem that martyrdom means ordinary missionary labor punctuated by difficult accommodation to an understanding of Incarnation that requires a transformation of the self in imitation of others; for Franciscans, martyrdom, it would seem, still means the punctum or puncture of the stigmata of their founder in imitation of Jesus Christ—an imitation they follow to the Letter, to the sermo, as it were: Thus, the Franciscans have offered an unimpeachable defense for any accusation that their martyrdom had been committed as an act of self-love, or that it had accomplished nothing. Indeed, by their death on the cross they had achieved martyrdom, and in writing the sermon on a sleeve they rendered “something greater” than even the robe of their founder St. Francis in yielding an imitation of the seamless robe of Christ.

Spiritual warfare, witness and exemplarity head into a different realm in the next chapter as we compare Jesuit and Dominican sermons on temptation and resurrection. As was the case in these chapters, we shall see how the theme of “soldiers of Christ” remains prevalent in the mission fields but navigates the more complex territory of the spiritual senses and emotion.
V. Defying the Devil’s Yo-yo:

Jesuits and Dominicans and the Redemption of the Senses

A. The Devil’s Yo-Yo

This chapter explores two early seventeenth century Tagalog sermons by the Dominican preacher Francisco Blancas de San Jose O.P. (1560–1614) on the temptation of Christ in the desert. Written for new Christian converts in the Philippine region of Bataan on the First Sunday of Lent, the sermons represent Blancas’ efforts to translate Christian concepts in unfamiliar territory using patristic sources as well as indigenous imagery and objects such as the yo-yo to evoke spiritual warfare between the devil and the Christian body and soul. Could sermons that appear to arm and control the colonized mind and body to serve the interests of *church and empire* have yielded spiritual fruit for love of one’s neighbor?

The answer depends upon translation, not only regarding trust in Blancas’ growing understanding of Tagalog language and culture but in our own distance from it four hundred years later. Indeed much depends on the translation of three words: *turān*, *mayoyoan*, *pinalooban*. Translation is always a work in progress, especially concerning the word

---

267 I am grateful to the Harvard Asia Center for awarding me a grant to conduct Translation studies with Luis Francia and Michael Coroza in 2013 and additionally for helping to fund travel to the ISRLC conference in 2013 held at the University of Copenhagen to present this paper. The conference resulted in the eventual publication of the sixth chapter of this dissertation (on melancholy and consolation) for which the author is grateful.

268 *Turān*: to guess or mention the answer.

269 On *mayoyoan*: to trample or crush. This word remains in discussion between Luis Francia, Michael Coroza and me in terms of its relation to the mechanics of the yo-yo. Its meaning to trample or crush certainly suggests the downward motion of the indigenous weapon; but efforts to locate academic articles on indigenous yoyos with help from Andover Harvard-Theological library staff have thus far proved unsuccessful.

270 *Pinalooban*: to cause into being, enter into being, breathe into being. This last word is something that remains in discussion.
mayoyoan. be the word. This chapter offers a very tentative the theological interpretations that result should mayoyoan prove to be “yo-yo” in verb form. At the outset, this author acknowledges the highly speculative nature of this particular idea and agrees more etymological research is required.

As with the project of translation and even the transformation of an indigenous weapon into a seemingly harmless toy, so much of Christian doctrine and human experience (or so it would seem) relies on the senses (or indeed our perception of them). Susceptible to the devil’s painful play and our own prejudice, the bodily senses condition our experience of the world and our relationships with others for better or worse. According to Fray Francisco Blancas, however, if we follow the example of Jesus in the desert, we may yet defy the devil’s yo-yo in order to redeem our senses and transform the desert into paradise.

What is the Jesuit view of the senses in the early seventeenth century? There is not one Jesuit perspective that can be articulated; as we have argued elsewhere, context is significant. Although a comparison of Jesuit and Dominican sermons from the Philippines would be ideal, we turn instead to Jesuit sermons recorded by Christian converts in China from the 1630s. Although they are not given during the Lenten season, these two short sermons also take up the question of exemplarity and similar Lenten themes of temptation and Resurrection. It is hoped that through an examination of exemplarity in Dominican preaching from the Philippines and an analysis of Jesuit sermons from China, we can deepen our appreciation for their shared endeavor to preach the Gospel in Asia while offering some hints and guesses about what distinguishes their approach to imitatio Christi, mission, why they have been sent and how to make sense of their sending.

For the indigenous converts who may have heard Blancas’ sermons in Bataan on the First Sunday of Lent in the early seventeenth century, Blancas’ words and indeed his very presence formed a complex sensory experience from the start. With roots in Tarzona Spain, Blancas was born in 1560 and entered the Dominican Order at the age of 15, pursuing an education at the University de Alcala de Henares, the convent of Santa Cruz de Segovia, and Pederahita. Blancas
arrived in the Philippines in 1595 where he was known to have learned Tagalog and Chinese while serving in the Dominican missions of Bataan in Central Luzon. While his Tagalog was not as elegant as his theology, he seemed to know his flock well. Indeed for a culture so shy yet curious, Blancas aptly began their sojourn on the Lenten road to Resurrection with a timely riddle.

Using the story of Jesus’ temptation in the desert, Blancas attempts to relay three stories of Christian mission: Why has Jesus been sent to the world? To save humanity from sin and teach human beings how to battle the devil and conquer temptation; why was Fr. Blancas,—a priest—and others like him (conquistadors, perhaps) sent? Presumably to relay this saving message. How does one make sense of it?

The first of the two sermons, an exposition on Matthew 4, written in Tagalog, highlights the devil’s efforts to tempt Jesus—who is fasting in the Desert—to turn stones to bread; to leap from a high place, assuring him that if he is the Son of God, the angels would come to his rescue; and to worship him in exchange for earthly treasures.

As the story unfolds, Blancas deploys the Tagalog verb Turan meaning to mention or guess the answer to a riddle, perhaps as a way to relay not only the Christian concept of the Holy Trinity, but also Jesus’ dual nature of humanity and divinity. This is an especially wonderful moment early on in the sermons for several reasons:

• Tagalogs have a fondness for riddles, and in using the verb turan, Blancas demonstrates an awareness of his audience to explain a profound theological point.

• What is more, the devil is in this moment in Blancas’ exposition trying to figure out whether this man, Jesus of Nazareth, is the Son of God.

• So too (presumably) are some members of Blancas’ audience.

271 Francisco Blancas de San José. *Sermones*, Jose Mario C Francisco. ed. (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University, 1994), Sermon 2, Passage 5.
Blancas relays to his audience just how deftly Jesus rebuffs the Devil’s temptation according to the Gospel story, thereby providing his converts with Jesus as the answer or *turan* to the great riddle. Even so, the Mystery (of Jesus and of Blancas’ mission) is just beginning.

After relating the story of Jesus’ temptation in the desert, the first and second sermons explain physical and spiritual temptation of the *body*, as an important component of spiritual warfare: how one avoids temptation, arms oneself against it, conquers it and emerges victorious—in and through the grace of God in His humanity through Jesus Christ, through His example, and that of His earliest followers. In fact in one passage Blancas implies that Jesus’ preferred method for how to battle demons is less through talking or lecturing than through experience and example. Blancas writes: “That is why he [Jesus] seldom talked about it [temptation] or taught, but first *experienced* it in his body [sa caniya ding cataoaan yrinaan].

Another translation of the same passage could read: *It ran its course through his* body and taught us what we might imitate it and be victorious against temptations by the devil.”

*Explication of Quaestio 41, summa*

Blancas’ attitude toward Jesus’ actions in the desert is guided by St. Thomas Aquinas’ explication in *Quaestio* 41 of the third part of the Summa. Among the key points that resonate with Blancas include:

I answer that, Christ wished to be tempted; first that He might strengthen us against temptations. Hence Gregory says in a homily (xvi in Evang.): “It was not unworthy of our Redeemer to wish to be tempted, who came also to be slain; in order that by His temptations He might conquer our temptations, just as by His death He overcame our death.

Secondly, that we might be warned, so that none, however holy, may think himself safe or free from temptation. Wherefore also He wished to be tempted

---

272 “*Caya nga pala dili ypinanguap, at dili yinaral condi sa caniya ding cataoaan yrinaan mona, at ytinoro sa atin ang ating gagagaring di ycatoloy nang toceso nang Diablo sa atin.*”
after His baptism, because, as Hilary says (Super Matth., cap. iii.): “The
temptations of the devil assail those principally who are sanctified, for he desires,
above all, to overcome the holy. Hence also it is written (Sirach 2): Son, when
thou comest to the service of God, stand in justice and in fear, and prepare thy
soul for temptation.

Thirdly, in order to give us an example: to teach us, to wit, how to overcome the
temptations of the devil. Hence Augustine says (De Trin. iv) that Christ “allowed
Himself to be tempted” by the devil, “that He might be our Mediator in
overcoming temptations, not only by helping us, but also by giving us an
example.”

Fourthly, in order to fill us with confidence in His mercy. Hence it is written
(Hebrews 4:15): “We have not a high-priest, who cannot have compassion on our
infirmities, but one tempted in all things like as we are, without sin.”

Blancas underscores Jesus’ humanity, even paying homage to the quotidian aspects of his
childhood, saying that Jesus preferred to serve his parents and do what was honorable if ordinary
prior to performing the works par excellence for which he—and any Dominican missionary—
would be found exemplary: teaching and preaching. In this way, Blancas grounds Jesus in the
everyday life of his congregation and all in all aspects of the life that He embodies in His
Incarnation. In doing so, the prospect of Jesus’ fasting in the desert—while curious to the devil
and perhaps to new converts—is still made up of everyday sensations: an experience of hunger, a
longing for protection and perhaps a desire for recognition.

Although these human sensations of Jesus are emphasized throughout the sermons,
Blancas masterfully balances Jesus’ humanity with his divinity lest his congregation fall into the
trap of idolatry. Two of Blancas’ strategies involve the use of the word “loob” or inside in various
forms and yoyo/mayoyoan in conjunction with Jesus and our own victory against our struggle
with the devil.

273 Thomas Aquinas, “Summa Theologica: Christ’s temptation (Tertia Pars, Q. 41),” New

274 Blancas, Sermones, Sermon 1, Passage 1.
Indeed, he ends the first sermon with the use of yo-yo as a verb in conjunction with the devil, saying that even though Jesus has in fact already defeated the devil and that the devil is already considerably weakened (hina) as a result, we may yet fight him, and [depending on your translation of the yo-yo], trample upon him, or use the yo-yo against him.

- Ay houag na nating catacoton at paŋgahasan din nating labanan, at ypanlora, at, pagyoyooan.\(^\text{275}\)

What the reader or audience soon realizes is that these different missions, whether Christ’s, the Christian’s, or conquistador’s are at play and intertwined in Blancas’ sermons—with the warfare being a common theme, and the yo-yo being an interesting and challenging weapon of choice—changing hands from the Devil, to the figure of Joshua from the Hebrew Scriptures, to the new Christian called to fight for Jesus his Captain. Blancas writes:

How similar is our Lord Jesus Christ to a brave captain who is insisting that his soldiers learn the proper and best conduct for battle … and if they saw his conduct and bravery and other teachings they would aspire to it and if there should happen to be a battle, they would know how to fight and would know how to fight their enemy with indifference. That is how our Lord King Jesus Christ is and that is why he challenged the devil to tempt him.\(^\text{276}\)

Jesus Christ is seen in this passage as one who teaches proper conduct in battle, as one whommodels bravery and other virtues in the midst of a spiritual battle yet to be fought. At times encouraging, other times bewildering, at turns frightening then downright maddening and then gorgeous, Blancas’ creative uses of images of conquest and warfare de-stabilize not only notions of the “Christian soldier” but they also free us to consider new ways of understanding violence and peace in a colonial religious context.

\(\text{275} \) Blancas, *Sermones*, sermon 1, passage 21. Note sermon 2, passage 5 p. 118; passage 6, 7, 120.

\(\text{276} \) Blancas, *Sermones*, sermon 1, Passage 11.
Perhaps the most compelling image that is used throughout both sermons is that of Christ as captain against a war on temptation. According to Blancas, Christians have been ably prepared to fight temptation through Christ’s perfect example. Although spiritual warfare with Christ as teacher is not new to Christian spirituality, it is typically Jesuits who are associated as “soldiers of Christ” in the image of St. Ignatius Loyola. However, its use in a Dominican sermon in conjunction an excursus on Joshua and the Israelite campaign (Joshua 10:16-25) finds scriptural basis (2 Tim 2:13) as well as support from St. Thomas Aquinas who uses the image in his commentary on Timothy.

What is extraordinary about Blancas’ sermons are their emphasis on the humanity of Jesus as the key to understanding the Incarnation and perhaps understanding the presence of other foreigners. For Dominicans such as Blancas emphasis is placed on the embodiment of Temptation by Jesus; it can be argued that for Blancas, the “epochs” of human creation, temptation and redemption are all present in the human being, carried within her or him: what is critical is how through the Incarnation, the Devil was defeated on humanity’s behalf.277

The second sermon offers further elaboration on the themes of temptation and spiritual warfare using exemplars culled from both the Old Testament and from early Christianity278. Here is where things get complicated. Lest we fall into the trap of spiritualizing the sermon completely, we encounter a passage in Blancas so utterly disturbing as to give one pause.

As if drawing a comparison to Jesus, Blancas his inserts the very violent example of Joshua, a figure from the Hebrew Bible and the role he plays in Israel’s military campaign and quest for the Promised Land, with reference in particular to his harsh treatment of the five Amorite kings referenced in Joshua 10:16–25.

277 Blancas, *Sermones*, sermon 1, passage 5.

278 Including Desert fathers such as Saint Antony and Pachomius. Interestingly, the Blancas also includes the story of Justina and the sorcerer Cyprian with Justina playing a major role in the conversion of the defeated sorcerer.
Passage 6, 119: I mentions our word “yoyoan” twice in the context of the punishment Joshua inflicts upon the five kings:

- “…at yoyoan ninoang manga liig nila” (and trample upon the necks of the kings)
- “…at nang mayoyoan na nila ang manga liig nyong limang hari…” (…and when the necks of the kings were crushed…)

In discussions with native speakers and Tagalog scholars in the Philippines, it was suggested mayoyoan could be a synonym for trample, or crush, which is in keeping with the Scripture as well as the yoyo itself—which when shot in a downward motion can trample, and does in fact have the force to crush its target. Blancas says to his “new Christian soldiers” that they have been given the strength to overcome demonic temptation. Furthermore in the context of interpreting a passage from Luke 10:19—granting authority over serpents and scorpions (“Cayo ... binigyan co nang lacas, nang bagsic nang ynong mayoyoan ang manga ahas….”). Blancas wrote once more in sermon 2 that human beings are granted the necessary strength, stamina and willpower to fight and crush without care/concern. (“malabanan at mayoyoan at matalo baga natin ualan bahala”). What are we to make of it?

Given the Dominican reputation established by the Bartolomé Las Casas and by Domingo de Salazar who was (lately) Bishop of the Philippines, regarding a more sympathetic stance toward indigenous populace, Blancas may have been forced to take a more “hardline” reputation in these sermons. Perhaps there were civil authorities present or as Filipino scholar and poet Luis Francia has pointed out, Blancas’ audience may not have been strictly Tagalog, but mixed with the Ita tribe, so this has to be taken into consideration when examining the idea of

---

279 I am indebted to Professors Michael Coroza of Ateneo de Manila University and Luis Francia of Hunter College New York for their help in the Translation Project funded by the Harvard Asia Center in 2013.

280 Blancas, Sermones, sermon 2, passage 5, 112.

281 Blancas, Sermones, sermon 2, passage 7, 112
language, warfare and indigenous weaponry. The possibility for a mixed audience thus increases
the potential for mixed messages and does not come without its accompanying complications
with regard to conquest in various forms, linguistic, religious, cultural, and military. If “yo-yo” is
an indigenous artifact/weapon turned verb, as I still believe it to be, perhaps continued
anthropological research will shed light on the matter. However, the question of violence still
stands.

B. Turning the Christian Soldier on its Head

Although the idea of the “Christian soldier” with Jesus as Captain is an ancient theme,
long in use and a paradox, it is interesting how willing we are to “spiritualize” a Christian battle
in which Jesus is captain how ready we also may be to impart Joshua as a stand-in for Spain and
its military conquest of the Philippines. This chapter questions how easily we ascribe peace to
Jesus, even as he “battles” demons, but how ready we are to point fingers (of violence) to the
missionary, using in this case his use of Joshua in the sermon. Let us instead turn the idea of
“Christian Soldier” on its head; indeed, the ideals of peace, violence, and “spiritual warfare” are
very much upset in this sermon which is so rich theologically and politically. It can be mined by
both sides as it were, to disempower, as well as to empower hearers and readers as neither the
categories nor the realities of violence and peace are no more clearly understood then or now.

Politically, however, it would seem, Blancas does impose certain limits on Christian
imitation in concert with colonial policy as when he cautions against following the example of the
desert fathers too literally, by saying “I cannot ask you Christians to go deliberately into the
desert and live there… We bring you deliberately into town that we may care for and teach
you.”

And yet, the same pastoral limitations might be imposed today, by contemporary
diocesan priests, upon their congregation without there being any political restrictions implied.

282 Blancas, Sermones, sermon 1, passage 12.
Perhaps the subtler question to ask is the nature of spiritual warfare, and the form (exterior and interior, body and mind, expression) it did take as a result of this preaching. If Blancas counseled against a physical journey, but exulted the body as the site both of temptation and its transformation (through the example of Jesus and early Christian saints) there may be something unique about Dominican spirituality and exemplarity to be learned by hearers and readers of his sermons.

If one were willing to view Jesus as captain teaching his soldiers spiritual warfare, why not view Joshua in typological terms? From this perspective, the kings no longer stand in for indigenous rulers who might be subjugated or conquered and violently killed. Instead, in keeping with the theme of temptation and Jesus’ own human experience in the desert, the five kings emerge as the five senses of the human body. This reading has its roots in Origen’s Homilies on Joshua 11:4-5; Blancas suggests a correspondence between the five kings and the five senses when he correlates Christ teaching his soldiers through their ears, speech and other senses that with a proper example, endure temptation. Additionally, the kings might also refer to the five “Evangelists” of Christianity who make sense of the Gospel and bear its good news to all the world: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Paul.

It is significant that the Dominicans should also emphasize speech, the ear and one’s inmost self. As we shall see, the Dominicans share much in common with Jesuits in their preference. Even more extraordinary is their emphasis on loob or “inmost self” which appears throughout the sermons in various forms. Indeed Blancas constant use of the word loob (variously translated as in-most self, inner spirit, inside) gives us leave to consider the images and questions asked at the beginning of this chapter—regarding the senses, how they are sent and what sense or meaning do we make of our experience.

283 Blancas, Sermones, sermon 1 passage 8.
In his treatment of Joshua’s conquest of the five kings, Blancas noted that they were
hidden in a cave (longa), but that Joshua asks his soldiers to take them out into an uncultivated
field (parang). According to Blancas, Joshua says:

Come Beloved ones (Halina cayo maña mahal) and gather around; trample
upon their necks (yoyoan) trample (niño) you (ang liig) necks (nila) theirs.
These great ones followed the words that their Captain Joshua said to them and
when they trampled (mayoyoan) upon the necks of the five kings, Joshua spoke
again to them. “Let us be brave once more beloved ones and do not be afraid not
even a little (houag din cayong matacot tacot monti man). Know in your hearts
(loob) that those who fight against you are like these kings and God will enable
you to defeat your enemies.”

Blancas goes onto say that the five kings are killed and hidden in the cave that is blocked
by stones. If we view Joshua as a type of Jesus, the scene and the imagery of the five kings
hidden in the cave anticipates the Resurrection; however, it is not the body of the crucified Jesus
who is in the cave, but humanity—and specifically it is an analogy to our senses held captive and
dead. It is important to note that it is not Joshua who kills them, but others who do, and that the
point is that perhaps the five kings as senses could be enemies that require further trampling, if
we make them rulers of our very bodies: “Know in your hearts that those who fight against you
are like these kings…”

Moreover, in their “conquest” and in their being crushed with the force of the “yo-yo,”
there is an implication here of senses who have overruled the body, subjugated it and made it
vulnerable to the devil’s wiles. As in his other explanation of other battles, Joshua like Jesus,
directs the initial battle that renders the enemy (the five kings) considerably weakened or “dead”
and awaiting redemption. Blancas does not explicitly name the five kings as the body’s five
senses, but does allude to sight, smell, hearing, speech and taste throughout this sermons, and his
persistent use loob (or inside) in conjunction with typology and resonant imagery merits this

284 Blancas, Sermones, Sermon 2, Passage 6, 119 (my emphasis).
initial consideration and is worth further exploration. Indeed in terms of his understanding of
spiritual anthropology, Blancas’ use of loob is nowhere more powerfully manifested than in
Blancas’ description of God’s creation of the human being.

Theologically, these sermons are marvelous not only because in them Blancas speaks of
Jesus who has weakened the Devil even though he continues to tempt us, but he also reminds
Christians of the many helpers—Angels and early Saints whose example we might follow in
the struggle against temptation. Blancas cites St. Athanasius’ *Life of St. Antony* in his sermon and
recounts in vivid detail St. Antony’s (c.251–356) encounter with the devil in his own monastic
dwelling. In particular, how one full of lies such as the devil was compelled to speak the truth
about his (the devil’s) weakness against Christians and “when the Devil heard the Beloved name
of Jesus he vanished because he could not stand to hear the Beloved name of Jesus.”

Most importantly however, Blancas underscores the importance of humanity’s creation in
the image of God and how this empowers us to fight against the devil’s temptation:

In the beginning, [God] breathed/created into them [this is how I chose to translate *pinalooban*] the ability to work according to His inner spirit [*loobin niya*].

An alternate translation: The [God] made human beings in the beginning and he ‘infused’
his work so that it would work the things he designed it to do according to His will/inner Spirit.

- *Pina* here means caused. *Loobin* is a passive form of entered into, or be in
  entered into, “breathed into being”

---

286 Blancas, *Sermones*, Sermon 2 Passage 5.
• **Guinanaua nang Panginoong Dios ang tauo sa mola mola** [In the beginning God made human beings] at **pinalooban niyang** [and He (niyang refers to god in this instance)] placed within them (“created within them”) niyang gumaua nang balang loobin niya.

• The **NIYA** here is ambiguous. *It can either refer to God or man.* So that the phrase can read:

  In the beginning God created human beings and created within them the ability to work according His design (e.g., according to human being's creation in His image and likeness—NRSV notes relationship and activity)

• **or**

  In the beginning God created human beings and created within them the ability to work according to **his** (man’s) will thus emphasizing free will … but always with the assurance in both cases that we were created in God's image, and we have Jesus as an exemplar.

However, **pinalooban** is still the critical word because it is the key that unlocks theological political and spiritual empowerment. To have a sentence that deals with creation, temptation, divinity, humanity, free-will/responsibility and human-divine love all in one is powerful. Blancas continually emphasizes God’s mercy in the battle against temptation:

> Hold fast Christians that if God will not let to be defeated by your enemy, all the more will he not let you be to be defeated according to your strength…. According to Saint Paul [God] will reduce [the devil’s] strength and add to your bravery in order that you will not come to harm, instead you benefit from the temptation, if you fight against him [the devil].

Blancas was capable of such a generous statement, because as the contemporary Jesuit editor of his sermons notes, Blancas at least once “proclaims the equality of all peoples be they

---

Spanish, Tagalog or English.” In his Lenten sermons, Blancas beautifully interpreted the Incarnation and Dominican mission through Jesus’ humanity. Taught as a riddle, Jesus’ temptation in the desert was revealed to new converts as God’s embodiment, God made flesh, His wish to be subject to humanity’s sufferings that He might be able to provide an example for others to imitate. Although without sin, Jesus allowed himself to be tempted by the devil with only Holy Scripture for His defense. Notably, although Blancas mentions “loob” or inmost self/inner spirit quite frequently to allude to human beings (and that this affects our response to temptation) Blancas does not describe this inner state and its transformation.

Indeed for the Dominicans, embracing Jesus Christ in His humanity is also what allows the human to redeem what is divine in themselves: Blancas reminds his congregation that they have been created in God’s image and if you know this, and as a result of the love and example of Jesus Christ, we can struggle against the devil and use the yoyo to trample him. Depending on your choice, your correct use of the senses, the human being either stands victorious or vanquished in battle: Blancas writes:

And you, human being, whoever you may be, water and fire, each are shown and served before you by God—whatever you might want; human beings must also face life and death, what is good and what is bad and some of what is desired by the Lord God for each one will taste according to his will … it is not possible to force people to do God’s work unless it originates from within their inner spirit (condi lamang sa loob niya) and it is them [people] who are doing the work and they alone who can make themselves better or worse; and isn’t it the case as with fire and water, that he would be the one who would either refreshing him or burning him.

Thus, although the human being is created in the image of God, and while Incarnation has weakened the devil’s power, we are not immune to the devil’s temptations; although the human senses (represented by the five kings) have been effectively “subdued,” it is the exercise

291 Jose Mario C. Francisco, SJ in Blancas, Sermones, xxi.

292 Blancas, Sermones, Sermon 2 Passage 2.
of humanity’s free will that ultimately determines whether our senses will translate a burning
sensation into one of sweet refreshment and whether the desert in which we find ourselves so
sorely tested will—with our senses redeemed—transform into Paradise.

C. Temptation and redemption of the senses in Jesuit Sermons from China

For all of Blancas’ constant awareness of loob, or “inner self,” he does not probe or enter;
he stays at the perimeter of exemplarity, of “sensible” action. Jesuits on the other hand have
offered a guide, an exercise for that inner self, involving accommodation of the Other from the
perspective of the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius Loyola. As a distinct component of Jesuit
spirituality the Spiritual Exercises engage the senses, put them to use, test them in addition to
speaking openly about their temptation and redemption.

Although with Blancas’ sermons, there is a sense of connection between the exemplar,
the human being, God as well as the missionary who is sent to deliver the message to new
Christians, the connection between humanity and divinity and how one makes sense of human
experience appears to be expressed or embodied within a person; human beings affect one
another in that they teach or are tempted or help one another, but discretely and in their embodied
selves. It appears Jesuits have a less compact way of proceeding and being and sensing that
entails fluency and requires response. Indeed when reading through the Spiritual Exercises, it
seems as if the conversion of the heart depends a great deal upon conversation—the Word
Incarnate through words imagined and spoken to another and on behalf of another, adapted to suit
the concern of the present moment and the persons speaking and asking to be heard.

Perhaps two of the most significant parts of the Spiritual Exercises have to do with
imagination and colloquy. To imagine another takes great force and to speak both to a spiritual
director and to an imagined spiritual helper requires accommodation at a profound level. The
importance of friendship is noted in the definition of colloquy as “made, properly speaking, as a
friend speaks to another…” [51]. Speaking to a Friend may be the most unique attribute of both
the *Spiritual Exercises* and the sermons to be analyzed; for in a speech to a friend, we not only find that striving for eloquence in which the life of a good man is articulated according to St. Augustine.\(^{293}\)

That friendship should form part of the basis of the *Spiritual Exercises* is critical to appreciating how the senses might be understood from a Jesuit perspective; and how the senses are to be construed positively and yet also with great intimacy and intensity that always has at its aim the Redemption of the Other, with the Resurrection at its heart. While the *Spiritual Exercises* are concerned with directing another person and helping them to navigate their heart’s terrain regarding vocation or another deeply personal matter, it can be argued that in a similar fashion, Jesuit sermons typically engage the spiritual senses in a similar fashion albeit in a liturgical and communal setting, without ever seeming to sacrifice a sense of lover and beloved.

They inform the sermons to which we now turn our attention. These sermons come from Li Jiubao’s *Diary of Oral Admonitions*, a book of notes on Christian teachings including a few sermons compiled by Chinese converts to Christianity in the early seventeenth century. One sermon focuses on the example of St. Ignatius Loyola and how he dealt with the sins and temptation belonging to someone else; the other sermon tells the story of women on their way to visit Jesus’ tomb on the Third Day—chief among them is Mary Magdalene.

In a sermon extolling St. Ignatius Loyola’s humility, it is written that the Saint was “often prepared to suffer to save the souls of others.” As proof, the sermon includes a brief episode how St. Ignatius was moved to pity by a man’s sexual offense. Unable to persuade him to repentance by words, St. Ignatius dove into a small pond that the man was sure to pass and “he could hardly bear the pain of the icy cold water.”\(^{294}\) For an order that emerged and flourished during a time of

\(^{293}\) Agustine, *De Doctrina*, 136.

Christian humanism, it is surprising to find a statement acknowledging the seeming failure of rhetoric to persuade a man to virtue. And yet, the *Spiritual Exercises* tells us that “One must not speak an idle word,” not even to expose another person’s faults lest it be “grounds for thinking he can help him.”

Instead, of wasting words, St. Ignatius takes action, just as the sermon itself does not waste words but relays the example of vividly: St. Ignatius tells the man that “he is in this pond on behalf of your sins.” At the sight of St. Ignatius suffering on his behalf, the man helped the Saint out of the pond and mended his ways. There is thus reciprocal action—the help goes both ways—Ignatius is helped out of the freezing water and the man is helped by Ignatius: both actions required a response of utmost empathy. This scene from a sermon is significant for several reasons having to do with Jesuit accommodation. As stated in another chapter, Jesuits in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were schooled in humanist rhetoric as part of their education and I have underscored the importance of remembering *accommodatio*’s rhetorical roots. In the example of Ignatius, it would seem as if, he had abandoned words and persuasion in favor of mere action to keep a man from following through with temptation. This is far from being the case. In fact what we have in example of St. Ignatius is discernment about how best to resolve the situation according to the context—regarding what would be most suitable, most fitting to the man in question. This is Jesuit accommodation taking into account one’s audience (a man not easily persuaded by words) emotion (pity), physical action (diving into the pond) sensation (cold) and persuasive speech that leads to a change in action and another man’s redemption (the sermon within the sermon itself that is given to a larger audience within the context of the Mass).

In the next sermon, the senses lead us not only from temptation to redemption but from death to Resurrection. Indeed in a sermon given at Easter, Chinese Christians are not only told the story of Easter, but are given an opportunity to re-enact it not just on that day, but every Sunday.

---

In this sermon, Mary Magdalene and the other women on their way to the Tomb on the Third day to see the body of the Crucified. The women were “filled with intense love and longing,” so much so, that even though half the distance through their travels the unidentified women saw that the stone had blocked the entrance to the tomb, “they did not give up.” Rather, they persevere all the way to the tomb to find their stamina rewarded, the entrance was unblocked! What is more, an angel told them their Lord had come back to Life. “Startled but happy” the women go home to announce the happy news—except for Mary Magdalene who stayed behind, because “could not part.”

What is intriguing about this sermon are the two levels of emotion, action and response at work. First, there are the unidentified women led by Mary Magdalene making their way to the tomb who are filled with “intense love and longing” to see the Lord “one last time.” The named exemplar is a woman from whom seven demons were cast out,296 a penitent sinner who anointed the feet of Jesus’ feet297 who leads the other women to that they might “see” him one last time. The entrance is blocked by stones. Recalling the story of Joshua and the five kings, with the senses hidden in the cave, the women’s “intense love and longing” to see the Other, unblocks the entrance to the tomb. As with the story of St. Ignatius in the pond, it is the power of his love for another, that effects action that clears the way for an announcement of redemption. For just as the tempted man reciprocates the Saint’s love for him and tells him would mend his ways, the angel in the tomb announces to the women, the good news—that their Lord has come back to life. It is to them—as a result of their steadfast love—that the Gospel is first given for announcement. What they once lost, the angel tells them, they now have; their senses “startled,” they head home “happy” with the injunction to share what they have learned with others.

296 Lk. 8:2 Mk. 16:9.
297 Lk. 7:36–50.
The story is not over, however, for although the other women go home happy, the Magdalene “tarries”—an unexpected move—for “soldiers of Christ. And yet she is rewarded! Her name is called; she is consoled, and she is comforted. “It was Jesus manifesting himself in the body.” The difference between Mary Magdalene and the other saintly women is that whereas the others were granted the reward of news of the Gospel—that the Lord has risen—and so go home; the Magdalene tarries; and her reward for staying (a different form of endurance, a vigil) is the consolation of hearing her name called by her Beloved, seeing Him manifested in the Body, and ultimately Being in His Presence. Rather than simply acquiring or having news that He “has come back to life,” she is the ultimate witness, thereby fulfilling her title of apostolorum apostola. The marked difference between the Magdalene and the other women is extraordinary for its commentary on the senses and their spiritual capacity: One can acquire information through the senses (the entrance to the tomb is blocked); emotion is a powerful sensation that propels the body into physical motion (the women persist in their goal to arrive at the tomb in order to see Lord “one last time;”) and faith is an engagement of the senses that compels the human to alter their reality from one of loss and death to life (the women’s encounter with an angel who tells them the good news.) However, something greater is here: It is that Mystery which compels a human into being in the presence of love.

Along with the other women, it is the strength of Mary Magdalene’s love and longing that allows her to enter into a place of loss and death. Their collective imaginative power, their own life-force allows them to open the tomb (womb?) and remove the obstacle that separates them from the one whom they longed to see. However, the Magdalene does more than possess the knowledge that the Lord has come back to life. In her determination to arrive at the tomb and in the strength and stamina she shows by staying, she is doubly rewarded: her senses receive the Lord into the depths of her very being. The intensity of her love and her longing surpasses that of the other women; she is compelled to stay, to remain, to endure in a place of mourning and desire until that very place, (locus) is transformed into the morning of desire for all Christians, of whom
she is first witness. Indeed, she is the first one, not simply privileged to have news of the Gospel, but the first one to be with the Risen Lord.

After the story is given in the sermon, the question is asked: “Do you want to see the Lord” and it appears as if those gathered respond, “That is our [dearest] wish” To have this call and response enacted in the middle of a sermon that imagines and locates love at the scene of Resurrection also means that the senses, exemplarity and accommodation are engaged in a liturgical setting; while this is hardly a surprise for a sermon, what is remarkable is the loving emphasis placed on how easy it is to transform one’s sense of being, place, community, world, purpose, simply by engaging and making “sense” of one another. Thus, senses and location are transformed, but so is the locus or argument for the senses.

“On this day of our Lord’s Resurrection, some can see him, some cannot. That is not because he is biased in showing or not showing himself; it is all man’s doing.”

Christians are exhorted to follow the example of Mary Magdalene and the other saintly women in their church-going; they are encouraged to examine their spiritual states—whether they are “sluggish” or “lazy” in going to church—and if so, they do not love the Lord and do not truly wish to “see” him.

Thus if you imagine the Other with all your senses, with your imagination … and emotion and with such an intense love and longing (the words in the sermon) that the women have an opportunity to unblock the entrance to Redemption. Moreover, if you are steadfast in your Love for the Other, You will see the lord and you are redeemed with him.

Indeed, through the example of the saintly women, and especially the Magdalene, the human being is created in the image of God, and (according to Christian theology) as a result of the Incarnation, death and Resurrection of the Lord, humanity’s senses are redeemed; we are reminded of our holiness, our sensuality and the capacity of our senses—in intense love and longing—to perceive all that is holy. More importantly, for those who persist, we enter into a place of death only to receive life and for those who stay, they not only see their Beloved come
alive, “manifest in the Body,” they are called, consoled, bidden to be in the Presence of one who once said to others: “Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.” What is enacted in this sermon on the day of Resurrection is a Remembrance not simply of the Risen Christ, but of the saintly women went home with the news that the Lord had come back to life, and of the One who stayed in her love and longing and—Being in the Presence of Love—saw and heard that it IS so.

What we thus have in both of the Jesuit sermons is an embodiment of exemplarity in a liturgical setting; what is more, converts to Christianity are not simply given the example of Jesus Christ and told the story of his victory over temptation and that of the triumph of his first followers. In the Jesuit case, converts are—in the very spirit of the Spiritual Exercises—asked if they desire to experience the Resurrection, and if so, that they may live the Resurrection by redeeming their own senses through an experience of the imagination engaged in holy contemplation and colloquy with exemplars of Christianity. Hence, we are given a glimpse into the importance and generative power (for Dominicans and Jesuits) of the actual space of the Church and the ritual practice of the Mass including the power of the sermon. (As we saw in the previous chapter, preaching and exemplarity was taken to a sublime expression by Fray Martin Ascensión). However, one idea learned from this comparative exercise has been that whereas in the Dominican sermons we are told that we can transform the desert into paradise, in the Jesuit sermons, we are shown just how our senses through faith can alter spiritual realities for Christians. It is by harnessing the senses through the imagination and with and on behalf of another that one is able to attain a deeper sense of the Incarnation—why the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, why now Others (other bodies, other eyes, other tongues…) have been sent to bear this Gospel, how to make sense of its meaning in ever changing and challenging contexts.

---

298 Mk. 14:9.
The theology and exemplarity thus far explored in this chapter is quite rich and both the Dominican Jesuit sources call for further investigation. What is proposed here as “differences” may turn out to be more complementary than contrasting. Indeed throughout this exploration of Jesuit material, especially by Pedro Chirino, we see a remarkable amity extended to all the religious orders even as they work through their differences. Once again, the Jesuit “difference” may well be an attunement to rhetoric at the level of human emotion empathy. Chirino’s reference to Horace of a hidden (positive) quality in native tongues is worth noting not only for those others who appear to be the obvious “foreigners” to whom they ministered, but to those others with whom they ministered but may have differed in theology and practice.

As we head into the final chapter of the dissertation, the questions and responses—both vexing and creative—that have attended the Jesuits since their arrival in the Philippines in 1581 remain with them on the eve of their expulsion from the Philippines and throughout the world in 1768. Indeed if at the time of their arrival (and from the first chapter of this dissertation), Jesuits have been preoccupied with what it means to be a missionary, what it means to be sent and how to translate the messenger and his message, we shall see in the final chapter of this thesis just how deeply the themes of rhetoric, translation and accommodation affect the question of mission and exemplarity from the time of the Spanish conquest of the Philippines onward. Martyrdom and mission are again cast in a different way (this time by an Augustinian friar) and yet, 150 years later, the principles of martyrdom and mission as “re-framed” by the first Jesuits to the Philippines in the late sixteenth century are maintained. That is, martyrdom is mission; and the work of rhetoric and theology is to read the heart.
VI. Errant Hearts:
Melancholy, Consolation and Mission in Colonial Philippines

A. Introduction

As asked to define the “nature and characteristics of the Indians of the Philippine Islands” as well as their “customs and vices,” the Augustinian friar Gaspar de San Agustín (1651–1724) protested that it would be easier to give the “square of a circle,” since only their Creator possessed true knowledge of the native people of the archipelago. However, in 1720 the aged friar obliged the request of “a friend” and wrote *A Letter Written by an Old Religious of the Philippines to a Friend of His in Spain*. Also known by its incipit as the *Quadraginta*, it is a scathing missive about the “Indians” of the islands where San Agustín arrived as a missionary in 1668. Contrary to the spirit with which he once wrote of “the natives who are very urbane and politic” as well as “…excellent Christians,” San Agustín launched a verbal assault on native people with a quotation from the Latin Psalter: *Quadraginta annis proximus fui generationi huic et dixi semper hi errant corde.* Following this with criticism about indios based on decades of experience, the authority of Scripture as well as Christian and classical thinkers, San Agustín hoped to build a case for why these “Indians” were not fit to become priests. Given the influence

---


300 Gaspar de San Agustín, *Conquistas*, 1051.

301 “For forty years, I loathed that generation and said, ‘They are a people whose hearts go astray,’” NRSV.
of San Agustín’s Letter on subsequent writers, it is worth examining its implications for mission and friendship in a colonial setting.

A Jesuit named Juan Jose Delgado (ca. 1697–1755) not only commented on San Agustín’s Letter and refuted its more outlandish claims, he also attempted to explain how a dedicated priest could have written such a provocative letter in the first place. Delgado attributed the bitterness and hyperbole of the Letter to melancholy and exhaustion. However, historians and San Agustín’s defenders alike have overlooked Delgado’s pastoral concern, focusing instead on Delgado’s disclosure of the identity of the Letter’s supposed secret writer. Indeed, in 1998, the Augustinian Pedro Galende wrote, “The letter, which was written as an anonymous…satire, was inexplicably published by the Jesuit historian Juan Jose Delgado in 1892… [who in so doing] stole the Augustinian’s right to anonymity and published that which the Augustinians refused to have published.”

Delgado was thus maligned although he was dead in 1892 and publication of the Historia General Sacra-Profana, Política y Natural de Las Islas del Poniente Llamadas Filipinas (henceforth called Historia General)—including San Agustín’s Letter and Delgado’s commentary—was approved by members of several religious orders including at least three Augustinians. However, even if the book was not officially published until the late nineteenth century.

---

302 See footnotes provided by Blair and Robertson based that include comments by Spanish diplomat, Sinibaldo de Mas (1809–1868), on San Agustín’s Letter corroborating his own “study” of native Filipinos.

303 Juan José Delgado, Historia General Sacro-Profana, Política y Natural De Las Islas Del Poniente, Llamadas Filipinas (Manila: Imp: de el Eco de Filipinas, 1892), 318.


305 See Delgado, Historia General, i–iii.
Delgado’s version of the Letter and commentary were written and possibly circulated when the Historia General was completed in 1754. So what was at stake for Delgado in redacting San Agustín’s Letter and writing his commentary in the first place?

In the introduction to his commentary in the Historia General Delgado wrote:

…I resolved to make a few brief commentaries on the matter in the letter, both for the consolation (consuelo) of those whom they may call to the missions and so that it may be understood (para que entienda) that at times sadness and melancholy (tristeza y melancolía) are accustomed to heighten things, making giants out of pygmies—all the more, if a relish for revery and grumbling be joined with a tendency to exaggeration with figures of speech corresponding hitherto (my emphasis). 307,308

The distinction of melancholy from sadness merits attention especially in conjunction with Delgado’s concern for missionaries and San Agustin’s preoccupation with vices. Delgado’s use of melancholy draws on Galenic medical tradition regarding the “black bile” and contemporaneous scientific perspective on humors. Although there is a comparable term (desolation) within the Jesuit Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola (1491–1556), Delgado refrained from using it in favor of melancolia—perhaps a more communicable word to convey to readers than desolation, which may have been reserved for Jesuits under spiritual direction.

According to the Spiritual Exercises, desolation is a “darkness of soul, disturbance in it, movement to things low and earthly, the unquiet of different agitations and temptations, moving


308 Delgado, Historia General, 297.
to want of confidence, without hope, without love.”

Although Delgado was not making a diagnosis in the context of the *Spiritual Exercises*, and indeed it might have seemed strange to undertake spiritual direction on a dead man, Delgado was not unaware of melancholy’s consequences for Catholic missionaries. Moreover, his distinction of melancholy from sadness could also have been drawing upon a different spiritual malady, called acedia, which had its origins in early Christian monastic wirings. A complicated condition, scholars have remarked on the difficulty of translating this term, resorting to other emotions when describing it: listlessness, anxiety, inquietude, ennui—conditions Delgado hoped he could help others to avoid.

Delgado’s purpose in writing was to show the dangers of melancholy and sadness since hyperbolic accounts of indios could affect prospective missionaries who read the Letter by stirring suspicion and hard feelings in their hearts (“recelo y mal afecto que puedan engendrar en los corazones”). In his commentary, Delgado mentioned the word melancholy in conjunction with and separate from sadness, grief, irritability, and exhaustion in at least four instances:

- As motivation for writing the commentary;

---


310 Evagrius, Antoine Guillaumont and Claire Guillaumont, *Traité pratique, ou, Le moine. Evagre le Pontique* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1971), 521. See also Ute Frevert’s discussion in Emotions in *History Lost and Found*, 31-36. Frevert’s dramatic characterization of acedia captures the severity of the malady, particularly, her summary that “the spirit was too weak to fight and gave way to sin and vice,” and her remedy that one’s veneration of and dedication to God had to be “rebuilt at all costs” (p 32). San Agustin offers an interesting case study especially since he appears to capture the stark contrast between melancholy and acedia that Frevert tries to illustrate. However, I disagree with Frevert’s characterization of acedia as guilt-ridden and suggestive of a pre-modern condition beyond consolation that is inaccessible to early modern or even contemporary readers According to desert fathers, the conquest of acedia (through perseverance and thanksgiving) yields “a state of deep peace and inexpressible joy.” Evagrius, Praktikos, 19.


• As an effect which can be perceived rhetorically as a “confused chaos” among certain authors of “a critical, melancholy or affected genius” (*un genio crítico, melancólico, ó afecto*); 313

• Speaking of both Spaniards and religious, that melancholy effects the feeling of being “wounded;” 314

• That San Agustín was melancholy and very tired when he began to write the Letter. 315

Although in using melancholy Delgado appealed to broader readership, his missionary concerns and his effort to explain its spiritual consequences suggest an interpretation of melancholy that is closer to acedia as understood in the early Christian monastic tradition.

Known to oppress one’s spirit with myriad emotions ranging from anger to inordinate yearning, from self-pity to mid-life crisis, 316 the demon of acedia or noonday demon was believed by fourth century Christian desert fathers to be a “complex” thought. 317 Indeed, acedia turned midday in the desert into a time of menace that plunged the heart of the monk into sudden darkness.

A precursor to the “seven deadly sins” of Western Christianity, Evagrius of Pontus’ (ca. 345–399) list of eight thoughts or passions included gluttony, fornication, avarice, anger, sadness, acedia, vainglory and pride, with acedia causing “the most serious trouble of all.” 318 During an


317 Evagrius’ Scholia on the Psalms (S1-Ps. 139:3) as quoted in Evagrius and Sinkewicz, *Evagrius of Pontus: The Greek Ascetic Corpus*, 251.

attack of acedia, Evagrius counseled *hypomene* or perseverance—which San Agustín also advised as the “only remedy which Christ left His disciples...”319 Evagrius separated sadness from acedia, as Delgado would one day do with sadness and melancholy; San Agustín himself separated “sloth” (acedia’s western equivalent) from sadness in the *Letter*.320 The separation is critical because it suggests that these writers were aware of an emotion graver than sadness.

In the *Praktikos*, Evagrius described the acedia in action:

> The demon of acedia—also called the noonday demon—is the one that causes the most trouble of all...he instills in the heart of the monk a hatred for the place, a hatred for his very life itself.... He leads him to reflect that charity has departed from among the brethren, that there is no one to give encouragement. Should there be someone at this period who happens to offend him in some way or other, this too the demon uses to contribute further to his hatred.321

In San Agustín’s *Letter*, a discerning reader would have found proof of the noonday demon’s presence.322 Although there were no demons mentioned therein, the “thoughts” or vices they represented were discussed. With both the *Letter* and the commentary quoting Scripture and classical writers in Latin, the spiritual milieu of Delgado and San Agustín was steeped in classical and patristic literature323 on virtues and vices, and it will be seen that that San Agustín’s melancholy could be read through that lens.


323 References to Ovid, Horace, Virgil etc. abound in San Agustín’s *Letter*. Although Delgado preferred to speak more plainly, Blair and Robertson say Delgado corrected a number of San Agustín’s classical references—making an implicit statement about the intellectual and spiritual milieu of Spanish missionaries.
The connection between vices, virtue and friendship, long established in classical writings (especially Cicero), was read by Jesuits as part of their studies in accordance with the Jesuit Ratio Studiorum.\textsuperscript{324} This was reinforced with the circulation of the Jesuit Matteo Ricci’s widely circulated 1595 Treatise on Friendship, which drew upon Cicero’s De Amicitia as well as patristic and humanist writers. Jesuits continued to publish Cicero’s works throughout Europe and even New Spain through the middle of the eighteenth century,\textsuperscript{325} attesting to his continued relevance for Jesuits.\textsuperscript{326} Both treatises show how discourse on friendship was influential in light of global expansion; they demonstrate how “amicitia was cast as a social political ethic, and most explicitly, as the antidote to the violence of imperium.”\textsuperscript{327} In San Agustín’s Letter, amicitia and imperium rub abrasively against one another in the context of Christian mission, and we see why San Agustin’s melancholy filtered through native vice was dangerous.

In his commentary, Delgado offered his interpretation of native vices from San Agustín’s Letter. For instance, San Agustin accused the entire Tagalog [tribe] of being sinners; This charge was based on their failure to return borrowed objects—which Delgado described as illogical.\textsuperscript{328} Delgado also provided context based on his own experiences as when he clarified that the indios

\textsuperscript{324} As part of Jesuit education in the late sixteenth century, Jesuit read classical writers such as Cicero, Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Aesop, Homer, Aristophanes and Quintilian. According to Brian Dunke, Jesuit pedagogical plans were surprisingly strictly Ciceronian. See Brian Dunke in Jesuit Education and the Classics and John Olin in Erasmus, Eutopia and the Jesuits.

\textsuperscript{325} See for instance: Thomas Ignatius Butler, Marci Tulij Ciceronis vita (Mexici: In Maximo Soc. Jesu Mexicano collegis, 1749); and M. T. Ciceronis, De officiis libri tres; Cato major, vel de senectute; Laelius, vel de amicitia; Paradoxa Stoicorum sex; Somnium Scipionis: Cum optimis ac postremis exemplaribus accuratè collati (Venice: Sumptibus Dominici Lovisæ, 1700).


\textsuperscript{327} Provost-Smith, “Macau, Manila, Mexico and Madrid,” 70.

\textsuperscript{328} Delgado, Historia General, 306.
“are very poor…and live meanly” to explain their naiveté regarding business matters. Although focused on San Agustín, Delgado also briefly criticized views of indios held by a Jesuit professor, Pedro Murillo Velarde (1696–1753), whom he claims, had even less experience with people.329

Still, scholars criticize Delgado not only for exposing San Agustín’s identity and for overreacting to “a trifle…and not a serious discourse” but also for the style of his refutation, which is “incomplete” and “full of simplicity.” At best, Delgado’s was a “devastatingly if urbanely” written defense of native people,333 and at worst, it painted just “as awful and ridiculous a picture of the indigenous… as Father Gaspar.”334

However, to interpret San Agustín’s Letter as a mere “trifle” and Delgado’s apologia as simple-minded is to underestimate the significance of melancholy and acedia and their theological implications for Roman Catholic missionaries in colonial Philippines. Indeed Delgado’s critique of San Agustín’s Letter culminates in saying that its author had committed no less than a grave sin and scandal against his neighbor (grave pecado y escándalo).335 What

---

329 Francisco Murillo Velaverde’s blunt list of indio traits is appended to San Agustín’s Letter, accompanying even an early manuscript (such as the Ayer MS). Velaverde was a professor at the University of Manila and wrote a History of the Jesuits in the Philippines in 1749.

330 Delgado, Historia General, 298.

331 Galende’s introduction to Conquistas, 33.

332 Retana quoted in Galende’s introduction to Conquistas, 33.


334 Galende’s introduction to Conquistas, 35.

335 Historia General, 320.
follows is an investigation of San Agustín’s Letter\textsuperscript{336} from the perspective of melancholy in general and acedia in particular. While it may have been impossible to perform spiritual direction on a dead man, Delgado’s commentary was written in that spirit on behalf of others. Following Delgado, this chapter proposes a reading of San Agustín’s Letter and Delgado’s commentary as a literary form of spiritual direction. With Delgado’s commentary as well as Cicero’s \textit{De Amicitia} as guides, this chapter attempts to examine San Agustín’s Letter in the hope of shedding light on a severe spiritual affliction that was perceived as a special threat to Roman Catholic missionaries in colonial Philippines.

If, according to Cicero, in a letter to a friend, one ought to recognize oneself,\textsuperscript{337} then it should come as no surprise that a letter written in fear and despair would signal the presence of the noonday demon who has gone to the ends of the earth to lay siege to an errant heart.\textsuperscript{338}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{336} A note on English Translation and Variant Readings: For the purposes of this chapter, I have used the English translation of San Agustín’s Letter Written by an Old Religious of the Philippines to a Friend of His in Spain provided by Blair and Robertson in Volume 40 of \textit{The Philippine Islands}. Their translation was primarily based on “an early manuscript copy of \textit{Carta de Fray Gaspar de San Agustin a un Amigo Suyo en España que le preguntó el natural ingenio de los Indios naturales de estas Islas Filipinas} belonging to Mr. E. E. Ayer in Chicago” which is presently at the Newberry Library in Chicago. Included in the Blair and Robertson translation are insights from variant readings of other extant manuscripts including that of Delgado published in his \textit{Historia General Sacra-Profana, Política y Natural de Las Islas del Poniente Llamadas Filipinas} in 1n 1892. Although my primary source for this chapter has been the Blair/Robertson translation, thanks to the assistance from Harvard and Newberry Libraries, I am able to draw upon the Ayer MS and Delgado’s \textit{Historia General} for additional evidence.


\textsuperscript{338} Psalm 61:2 LXX, uses the Greek word for acedia.
\end{flushright}
The place of the Augustinian Order and the Conquest of the Philippines

*The Missionary as “Stranger”*

Born in Madrid in 1651, San Agustín is believed to have come from a family of means and good social standing. His father, Gaspar Caneyllas, had connections to a delegate at Court—seen as evidence that San Agustín was raised and educated in a manner appropriate to his family’s sphere of influence.³³⁹ In 1667, inspired by tales of missions abroad, he entered the Augustinian Order and traveled to the Philippines on the Galleon, arriving in Manila in 1668. As a result of his theological studies in Greek and Latin, his understanding of French as well as Hebrew, and his gift for literature and languages, San Agustín earned a reputation as “one of the legitimate hopes of our beloved province”³⁴⁰ Ordained at 23, San Agustín not only corrected catechisms in indigenous dialects, he also administered properties as well as served as judge and prior, examiner of Tagalog, and Commissary of the Office of the Holy Inquisition of the Order. Besides his infamous *Letter* also known as *Carta de Fray Gaspar de San Agustín a un Amigo Suyo en España que Pregunto el natural iegenio de los Indios naturales de estas Islas Philipinas*, San Agustín is renowned for his great chronicle, *Conquistas de las Islas Filipinas: 1565–1615* and a *Compendio del Arte de la Lengua Tagala* (1703).³⁴¹ San Agustín died in the San Agustín convent in Manila at the age of 74 in 1724.

Although Christian mission presupposes engagement with and through the conversion of others, and San Agustín cites St. Thomas the Apostle, St. Paul, and St. Peter within the *Letter* as exemplary missionaries,³⁴² in a colonial setting, missionaries must often choose to adopt or adapt

³³⁹ Galende’s introduction to *Conquistas*, 25.

³⁴⁰ Galende’s introduction to *Conquistas*, 27.

³⁴¹ Galende’s introduction to *Conquistas*, 33–35.

to the outlook of “missionary as stranger.” The history of the first Augustinian mission to the Philippines offers insight into San Agustín’s emotional predicament in the face of the consequences of conquest and the opportunities and challenges it presents for proclaiming the Gospel.

Spanish conquest and colonization of the Philippines was not without violence or controversy. J. Gayo Aragón argues that the Augustinians had voiced opposition over Spanish dominion in the Philippines; they agreed to join the expedition led by Miguel Lopez de Legazpi with Fray Andrés Urdaneta serving as his navigator and pilot, believing they were headed to New Guinea. Having reminded King Philip II of the terms of the Treaty of Zaragoza (1529)—demarcating which lands “belonged” to Spain and Portugal—Fray Andrés de Urdaneta stated the following opinion:

Therefore it seems it would be somewhat inconsistent for your majesty to order the said vessels to the Filipina Island without showing legitimate or pious reason therefore.

Informed at sea of their ultimate destination, however, the Augustinians condemned the action as “an underhanded ruse.” Thus they strayed into territory that they not only felt Spain had no just claims to conquer, but a place where previous expeditions (famously Magellan’s in 1521) had failed. Upon reaching the Philippines, the Augustinians continued to protest, but in silence. According to Aragón, they “refrained from commenting in any way (and Legazpi


344 Gaspar de San Agustín, Conquistas, 234.


expressly sought their opinion) on whether or not it seemed right to settle on any of the islands visited.347 Instead, they addressed the King directly to express their Opinion. Fray Martin de Rada wrote:

I have taken the opinion of all the fathers to be found here. They unanimously affirm that none among these islands have come into the power of the Spaniards with just title.348

The friar then depicted him and his companions as strangers living in alien territory on the basis of a tenuous friendship, suspiciously offered through force of arms and only conditionally accepted.349 The instructions of Philip II likewise hinged on friendship and hospitality,350 but in their report to the King, Fray Martin de Rada decried abuses in the Philippines,351 especially when no spiritual “benefits” had been rendered. In fact the Augustinian reported that that the Spanish soldiers had attacked native villages “with fire and sword”352 and “burned the houses or inflicted other greater injuries.”353

In a 1570 letter to Philip II, the Augustinian Fray Diego de Herrera, attested to similar hardship and hostility between Spanish soldiers and native people including a struggle over food:

Therefore they [indigenous inhabitants] were disquieted, and many fled deserting their towns and those who remained determined not to cultivate their fields, or to

348 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 3:254.
349 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 3:251.
352 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 3:254.
353 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 3:255.
sow, believing that by this stratagem they could drive us from their land. Consequently they and ours have endured very great extremities… 354

Regarding evangelization, he confessed that “nothing yet had really been done until we know your Majesty’s will” and that only “a hundred” native people had been baptized since their arrival. 355 The Augustinian claimed this was due in part because there were “civilized” nations nearby (i.e., China and Japan) and as he put it, the King’s will to evangelize the Philippines had only recently been made clear. As with the Opinion, this letter indicates feelings of continued uncertainty about their mission. Enmity between the soldiers and indios as a result of food shortage and supplies 356 had shaken the spirit of the first Augustinians who— even when deceived at sea—still possessed enough faith to proceed to the Philippines for the “service of God.” 357

Far from peaceful, the voyage and arrival of the first Augustinian mission was riddled with deceit, protest and a refusal to feel “settled” as a matter of principle 358 as well as physical and psychological distress. Whether this crisis left an emotional imprint on the history of Augustinians in the Philippines is arguable, but its influence on the narrative of San Agustín can be detected.

San Agustín’s account of that event in Conquistas de las Islas Filipinas published in 1698 does acknowledge the moment when the Instructions of the Royal Audiencia of New Spain were opened, but the emotion he recorded was not one of protest. San Agustín did write, however, that

354 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 3:69–70.
355 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 3:72.
356 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 3:71.
357 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 2:105.
358 The validity of the conquest was questioned by members of several religious orders as they arrived in the Philippines including the Franciscans, (1578) Jesuits (1581) Dominicans (1587) or the Recollects (1606). The first bishop of the Philippines, the Dominican, Domingo de Salazar, not only championed the indios, but the issue of the military conquest of the Philippines was a topic of serious theological consideration in the First Synod of Manila (1582–1586).
Fray Andrès de Urdaneta was “very saddened” (Mucho se entristeció) at the change of course from the one he had proposed.

Thus, in San Agustín’s chronicle of his Order’s journey lay a possible imprint of his own sojourn in the Philippines—connected through sadness. In the Letter, we shall see how this sadness interacted with other unsettled feelings as San Agustín confronted his status not just as a missionary among strangers, but as a missionary estranged from his mission.

C. San Agustín’s Letter

Written by an Old Religious of the Philippines to a Friend of His in Spain

Melancholy and Rhetoric: The Psychological and Social Consequences

In his Letter Written by an Old Religious of the Philippines to a Friend of His in Spain, San Agustín told of no miracles or extraordinary conversions. Rather he wrote of sundry “cause[s] for wonder” While the Letter’s own puzzling status, renders San Agustín’s “anonymity” unclear, he may have preferred, nevertheless, to adopt the posture of an “unknown,” writing among friends, or among one’s familiar countrymen.

359 Gaspar de San Agustín, Conquistas, 234.
360 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 40:239.
361 The early Ayer manuscript copy of Chicago upon which the English translation is based, bears the name of its author on the front page; another manuscript copy, known as the “Navarette MS” bears San Agustín’s actual signature.
363 Among religious orders there are rules governing the circulation of such letters, and perhaps San Agustín’s Letter was meant only for Augustinian eyes when he was alive. See Ellis, They Need Nothing, 145-146. For friendship among one’s countrymen as opposed to foreigners; see Cicero, De Amicitia, v, 18–20.
By characterizing indios as uniformly ungrateful, lazy, and vile for more than seventy of the Letter’s 101 paragraphs, San Agustín seemed to fix the terms of discourse between himself and his Spanish friend. What is friendship after all if not delimiting a boundary of inclusive/exclusive exchange of knowledge, or better yet, the recognition that one’s friend is not “an other but a second me.”\(^{364}\) From this perspective, the Letter depicting a relationship between an anonymous religious and nameless “Indians” was intimate, but in unexpected ways.

Despite San Agustín’s protests over “defining the nature and vices of the Indians,” he obliged his “Friend in Spain,” although it risked portraying its writer poorly; for according to Cicero, it was the mark of a “well-ordered mind to rejoice at good deeds and be pained at the reverse.”\(^{365}\) Although the “friend” was addressed, virtues and vices noted, they were distorted, serving as proof only of a dysfunctional relationship rather than friendship for anyone. Delgado accused San Agustín of hyperbole, drawing readers’ attention to the connection between emotion and rhetoric. Readers of Cicero would know that a pre-requisite of the ideal orator is virtue. To equip someone with rhetorical skills who was not otherwise good was to “give weapons to a madman.”\(^{366}\)

San Agustín called indios “fickle, false and mendacious,”\(^{367}\) “naturally rude,” given to the “sin of blasphemy, because of their natural vileness, their pride and their presumption.”\(^{368}\) According to Delgado, many of San Agustín’s criticisms were so general, examples similar to life in Spain and vices so universal to humankind as to make their exclusive attribution to indios


\(^{365}\) Cicero, *De Amicitia*, xiii, 47–48.

\(^{366}\) Cicero, *De Oratore*, Book 3:55.


\(^{368}\) Blair and Robertson, *Philippine Islands*, 40:230.
nonsensical. Exasperated, Delgado addressed him directly, “¿Y digame su paternidad; quienes ni son dados a este vicio en esta tierra?,” asking whether there was anyone on earth free of vice. Moreover, neither was there nostalgia or intimacy palpable for the Letter’s recipient. From Delgado’s perspective, not only did the vice-ridden rhetoric of San Agustín’s Letter fail to persuade, it also indicated San Agustín’s sense of friendlessness for “without virtue friendship cannot exist at all.” Moreover, the Letter revealed an author still unsettled in the very location from which he wrote.

If his mission was to make Christians from these “Indians,” then to write of their vices was to admit failure. He did not blame himself however, but in quoting Psalm 94 of the Vulgate, he styled himself a reluctant shepherd in a wilderness of complaining idolaters. Moreover, if virtue and friendship were inextricably linked, then San Agustín made it impossible for himself to be friends with people whom he has cast out of his presence—rhetorically, psychologically, and theologically, as a result of his melancholy. One could argue the Letter manifested a breakdown, a state of anomie, which is how one scholar has characterized the Evagrian notion of acedia.

San Agustín’s psychological state led him to write a vengeful letter that characterized—with few exceptions—an entire populace in exaggerated, negative terms. Moreover, perhaps as a result of genuine cultural differences, his expectations for friendship had not been met, and his

---

369 Delgado, Historia General, 309.

370 For discussion of recipients of the Letter, hypothetical, actual or imaginary, see Ellis, They Need Nothing, 145–146.

371 Cicero, De Amicitia, vi. 20–22

372 See Cicero, De Amicitia xiv. 50–xv52, although this theme is woven throughout the work. It is also a constant theme in in Matteo Ricci’s Treatise on Friendship.

feelings of being a stranger devolved into estrangement, evoking in San Agustín not just sadness, but extreme self-pity, anger, envy and pride.\textsuperscript{374} As he unjustly catalogs vices of the indios, one senses these very emotions about to implode. As Delgado wrote, San Agustín has committed a grave sin and scandal (\textit{grave pecado y escándalo}) against his neighbor and community.\textsuperscript{375}

From the breaking of plates to the bungling of simple requests, the indios’ work habits infuriate San Agustín, particularly as it relates to home and sense of place:

> It is not known that the Indian has [ever] broken a dish or a crock in his own house, and consequently one will find dishes in them that date before the arrival of the Spaniards in this country. But in the convents and houses where they serve, they do it on purpose to do their masters an ill turn.\textsuperscript{376}

Perhaps for San Agustín this was evidence that his presence barely registered in the hearth of the indigenous household whereas broken plates in a colonial domestic setting signified a broken relationship evidenced in an apparent disregard for Spaniards and priests in favor of their own \textit{ugali} or customs.

According to San Agustín, indios did not care for Spanish dress but preferred their own rags,\textsuperscript{377} did not put tools in their proper place and never returned what they borrowed until it was requested.\textsuperscript{378} Furthermore, native laborers left work early if paid in advance,\textsuperscript{379} scratched themselves while talking,\textsuperscript{380} were early risers only in their own house, broke a sword, mirror, 

\textsuperscript{374} See Ellis, \textit{They Need Nothing}, 154.

\textsuperscript{375} \textit{Historia General}, 320.

\textsuperscript{376} Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands}, 28:204–205.

\textsuperscript{377} Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands}, 40:203.

\textsuperscript{378} Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands}, 40:197.

\textsuperscript{379} Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands}, 40:198.

\textsuperscript{380} Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands}, 40:198.
glass, musket or clock and could “only handle bamboo, rattan, nipa or bolo” (indigenous materials).\textsuperscript{381} Most insidious was the indios’ loyalty to one another in concealing one another’s faults from spiritual and temporal authorities.\textsuperscript{382}

San Agustín was also annoyed that “Indians” read over people’s shoulders.\textsuperscript{383} Disregarding his assumptions about native literacy, indios may have been performing an expression of engagement. Similarly, San Agustín complains that indios desire to “eat and try all that their masters eat… Neither will they drink out of…a separate jar.”\textsuperscript{384} Compounding San Agustín’s distress was the indios’ habit of questioning priests: “When they meet the father they generally ask him where he is going and whence he is coming and innumerable questions, all impertinent and troublesome.”\textsuperscript{385} An endless source of frustration for San Agustín thus arose from a seeming disregard for his privacy on the one hand and ambivalence for his presence on the other.

Indios’ resistance to Spanish “civilization” was treated as rejection by San Agustín whereas any indio effort to “locate” him was perceived as an intrusion or breach of (Spanish) etiquette. As indios eluded San Agustín, his temper flared. Indignantly, he confessed envy that in the face of Spanish riches, “Indians” felt contentment at having “a bamboo hut, a little rice and a few small fish.”\textsuperscript{386} Regarding San Agustín’s irritability, Delgado observed:

\begin{quote}
...there are many Spaniards, and even ministers, who are melancholy and crabbed (\textit{melancólicos y tétricos}), are so ill-conditioned and moody that
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{381} Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands}, 40:205.

\textsuperscript{382} Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands}, 40:237.

\textsuperscript{383} Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands}, 40:201.

\textsuperscript{384} Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands}, 40:202 (my emphasis).

\textsuperscript{385} Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands}, 40:200.

\textsuperscript{386} Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands}, 40:260.
everything wounds them, and they are contented with nothing; All the actions of
the Indians displease them and they even believe that the Indians do them
purposefully to make them impatient and to jest with them. From such ill-
conditioned people the Indians suffer much and tolerate and endure much....

That *melancólicos* should be qualified by another word points to the inadequacy of
melancholy to capture San Agustín’s crisis. Acedia commanded an opposing army of
symptoms and just as a person afflicted was wont to feel like an innocent victim, in the
Letter, San Agustín warned readers to “prepare oneself to receive the blow of ingratitude;” he
also wrote of how the Spaniard, especially the religious, have been cheated, ignored, and
disrespected by “Indians.” In this way, San Agustín portrayed himself as imitating Christ in
suffering on behalf of others who—he implies—know not what they do. Similarly, those afflicted
with acedia were believed to be prone to fantasies, especially ones that appeared to serve God.
San Agustín’s desire to be understood solely on his own terms clashed with an *imitatio Christi*
gone awry. Indeed with acedia, “so much-disquieted yearning might perhaps even turn into
hatred.”

However, it is possible to read the Letter as a psalm of Lament. From this perspective,
San Agustín is also allowed to voice his distress and outrage to a Friend, perhaps mirroring his
Augustinian predecessors. Just as Fray Martin de Rada wrote to Philip II expressing the injustice

---

392 Delgado has a different view of Christ and the missionary. See *Historia General*, 321.
For a compelling analysis of Delgado’s commentary, see Ellis, *They Need Nothing*, 155.
of the conquest, San Agustín has addressed his spiritual King, lamenting the injustice the
conquest inflicted on him. As the conquest affects the colonizer and the colonized (albeit
disproportionately, asymmetrically) it must be acknowledged that Christian mission in a colonial
setting, affects the “oppressor” just as it does the “oppressed.”

Considering how psalm 94/95 begins (in joy) and how part of the Letter would end (in
consolation), we may be able to appreciate the Letter as an honest prayer of crisis and comfort.
Before San Agustín would reach a modicum of consolation, however, he would face a painful
gulf created in anger and pride by his own melancholy, out of a confused desire to punish those
with whom he experienced mutual misunderstanding.

D. Melancholy and the Severing of Christian Friendship

Throughout the Letter, San Agustín noted how indios have no love for the Spaniard, only for
themselves, thus demonstrating their vanity. In order to “punish” indios for their
preference, he then attempted to reserve the love, friendship and imitation of European saints to
their kin and descendants. After the passage on errant hearts quoted from the Psalter, he made
reference to the complaining faithful in the wilderness. Although San Agustín made no other
direct quotation of Psalm 94 of the vulgate or of Hebrews 3:8, the vitriolic tone of his letter,
especially when read as a psalm of lament suggests and anticipates the next line (10) from psalm
94: “Therefore in my anger I swore They shall not enter my rest.”

The wrath of the psalmist at having led a generation, “who always err from the heart,”
ends with rest, an allusion to the Promised Land, or in the Christian context, communion with the

394 Blair and Robertson, *Philippine Islands*, 40:236. However there are other passages.
saints, heaven, fellowship with God. Having established the vices of the Indians, however, San Agustín also barred their path to Christian virtue—via imitation of saints.

Melancholy’s Theological Consequences

Only toward the end of the Letter do readers understand that the issue of native clergy was what was at stake in San Agustín’s description of the “nature of the Indians, and their customs and vices.” Despite Delgado’s eloquent defense of native clergy, (citing the example of the work of missionary work Francis Xavier in India and indigenous priests in Japan397), the consensus in the Philippines opposed its implementation. The order to ordain greater numbers of indigenous priests was flagrantly disregarded by the governor-general in Manila as late as 1787.398 The cornerstone of San Agustín’s argument was Christian imitation:

One cannot indeed, compare the voluntary poverty of St. Francis with that of the Indians, which is born of laziness and full of greed; for theirs is the infamous poverty which Virgil places in hell: *et turpis egestas*; And just as the economy of a poor wretch is not reckoned as fasting, so it will not be proper to say that if St. Antony went barefoot the Indians do the same; and that they live on certain roots as did the fathers of Thebaid. For the fasting and austerities of St. Arsenius had a different impelling motive since he left the pleasures and esteem, of the court of the emperor Theodosius than that which they can have, being born and reared, and never having seen anything else.399

What then did it mean for Christians to imitate Christ? What purpose did Christian mission serve? San Agustin made a roundabout case as to why he could imitate the saints better than the “Indians” can—that is by virtue of his original estrangement from the condition of asceticism. Indios could not truly imitate saints in their poverty because they gave up nothing in

397 *Historia General*, 295.


the process. So much of Agustín’s anxiety regarding native clergy\(^{400}\) revolved around all that they stood to gain through the office.\(^{401}\)

Unlike San Agustín who left the comforts of home, indio priests would have the comfort of preaching to their own. How could “Indians” understand the nature of the priesthood when they knew nothing of sacrifice? Interestingly, San Agustín himself attempted to console missionaries with a vision of St. Bridget that he presents as a consolation “to those who take up this charge.” His consolation however, underscored the severity of his acedia and its dangerous effect on Christian friendship:

\[
\text{Vos ergo amici mei qui estis in mundo procedite secure, clamate, et anuntiate voluntatem meam. Ego ero in corde et in ore vestro. Ego ero dux vester in via et consolator in morte.}\]\(^{402}\)

San Agustín went on:

…all this is necessary in order to combat the friction that is caused to the European\(^{403}\) disposition by dealing with people of customs so different and which has caused so many to lose their reason [my emphasis].

After San Agustín’s argument on the indios’ imperfect capacity to imitate ascetics and saints, he dared to take the argument further. He exhorted missionaries to go forth and do God’s will assured that God would be in their hearts and mouths, their comforter unto death. By offering the consolation and wisdom of St. Bridget of Sweden (1303–1373), he casts her on the side of Europeans. Moreover, San Agustín—through the vision of St. Bridget—disallows friendship between the saints and the “Indians” in the following manner: If virtue is inseparable from

\(^{400}\) Blair and Robertson, *Philippine Islands*, 40:270.

\(^{401}\) Blair and Robertson, *Philippine Islands*, 40:270.

\(^{402}\) Blair and Robertson, *Philippine Islands*, 40:263.

\(^{403}\) St. Brígida of Sweden is renowned as being one of the patron saints of Europe.
friendship, and San Agustín has hitherto underscored the vices of “Indians,” and further, has implied, indios cannot imitate Christ and His saints to perfection, then he has severed indios from Christian friendship. Worse, in San Agustín’s account, God addressed St. Bridget and others who do her work as “My friends” (amici mei), and deployed this address specifically for Europeans.

San Agustín’s attempt to validate the efficacy of the missionary as stranger on rhetorical, theological and political grounds was thus made even at the cost of further emotional and spiritual alienation. Given his stance against native clergy, his use of St. Bridget’s vision did little to promote faith, hope and charity, not to mention love for all. As for the colony, he preferred to maintain the status quo and govern as the dominant other even when insurrections and revolts served as constant, haunting reminders that the “conquest” was not over.

E. Delgado’s Consolation

The Dutiful Friend

Little is known about Juan Jose Delgado except that he came from Cadiz, Spain and was probably born in 1697. He arrived in the Philippines sometime in 1717 or 1718 after some years in New Spain where he studied at a Jesuit school. Upon Delgado’s arrival in the Philippines, he completed his studies and was sent to various missions including Carigara where he completed the Historia General in 1754, in which he famously defended indios against San Agustín’s diatribe. Although Arcilla points out that the Historia General was not published until the late nineteenth century, it was completed within 30 years of San Agustín’s death. Indeed the author’s dedicatory letter to the Virgin Madre de Dios de Borongan is dated September 28, 1751.  

404 Cicero, De Amicitia, vi.20–22.

405 Arcilla, entry for Delgado in Diccionario Histórico, 1077.

Delgado knew San Agustín when he was alive, saying in the introduction to his commentary that he had no wish to malign the reverend father “à quien conocí cuando vivía.” However, he did not say whether he sought to console him during his lifetime. Besides the issue of native clergy, the middle of the eighteenth century was a period of social and political unrest in the archipelago. One letter from King Ferdinand VI in 1751 to the Manila Audiencia details indirect involvement by Augustinians and Dominicans in recent risings.

A similar insurrection or revolt occurred in most of the villages of the province of Bulacan ... against the injuries which the Indians received from the managers of the estates which are owned by the religious of St. Dominic and those of St. Augustine, both calced and discalced—usurping the lands of the Indians, without leaving them the freedom of the rivers for their fishing, or allowing them to cut wood for their necessary use, or even to collect the wild fruits; nor did they allow the natives to pasture [the carabaos].

The report of friction between indios and religious orders except the Jesuits was notable because the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Philippines would occur in 1768. Perhaps tensions were already brewing. For Delgado, then, therein lay the danger. Perhaps San Agustín’s Letter was meant to serve as a negative example, a reminder of Cicero’s description of a tyrant’s life:

Such indeed is the life of tyrants...in which there can be no faith, no affection, no trust in the continuance of goodwill; where every act arouses suspicion of anxiety

407 Delgado, Historia General, 303.

408 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 48:28.

409 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 48:30.


411 NB: While Delgado focuses on San Agustin, he also contradicts statements made by fellow Jesuit, Murillo who also wrote a derogatory and ignorant portrait of indios.
and where friendship has no place. For how can anyone love either the man whom he fears or the man by whom he believes himself to be feared?412

Delgado stated that indios respected Spaniards but also feared them, and that fear caused the confusion that made San Agusín angry.413 In his commentary, Delgado wished to speak plainly (“el deseo de sacar en limpio de verdad”) so missionaries would not be excessively grieved (entristezcan),414 and thus restore honor between Spaniards and indios by mitigating the fear in one and the sadness of the other. In doing so, Delgado could be said to fulfill the duty of a friend according to Cicero’s De Amicitia and in keeping with Jesuit spirituality:

It is his duty to strive with all his might to arouse his friend’s prostrate soul and lead it to a livelier hope and into a better train of thought.415

Perhaps Delgado saw in San Agusín’s Letter a soul so preoccupied with the vices of the indios that it reflected the friar’s own interior state, to the peril of the colony. Although Delgado says he was initially impressed by San Agusín’s erudition, he was compelled to offer a commentary on the dangers of melancholy and perspective for the understanding and consolation of others.

Melancholy and Perspective

Delgado argued that melancholy had affected San Agusín’s perspective on indios and this in turn potentially damaged Christian mission and friendship in the Philippines. From gambling to “lujuria sin amor” (lust without love), the native vices spewing from the Letter were

412 Cicero, De Amicitia, xv, 52.
413 See footnote in Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 40:199.
414 Delgado, Historia General, 303.
415 Cicero, De Amicitia, xvi, 58–59.
indeed nothing short of incendiary and depicted a troubled soul, judging others with little or no evidence,\footnote{Historia General, 310} when “only God knows the heart.”\footnote{Historia General, 313. Evagrius also claims that while only God knows the heart, demons watch our actions closely!} Against such grave sin against his neighbor, Delgado called for a restoration of honor (\textit{la restitución in integrum de la honra Del prójimo}).\footnote{Historia General, 320.}

Having critiqued San Agustín’s hyperbolic rhetoric, it is fitting that Delgado would attempt to restore honor and offer consolation by means of a narrative reversal.

Whereas San Agustín’s narrative of Legazpi’s expedition in 1564 admitted great sadness and the ensuing Spanish colonization was suffused with lament for himself and fury toward others, Delgado’s view on the Spanish-Indio relations was decidedly different. Although the mid-eighteenth century insurrections and revolts bore resemblance to the first years of mission and conquest in the Philippines,\footnote{Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands}, 3:69–70.} San Agustín maintained that it was his status as a stranger that helped preserve order in the colony. Moreover he said indio priests, flattered by vanity, would be ineffective in handling future situations.\footnote{Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands}, 40:272.}

Unlike San Agustín who criticized the indios’ ingratitude, Delgado underscored the Spaniard’s debt. In a reversal of the account of the Augustinian voyage and arrival to the Philippines, he reminded his readers:

\begin{quote}
…Who are the men who convey and conduct the ships and the galleons from Acapulco and other kingdoms? Is it the Spaniards? Ask that of the pilots, masters, and boatswains and they will affirm that this great and inestimable good is due to the Indian alone… Besides this, who are the people who support us in these lands and who furnish us food… The Indians are the ones who plow the lands, who sow the rice, who keep it clear, who tend it, who harvest it, who
\end{quote}

\footnote{Historia General, 310}

\footnote{Historia General, 313. Evagrius also claims that while only God knows the heart, demons watch our actions closely!}

\footnote{Historia General, 320.}

\footnote{Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands}, 3:69–70.}

\footnote{Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands}, 40:272.}
thresh it out with their feet—and not only the rice which is consumed in Manila, but that throughout the Filipinas—(my emphasis). 421

Delgado thus wrote of mutual journeying and dependence, as if to right the wrongs of narratives past. He underscored the “love and security” 422 which native people bestow upon Spaniards, for which THEY should be thankful lest they “die of starvation.” Not only was this a reversal from Fray Diego de Hererra’s report of indios fleeing with food on their shoulders, 423 it also contrasted with contemporaneous events in which Filipinos were forbidden to pick fruit. 424 Moreover, Delgado blamed insurrections and revolts not on indios, but on the “cruelty, wickedness and tyranny of some alcalde mayor and other Spaniards” 425 whose “authority and arrogance…upon arrival in this country is incredible.” 426 Delgado thus maintained the defiant spirit of the first Augustinians 427 as to the temporal conquest of the Philippines, while remaining loyal to the Gospel mission.

Delgado set about building the foundation of a different type of relationship. In his dedicatory letter to the Virgin Mary of Borongan, he quoted Romans 8:37: sed in his omnibus superamus, propter eum, qui dilexit nos: “But in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.” 428 Ultimately this was the consolation Delgado offered to all who

421 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 40:292 (emphasis mine).
422 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 40:294
423 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 3:69–70.
424 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 48:28.
425 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 40:294.
426 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 40:295.
427 And indeed the spirit of the very first Jesuit, Franciscan and Dominican missionaries as well, as per the Synod of Manila in 1582–1586.
428 Delgado, Historia General, 3 (my emphasis).
were affected by the violence of the conquest and its enduring consequences—whether colonizer or colonized, but especially for those in apparent positions of power—that they were all human beings, capable of more excellent things.

F. San Agustín’s Consolation

Delgado’s project to be “more than conquerors” challenged San Agustín’s melancholy and its destructive effects. San Agustín’s Letter protested that what he wrote was a “mere approximation” of the Truth about indios, a “claw by which this lion can be recognized.” Despite acknowledgement of these limits however, San Agustín could not contain his rage.

San Agustín wrote that discovering the true nature of the Indians was like looking for gold, and if one was to test for fineness, and to “recognize the truth…one must first crush the rock.” An early manuscript copy used the word Colisión for this process. Delgado however, presented it differently. In order to recognize the truth, one must “collect” ("y necesita de la colección"). Whereas Delgado proposed to gather evidence to know anything or anyone, San Agustín’s sense of despair manifested itself in destructive ways; he had to crush the very thing he wished to know. However, perhaps as a result of his spiritual crisis, his unrequited desire to know the Other only yielded a knowledge and reflection of vice not virtue. Unable to bridge the chasm of cultural (in)difference, he became easy prey for the barrage of negative emotions that filled his Letter. This speaks to the oppressive and tragic work of acedia, believed to rally an opposing

429 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 40:262.

430 Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 40:192.

431 Gaspar de San Agustín. Carta de Fr. Gaspar de San Ag[ustiè]n. aun Amigo suyo en España, que le pregu[n]ta el natural igenio de los Indios naturales de estas Islas Filipinas, Manuscript, Published ca. 1720, Newberry Library, Ayer MS 1429.

432 Delgado, Historia General, 274.
army of other vices against its victim. Understood as the juncture of all passions, unattended, acedia can be deadly (“leur aboutissement fatal”).

Acedia is a prolonged movement of irascibility and desire at the same time; the former displays anger over what is present and the latter shows longing for what is not. It is a drowsiness of the rational soul, neglect of virtues and of the knowledge of God.

The repugnance San Agustín felt toward “Indians” caused friction in his relationships and more importantly, began to erode the love he felt toward himself. Although the litany of indigenous disregard for the Spaniard can be read as acts of resistance, this disregard —when read as a private lament—could be seen as evidence of a looming self-loathing couched in anger toward the indio that ends with a refrain from an epigram by Antonio Urceo (1446–1500) in the Letter’s final paragraph:

Add that though thou art an honor to thy country and claim the noblest kin; Still even then thou mayst be a base beast… In short, whatever thou shalt be, unless thou have prudence; I declare thou wilt ever be a base beast.

Although meant to deliver a final blow to the ordination of native priests, the epigram reflects a distorted image of both the indio and the Spanish missionary—the “beastly” outcome of the injustice of the Spanish conquest of the Philippines. Melancholy, especially understood in the brutal form of acedia, has converted a noble man of God into a virtual demon. In spite of its dehumanizing power however, San Agustín was not beyond consolation. As stated earlier, he consoled missionaries with an exhortation of patientia from the same Scriptural passages that use

433 Evagrius Eulogios 8 in Sinkewicz, Evagrius of Pontus: The Greek Ascetic Corpus, 35.

434 Bunge, Akèdia, 36.

435 Evagrius’ Scholia on the Psalms (S13-Ps. 118:28) as quoted in Sinkewicz, Evagrius of Pontus: The Greek Ascetic Corpus, 251.
the Greek word hypomene or perseverance as a cure for acedia.\textsuperscript{436} Moreover, after decades of attempting to understand another culture, San Agustín humbly conceded:

I confess for my part that, at the beginning I was afflicted and was greatly tormented, until with the lapse of time I came to realize that such was their disposition and nature, and that these trees could give no better fruit. In time it became to me a motive for praising God to see the variety of conditions and customs which he has placed in human nature, which is so beautified with variety; and I took particular pleasure in seeing youths and boys doing all things backward without malice, and without having prompters like actors; but moved only by that hidden peculiarity that makes them so different from all other nations…with these considerations I lived consoled and succeeded in making of them wax and wick as the saying goes.\textsuperscript{437}

Taking up the persona of the blind man in the Gospel of Mark lauded by San Agustin for seeing “men as trees walking,”\textsuperscript{438} he has confronted the limit of his mission and the gap between cultures. Although he started afflicted he has ended consoled, even as he has given up hope of understanding. Earlier in the \textit{Letter}, he expressed frustration that “although [indios] are not good and faithful servants, they will nevertheless enter into His joy” (\textit{intra in gaudium sui}).\textsuperscript{439} San Agustín had grudgingly acknowledged a mercy he was incapable of as a mere human being, but by this moment in the \textit{Letter}, the course of the psalm on which his diatribe began was reversed—from anger toward joy. However fleeting, he has acknowledged the mystery of human diversity, and perhaps in the spirit of psalm 94 of the Vulgate, he was ready to give as well as accept the invitation to make joyful noise in praise of the Lord.


\textsuperscript{437} Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands}, 40:264–265.

\textsuperscript{438} Mk:824–25.

\textsuperscript{439} Blair and Robertson, \textit{Philippine Islands}, 40:259.
The consolation was fleeting, however, and limited to several paragraphs of advice about how to work with “Indians.” Delgado admitted difficulty in contradicting these sections.⁴⁴⁰ San Agustín continued to protest against native clergy, even as he acknowledged its inevitability; however, he did provide—albeit condescendingly—a path to progress.⁴⁴¹

Conflicted and agitated to the end, San Agustin compared the indio priest to a kitten (from Lucian’s Second Dialogue) transformed into a bride who chases a mouse at the wedding; he expressed disbelief that St. Peter’s vision to preach to the Gentiles also meant adding to the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and asked for more faith.⁴⁴² Ending the letter with Urceo’s epigram, he reinforced the indio priest as “beast.” However, given the mythic tone of these examples, in addition to what was said above, the final blow delivered to the issue of native clergy could be interpreted as a wicked post script after the seal of Scripture in the penultimate paragraph: “Lord, increase our faith” Domine adauge [nobis] fidem.

G. Conclusion

In 1720, Fray Gaspar de San Agustín wrote an anonymous letter detailing the nature of “Indians” in the Philippines, their customs and vices. Far from depicting his subject accurately, San Agustín’s Letter offered a more complex portrait of himself than of the indios among whom he lived as missionary and priest for more than fifty years. Indeed his Letter read like one long cry in the wilderness. Although this cry was hidden in a thicket of erudition, it was rooted out for consolation by a Jesuit who appeared to know just how dangerous a melancholy missionary could be.

⁴⁴⁰ Delgado, Historia General, 323.
⁴⁴¹ Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 40:274.
⁴⁴² Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 40:276.
This chapter has explored Delgado’s suggestion that melancholy affected one’s perspective. Through an analysis of an Augustinian’s Letter, we saw how one Jesuit’s attempt to practice “spiritual direction” and to read a missionary’s heart for signs of melancholy rhetorically, psychologically and theologically manifested. As we observed, melancholy—especially understood as acedia—distorted San Agustín’s sense of mission and friendship in a colonial setting. By taking Delgado’s claim seriously, we saw connections between emotion, rhetoric and theology. By delving more deeply into an older form of “spiritual melancholy” known as acedia, we saw a complex range of vices and emotions wreak havoc in the heart of one man sent to preach the Gospel. Although these observations are not intended to endorse San Agustín’s negative statements, this chapter hoped nevertheless to have offered a glimpse into the complexity of San Agustín’s crisis. Indeed his Letter can be interpreted as less a letter of hatred for the indios than a psalm of Lament in which the author cried out to God in his grief.

Filled with hyperbole that “transcends faith,” San Agustín’s Letter reflected a wounded soul alternately unloading its burden and unleashing the last of its venom. By portraying indios in negative terms, San Agustín appeared to withhold the path to Christian virtue and friendship from the very people to whom he was sent as a missionary. However, this intimate lament (for what could be more intimate than a letter to a Friend, especially if that Friend is God, to whom you write about errant hearts, including your own?) made available on condition of anonymity collided disastrously with larger political and theological concerns that threatened to endanger more than San Agustín’s reputation.

On the one hand, San Agustín’s erudition masked his despair. On the other hand, debates about the justice of the conquest of the Philippines remained unsettled long after the first

---

443 Delgado, Historia General, 299.
Augustinians protested their mission in 1564.\textsuperscript{444} In Delgado’s response to San Agustín’s cry in the wilderness, we found that the interests and tensions of friendship and conquest remain—intractable as they ever were. Indeed we saw in San Agustín’s \textit{Letter} that the great sadness and distress that permeated the experience and narrative of conquest in the Philippines had dehumanized the missionary and indio alike into a “beast,” and turned a dedicated missionary into a captive of the noonday demon. Meanwhile Delgado exhorted all to be “more than conquerors.”

Why then did San Agustín attempt to define the customs and vices of the indios? One possible answer can be found in the \textit{Letter}’s reference to one of Jesus’ miracles. San Agustín wrote, “A great knowledge of man did the blind man of the eighth chapter of St. Mark have who said, with miraculous sight: \textit{Video hominems velut arbores ambulantes},”\textsuperscript{445} or “I see men as trees walking.”

Going blind as he neared death, perhaps the \textit{Letter} was San Agustín’s way of confessing his interior blindness in spite of his priestly office. It also offered a critique of attempts to “know” humanity by fixed categories. Poignantly, this may have been San Agustín’s way of saying his own vision of Philippine habits and customs was not to be trusted. Like the blind man who saw men as trees walking, San Agustín could perceive only the mere outlines of truth. And yet, it was precisely in acknowledging the absurdity of what he saw that he was able to demonstrate his true power of insight.

As representatives of the first Augustinians and the first Jesuits who arrived in the Philippines in 1565 and 1581 respectively, the story of San Agustín and Juan Jose Delgado SJ is a fitting break to the haunted story of a reluctant conquest. Indeed it could be argued that while it


\textsuperscript{445} Blair and Robertson, Philippine Islands, 40:188.
was Vaez’ Annual Letter in 1601 (Chapter 1) that cast Jesuits and indigenous converts as Jonahs, it was the Augustinians “tricked” into the party of conquistadors who were the first Jonahs in the Philippines. And like Jonah, they were angry and disobedient and in disbelief from the start—ever lamenting to their “king” what had happened to them in their travels.

What we have seen in this chapter, I hope to have demonstrated in all previous chapters: A Jesuit concern for words, for rhetoric and a desire to make sense of words as an embodiment of a person’s spiritual state. This attention to the Other, as I hope to have shown, demonstrates the complexity of Roman Catholic missionaries in general and Jesuits in particular insofar as for Jesuits, the Missionary is himself the martyr, the one is sent to bear witness to the Gospel. As such the Missionary is himself the very text that must be translated, spoken, heard and understood by others. In attempting to translate San Agustín’s Letter for the good of other missionaries and indios, Delgado attempts to work wonders and proclaim the Gospel anew. He attempts to teach a new grammar and be a witness to a new age where to be sent is not to be haunted by history and to be preach is to truly share good news.
Conclusion

Jesuits in the Philippines have been overlooked by contemporary scholars and like many Spanish missionaries, the “Black Legend” about them continues. Scholars from Walter Mignolo (2002) to Ana Carolina Hosne (2013) continue to see Jesuits from Spanish colonies as “medieval” or scholastic/Thomist in their thinking—undervaluing their humanistic roots. References to classical or Patristic sources and typology remain misunderstood or not analyzed. The place of rhetoric in the Jesuit relations as a category of analysis and interpretation remains underutilized with the result that the picture of the Spanish missionary whether to the Philippines or to Peru or to New Spain emerges as one coercive and hostile to indigenous peoples and cultures. Jesuit “accommodation” is seen as a last resort and tends to be aligned only with such figures as Valignano or Ricci.

My dissertation sought not only to illuminate Jesuit missionary strategy in the Philippines but also to do so in light of the immediate Philippine missionary context (Chapters 1 and 2) and in comparison with different Roman Catholic orders (Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6).

As we have seen Translation, Rhetoric and Accommodation play key roles in each of the chapters. Indeed Jesuits came to bear the Gospel and to translate Roman Catholic doctrine for the conversion and salvation of Others—and they did so bearing the tools of their epoch: Scripture, patristic and classical sources and these they understood typologically by means of exemplarity, and through rhetoric. Moreover, these were all brought to bear through the work of translation.

For the Jesuits it would seem that the Incarnation had less to do with material imitation—God is omnipresent. If St. Ignatius of Antioch died to prove the Resurrection of the Body, the Jesuits would send the body everywhere to prove mission to others was the new martyrdom. This was “something greater.” It was not the Jesuits themselves that made them “greater” but the early modern period’s innovations, concerns, challenges that brought about opportunities for Jesuits to enact ways of proceeding hitherto untried by other religious orders who were founded centuries
earlier. The revival of rhetoric and the wresting of theology from the exclusive hold of theologians allowed for new modes of discourse, new ways of thinking and practicing theology through the evocation *ad fontes*.

While one cannot deny that what Walter Mignolo has termed the “Dark Side of the Renaissance” in the New World, offered a historiographical corrective to the “rebirth” of western civilization, it has needed adjustment. Although a 2002 edition of Jose de Acosta’s *Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, annotates Acosta’s use of Church fathers and classical sources, it offers no analysis of its usage. This is a missed opportunity to appreciate the complexity and creativity of a Jesuit such as Acosta and other missionaries who relied upon him for wisdom.

This dissertation attempted to draw attention to Jesuit missionaries and their complex labors that awaited them wherever they were sent. Perhaps the most important conclusion to arise from this investigation is that out of all the Roman Catholic orders with whom they interacted, the Jesuits were concerned with shaping a new form of Christian witness in mission. Context was significant, and no two Jesuit missions were alike. Accommodation in China and Japan was not the same as accommodation practiced in Hispanic colonies or French territories. While these realities would later contribute to black and white legends or celebrated images of Matteo Ricci in Chinese dress, places like the Philippines would often be overlooked.

The first three chapters of this dissertation situated the Jesuits in the Philippine context as experimenting with three forms of “witness”: the reluctant and recalcitrant Jonah sent to deal with “the Other” whom he does not know and yet is sent to save; Gregory Wonderworker who must assert his spiritual and written authority in order to eradicate pagan idolatry; and thirdly with exemplary martyrs who die like Christ on a cross. In the first three chapters Jesuits must negotiate for and with their potential readers the realities of exemplarity. The Jesuits might have asked: How does what we do translate in the world? Are we in fact transmitting and translating “well and aptly” Christian doctrine and practice about others and ourselves?
In the fourth, fifth and sixth chapters of the dissertation, we examined Jesuit exemplarity in comparison to Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustinians. While no one would deny that the Incarnation is important for all Roman Catholic orders, how such theology would be represented in mission and exemplarity was complicated. For Franciscans called to serve as diplomats and “double agents” in Japan in 1593, their attachment to a material and visible imitation of their founder St. Francis—in robe, in preaching, in poverty and in demeanor—counter to how the Jesuits had been conducting their missionary work—led not only to tremendous conflicts within the Roman Catholic world in Asia, but significantly led to the controversial martyrdom of European Franciscans and Japanese Jesuits—many deemed unnecessary.

Whereas in the third chapter, a letter by Fray Martin Ascensión served to defend a colonial official from accusations of cowardice in a fight against Dutch Protestants, a sermon on a sleeve of a habit, written by the same Franciscan attests to his hope in the power of the “robe” to render Asian Christianity whole again after potentially being rent by scandal. The fifth chapter discusses exemplarity through the senses, its temptation and redemption. The sixth and final chapter restores us to the beginning of the Conquest of the Philippines with its first missionaries—the Augustinians who were “tricked” into conquest and were haunted by it 150 years later. As the final chapter (and all the preceding chapters) shows, Jesuits were ever concerned with rhetoric and theology that they might be able to read hearts better in order to help souls. To that end, a Jesuit, a few years shy of the Expulsion attempted to rewrite the narrative of the conquest of the Philippines and exhorted his fellow missionaries to be something greater—that is, to restore honor by being more than conquerors.
Bibliography

Acosta, José de. *De Promulgando Evangelio apud Barbaros: sive de Procuranda Indorum salute, Libri sex.* Laurentii Anisson, 1670.


Delgado, Juan José. *Historia General Sacro-Profana, Política y Natural De Las Islas Del Poniente, Llamadas Filipinas.* Manila: Imp. de el Eco de Filipinas, 1892.


Gaspar de San Agustín. *Carta de Fr. Gaspar de San Agustín, a su amigo en España, que le pregunta el natural ingenio de los Indios naturales de estas Islas Filipinas*. Manuscript, Published ca. 1720, Newberry Library, Ayer MS 1429.


Kenners, Emmanuel. *The Japanese Martyrs: or, A Brief Sketch of the Lives and Martyrdom of the Franciscan Saints, who were Canonized at St. Peters, in Rome, by Pope Pius IX, on Whit-Sunday, June 8th, 1862*. Manchester, 1862.


