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Philippine Jesuits in the Middle Kingdom in the 17th Century

JOSEPH S. SEBES, S.J.

Astrain¹ asserts that “the colonists of Manila, in reality, lived with their feet in the Philippines and with their eyes and hearts in the Empire of China.” This might be, in part, the reason why Spanish missionaries from the Philippines also showed an early interest in China. With this Spanish desire coincided the need for missionaries in China. On 10 March 1637 Manoel Dias the elder,² Visitator, writing from Macao to the General of the Society of Jesus, Muzio Vitelleschi, in Rome appeals for many missionaries from countries other than Portugal, which can no longer furnish them in the required numbers. He gives seven reasons for his request. In his opinion a native clergy is still a long way off. In 1638, the Provincial Congregation held in Macao in its third “quesitum” (question) proposed that some Fathers be sent to China via New Spain and the Philippines. Two reasons are given for this proposal: one being the perils of the voyage, especially from Goa to Macao, where many Fathers perished because of Dutch depredations, and the second, the frequent commercial contacts between Manila and Macao.³ The answer of the Jesuit General, Muzio Vitelleschi, was negative. He found it impossible to grant this permission because

*Documents and materials used in this article are from Francis A. Rouleau, S.J.’s Collection. This article will form a chapter in the “Digest” of the Rouleau Collection now in preparation, to be entitled *The Jesuit Century in Old China*.

1. Antonio Astrain, *Historia de la Compañía de Jesús en la Asistencia de España* (Madrid 1902-25):4:457. See also Fortunato Margiotti, *Il cattolicesimo nello Shansi delle origini al 1738* (Roma: Edizione “Sinica Franciscana,” 1958), p. 316, n. 59. Margiotti quotes Astrain. It might be interesting to note here that in letters written to Europe from Mexico the Philippines are called, infrequently, “China” and China is called “Gran China.”

2. Original Portuguese letter in *Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu [ARSI] Jap. Sin. 161 II*, ff. 175-176. This letter is reproduced, in Italian, by Daniel Bartoli, S.J., *Dell’ historia della Compagnia de Giesu, La Cina*. In folio, Roma 1663. (Edit. Torino, 1825, vol. XVIII, Lib. Quarto, pp. 415-418).

3. ARSI, *Congr.* 66, f. 367v.

New Spain (Mexico) and the Philippines on the one hand, and China on the other hand, were under the "Patronate" of two different kings.⁴ The Portuguese *Padroado*, indeed, remained an unremovable obstacle, as we shall see, even though the shortage of missionaries worsened. For instance, in 1648 or 1649 again a petition ("Libellus supplex") signed by Nunius da Cunha was composed,⁵ asking that foreign (non-Portuguese) Jesuit Fathers who have so requested (volunteered) be sent to the missions of the Portuguese Indies.⁶

In his letter to the General, Giovanni-Paolo Oliva, dated 5 October 1668, Canton, Giovanni Francesco de Ferrariis⁷ reported that eighteen years previous the Jesuit Fathers of Manila had sent a special letter to Manoel Dias the younger, the then Vice-Provincial, offering to send him some subjects who were desirous of serving the Lord in this Chinese Province and also means for maintaining the missionaries. De Ferrariis severely criticized the Portuguese nationalistic spirit rampant among some of the Fathers and gave some choice examples: e.g., Antonio de Gouvea. He decries the monopoly of the *Padroado* over the missions and the fear on the part of some Superiors, even Generals, e.g., Goswin Nickel, of offending the king of Portugal. He asks for more non-Portuguese missionaries. It is on this point that he offers some interesting data, namely the great interest of the Philippine Fathers in the apostolic work of their confreres in China. It was more than interest, it was a practical proposal to send missionaries from the Philippines.

Father de Ferrariis must have received this detail from his fellow internee at Canton,⁸ Father Francesco Brancato, who at the period

4. Mexico and the Philippines were under Spain, while China was under Portugal. For the General's reply see ARSI, *Congr. 66*, f. 375v.

5. ARSI, *Jap. Sin. 199-I*, ff. 1-12. Summarized by Francisco Rodrigues, S.J., *História da Companhia de Jesus na Assistência de Portugal* (4 vols., Porto, 1931-1950), 3:2, 143-144.

6. In the Jesuit Archives in Rome there is a detailed report on the navigation of 43 Jesuits from Cadiz (15 March 1642) to Mexico. Among the 43 there was one German, Ignatius de Monte, whose real name was Gualtero (Walter) Sonnenberg, who eventually ended up in China. Another report by the same author also describes the trip from Mexico to the Philippines. Original Spanish. ARSI, *Phil. II*, ff. 227-242. Diego Bobadilla, writing from Mexico to the Jesuit General, Muzio Vitelleschi, in Rome describes the trip from Cadiz to Mexico, *Phil. II*, ff. 235-240. The same author writes from Manila, on 6 August 1643, about the trip from Mexico to the Philippines. Diego Bobadilla seems to have been the superior of these contingents. He died on 26 February 1648.

7. ARSI, *Jap. Sin. 162*, ff. 207-208r.

8. ARSI, *Jap. Sin. 112*, ff. 183-222; *Jap. Sin. 162* (Epp. Sin. 1652-1674).

indicated — that is, 1650-1651 — was one of Dias' consultors, with his central residence at Shanghai.

Manoel Dias the younger — aged, infirm, and almost blind — took over the office of Vice-Provincial in July 1650, at Hangchow. At the same time and also at Hangchow, Father Francisco Furtado, Superior of the northern provinces of China (already under the Manchus), received letters patent of Visitator of the Province of Japan and the Vice-Province of China. Because of this Manchu conquest, communications between north and south were cut, the Vice-Province was divided into two parts, northern (Manchu) and southern (Ming), with the Vice-Provincial (who had letters patent from Rome) in one division and a substitute Vice-Provincial in the other. Father Furtado was not able to make his way from Central China to Macao, official residence of the Visitator, until a year after receiving his patents.⁹

Following Ferrariis' report, then, first negotiations to have men from the Philippines come over to China took place in 1650-1651 ("18 anni fa").¹⁰ The matter was almost concluded when for some unknown reason it fell through. A partial reason for the failure, most assuredly, was the Padroado. De Ferrariis continues by praising the charity of the Philippine Province towards the Chinese Vice-Province, especially during the Canton exile.¹¹

The letters of this time,¹² according to Father Rouleau's research, contain no direct reference to the negotiations mentioned as having taken place between the Superiors of the Philippine Province and the Superiors of the Chinese Vice-Province. But Ferrariis' informant, Brancato, was in all probability referring to an interchange of communications between the Christians of Changchow (Kiangsu) and the Provincial of the Philippines (Ignacio Zapata) which took place in early 1651. Two letters, in fact, were dispatched by the Changchow Christians, one by the community as such and a second personal letter by a "literatus" named Ambrose Nien. The first is a pressing appeal to the Provincial of the Philippines to send reinforcements to China.¹³ The situation there is serious because of the scarcity of missionary

9. ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 142, n. 34, 2 ff.

10. ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 162, f. 270v.

11. *Ibid.*

12. ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 161.

13. ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 161-II, ff. 364-365 and 366-367 (dupl.).

personnel, far too few to take care of the increased number of converts. Nien's personal letter,¹⁴ rather pompous in spots, is a little exposition of "missiology": He explains the honors given to Confucius, why Christ the crucified is not emphasized but rather Christ the glorified; he describes the spread of the Christian faith and asks for missionaries and in particular for a missionary to be sent to the new church at Changchow; he also sent as presents some silk and "my crude compositions" on the mysteries of the feasts of the year.

These two letters were brought to Manila by Martino Martini, whom Furtado had named Procurator to Rome despite a majority vote of the consultors that Brancato be sent on this mission.¹⁵ Martini left the Fukien coast "at the beginning of the year 1651"—probably in February, when the Chinese trading fleet usually set sail for the Philippines. He was accompanied by Julian Sien, whom Nien in his letter praised as "a fervent and good Christian, and an example of our entire Christianity." Sien's function was to deliver the two letters to the Philippine Provincial and to act as an escort for the group the Provincial was expected to assign to the China Mission in response to the petition presented to him.

The Philippine Provincial (Ignacio Zapata), in his reply to the Changchow Christians,¹⁶ dated 23 June 1651, expresses his joy at hearing of the great progress of the faith in China. Unfortunately, because of the great need in the Philippines he cannot send anyone at present. Next year, with new arrivals, he might be in a position to help. In his reply to Nien,¹⁷ Zapata gives him a lesson on the devotion to Christ Crucified. He also praises the virtues of Confucius and says that the needs of the Philippines do not permit his sending reinforcements to China at present, but that next year it may be possible.

Martini brought a third Chinese petition.¹⁸ This one was directed to the General of the Society of Jesus in Rome, asking for

14. ARSI, *Jap. Sin. 161-II*, ff. 368-369 and 370-371 (dupl.), Spanish copy translated from Chinese and authenticated by Martino Martini.

15. ARSI, *Jap. Sin. 142*, n. 34, 2 ff.

16. ARSI, *Phil. II*, ff. 280 a and 280 b (dupl.). This is an autograph copy by Zapata with seal, and addressed and sent (with the letter of Ambrose Nien) to the Jesuit General, Vincenzo Caraffa, in Rome. It is in response to the letter of the Changchow Christians.

17. ARSI, *Phil. II*, f. 280c. Autograph copy by Zapata sent with duplicate copies of letter to Changchow Christian to Caraffa.

18. ARSI, *Jap. Sin. 186 N. 15.*, Libellus Supplex [Petition] Christianorum Sinensium ad P. Generalem S.J. (Febr) 1651. This is a Chinese letter in large red characters and documen-

missionaries and a bishop, since there are around 100 churches, 100,000 converts, but hardly ("sed vix") ten Fathers.

On 20 June 1651 Francesco Brancato also wrote a long personal letter to Father General¹⁹ describing the state of the China Mission and his apostolate in and around Shanghai. He describes the churches, baptisms (15,000 in ten years). The country is troubled by wars but his district is peaceful. He says that Adam Schall has built a splendid church in Peking. He sends a rubbing of the inscription.²⁰ Franciscan and Dominican friars are taking over the Jesuit missions. In another letter Brancato, writing to the Visitator, Furtado,²¹ gives a list and account of the churches in his district, ending with a statistical list of Christians in the year 1651, giving as the total 8847.

The movement, consequently, was initiated leading to the intro-

tary in style signed by three "Doctores" and three "Licentiati," authenticated by Furtado (Visitator) and Carnevari. It has not been translated, but Martini (or Brancato) gives a brief resume in Latin on the covering page. The great Brancato, apostle of the Yangtse Delta, was the one who almost certainly inspired the composition and sending of these letters. This is evident by comparing the ideas expressed in the Changchow community letter — and much more so in the contents of the Libellus Supplex [Petition] — with Brancato's letter of 1661 to the Spanish Assistant, as we shall see. The same circumstances are indicated. Particularly noticeable in the Libellus Supplex to the General is the request for a Bishop. In his personal correspondence Brancato also asks for a Bishop — or even a Patriarch! Since Manoel Dias the younger was Vice-Provincial (1650-1654) and residing at Hangchow at the time the several Chinese requests for Philippine missionaries were composed, Brancato (a consultor to Dias) must have taken up the matter with him of asking the Philippine Province for help. And it is most likely that Martini received oral instructions to pursue this request when he should reach Manila. In this case the real negotiations took place between the respective authorities, the Chinese letters simply being a form of gesture.

On the origins of the Philippine Jesuits in China it is to be noted that Philip IV (1621-1665) instructed the Governor of the Philippines, D. Diego Salcedo, to send "five or six Jesuits" to China [See Irigoyen's letter in Appendix]. This instruction is reproduced by Pedro Murillo Velarde, *Historia de la provincia de Filipinas de la Compañía de Jesús, segunda parte* [Murillo called his book "segunda parte" because the earlier work by Colin is considered the first part of the history of the Society in the Philippines] (Manila, 1749), f. 370r, b. The instruction is not dated.

19. ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 161, ff. 362-363.

20. Photo of the rubbing in *Jap. Sin.* IV 2. It has the original Chinese and Latin translation. In English it reads: "After the Faith was first brought [to China] by the Apostle Thomas, and after it was propagated wider by the Syrians [Nestorians] during the T'ang Dynasty, the men of the Society of Jesus led by Saint Francis Xavier and Matthew Ricci spread it by words and in writings a third time, during the Ming Dynasty, with great effort and work but with little results because of the inconsistency of the people. Finally, after Empire had fallen to the Tartars, the members of the Society [of Jesus], as a crowning of their labors for having reformed the Calendar called Xi Hien Lie [Shih-hsien li or Imperial Calendar] publicly erected a Temple of the Lord in Peking, the capital of the Empire of China. In the Jubilee Year 1650. 7th year of Shun-chih."

21. ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 117, ff. 139v-146v. Copia de una carta do P.^r Fran.^{cº} Brancato por o P. Visitador [Furtado], in *Annua* 1650-1651.

duction of Spanish Philippine Jesuits, though it required another 25 years at least before this objective could be obtained.

What were the motives of this movement? From Brancato's efforts of 1650-1651 and through the following years letters from China emphasized the crippling situation caused by the maritime expansion of the Dutch in the East Indies. The principal Portuguese strongholds were captured, and Batavia became the capital of Dutch supremacy, cutting off or seriously weakening the supply of Padroado missionaries to the Far East. The consequence was that the old men were dying off and there were but few replacements. The term *penuria* [want] of workers is of great frequency in these letters.²² Even the Portuguese of Macao, as we have seen,²³ voted as early as 1638 to request Father General to permit Padroado missionaries to be re-routed to New Spain and the Philippines, but this was turned down at Rome for fear of nationalistic complications.²⁴ In short, great apostles like Brancato, and later Verbiest, looked beyond the narrow horizons of the Padroado and sought missionaries from other countries.

A witness to this fact is Brancato's letter, dated 10 August 1661, from Kiang-nan to the Spanish Assistant in Rome.²⁵

The Philippine Jesuits were not delinquent in responding to the needs of the China Mission. The possibility of sharing in the China harvest, especially after Verbiest's brilliant successes brought an end to the persecution of the Regents (1671), stirred up widespread enthusiasm among the Jesuits of the Philippines. Shortly after Brancato's original activity (1650-51), a Philippine Jesuit Procurator who was at Macao in 1673, Francisco Messina,²⁶ sounded out the Macao Superiors on the matter and was assured that not only would the men from the Philippines be welcomed, but that one or more of the maritime provinces of China would be

22. It might be interesting to see what John Grueber said about the Portuguese. In a letter dated 7 March 1658, from Surate he writes to Haffenecker: "The Portuguese are already weakened to the degree that they are unable to exercise power anymore so that there exists the gravest of dangers, that within a short time, they will lose the entire Indies. . . Compared with the earlier ones the present-day Portuguese are degenerates to the point that while the earlier ones proved things with few words but many deeds, the present-day ones living licentiously and in luxury and treating their poor subjects tyrannically, roar like lions when they speak, but their deeds and actions are more timid than those of scared rabbits." See H. Bosmans, S.J. *Documents sur Albert Dorville de Bruxelles* (Louvain, 1911), p. 63.

23. See footnote 3.

24. See footnote 4.

25. ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 162, ff. 71-72.

26. ARSI, *Congr.* 79, f. 175r.

given to them as their field. This latter possibility became a new incentive for the Philippine Jesuits.²⁷ In his letter to the Spanish Assistant (1661),²⁸ Brancato also held out as inducement a separate region (one or more maritime provinces) for the Jesuits from the Philippines.

In its provincial congregations the Philippine Province more than once discussed the question of entering the vast and under-manned China field and *postulata* to this effect were sent to Rome via the elected procurator. The decisive action came in the provincial congregation held in Manila, 17-23 April 1675. Postulatum no. 7 asked the General, Oliva, for the designation of Jesuits from the Philippines to take over some provinces in China²⁹ General Oliva's answer of 10 January 1678 to postulatum 7 reads:

The zeal and charity of this Province [the Philippines] which offers itself to give assistance to the Fathers in China is praiseworthy. Not only would I permit this but I would agree, thanks [to God], were it not for the fact that the customs of the times have to be taken into consideration, and before I even answer I must first inquire and find out whether or not doing so could offend someone.³⁰

However this answer of the General arrived too late. Three candidates had already been chosen and set out for the China coast via Formosa.³¹ These three were Father Ignacio de Monte,³²

27. ARSI, *Philipp.*, 14 [Philipp, Suppl. 1584-1750] ff. 56-59r, especially f. 59r, where he speaks about China. This is a letter, dated 22 July 1663, by Diego Luis de San Vítores, S.J., from Taytay (near Manila), to the Jesuit General.

28. ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 162, ff. 71-72.

29. ARSI, *Congr.* 79, f. 175r. Acta on this Congregation, *ibid.*, f. 169r. Earlier Congregations had already asked for a similar permission. See footnotes 3 and 4 above. Also earlier than the 1675 Congregation, the Spanish Monarch Philip IV (1621-1665) had instructed the Governor of the Philippines to send "five or six Jesuits" to China, where they were much needed. See footnote 18 above. This royal directive may have stimulated actions at the 1675 Provincial Congregation. Acting on the urgent request of his subjects in the Philippines, transmitted and sponsored by the Spanish Assistant in Rome, Carlos II in 1680 dispatched three letters in succession to Father General asking that China be opened to the Philippine Jesuits. The three letters are dated, 12 February, 12 April, and 18 July 1680, and are found in ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 163, ff. 92-95. No reply of General Oliva has been found. On 12 June 1678 Montemayor had written to the King of Spain that the Jesuits in China were asking for Philippine Jesuits.

30. ARSI, *Congr.* 79, f. 178r.

31. For the Philippine Jesuits' activities on the island of Formosa see *The Philippine Islands 1493-1898*, edited and annotated by Emma H. Blair and James A. Robertson (Cleveland, Ohio: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1905), 22:176, 184, 249, 300; 27:115-116; 28:101.

32. See Murillo Velarde, op. cit., no. 794, f. 353v. See also ARSI, *Germ. Sup.* 18 II, ff. 415-418, and a letter dated 25 February 1634 from Gualterus Sonnenberg [de Monte] to General Vitelleschi in Rome, *Germ. Sup.* III., f. 492r and f. 494.

Father Juan de Irigoyen,³³ and Father Francisco Gayoso,³⁴ who had left Manila on 24 June 1678.³⁵ Two more were chosen for the following year's expedition but they perished in a shipwreck during their voyage.

The reason why the Philippine Jesuits left for China without waiting for the General's reply to their postulatum might have been two letters written by Simon Rodriguez from Fuchou to Xavier Riquelme, Provincial of the Philippines (dated 20 and 28 December 1677).³⁶ Rodriguez, a missionary in Fuchou, wrote these letters at the orders of Verbiest, who was then the Vice-Provincial.

In Peking Verbiest had as his apostolic objective the recruiting of more missionaries to fill up the depleted ranks of veterans, especially now that the harvest seemed "ripe" because of the K'ang-hsi Emperor's increasingly favorable attitude toward the Christian penetration into his dominions. Jesuit manpower had dwindled alarmingly and Verbiest's primary objective, now that his personal prestige with the Manchu lord was on the upswing, was to seek reinforcements to fill the gaps left by the dying and by the aged. He made his own Brancato's dream of drawing on their neighbors across the China Sea. To this effect he instructed Rodriguez, a Portuguese missionary in Fukien, to write to the Philippine Provincial in Manila, describing the urgency for recruitments and asking that such be dispatched as soon as possible. Verbiest had cleared this with his superior, the Visitator, Sebastian d'Almeida, who held this office from 3 August 1677 to 9 June 1680. D'Almeida, aware of the pressing need for missionaries, having favored and assisted two Dominicans and two Augustinians to enter Canton, agreed with Verbiest.³⁷ Rodriguez fulfilled his commission in two letters³⁸ but fully aware of the Macao sensitivity to admitting "foreigners" into the Padroado sphere, was very

33. See Murillo Velarde, op. cit., no. 843, f. 370r.

34. See Murillo Velarde, op. cit., n. 881, ff. 387v-388v. In ARSI, *Phil. 13*, ff. 133-194, a document dated 12 November 1676, "Fran. Gayoso, Manila, [to] Xavier Riquelme Prov. Res Gestae in Marianis [e.g., martyrdoms] 1668-1676." "Gesta in Marianis 1674-1676" ibid., ff. 201-206. See also *Catholic Historical Review* 56 (1970):422.

35. ARSI, *Jap. Sin. 124*, ff. 104r-v and ff. 103-104r.

36. ARSI, *Jap. Sin. 104*, f. 326r, "septimo calendas Iulias," which was 24 June 1678, according to *Jap. Sin. 109*, f. 194.

37. ARSI, *Jap. Sin. 103*, f.195r-v; *Jap. Sin. 104*, ff. 325v-326r; and *Jap. Sin. 109*, pp. 192-193 [without archival pagination].

38. See footnote 35.

careful to shift the responsibility for this invitation to the shoulders of others.

These two letters may have had some influence in confirming a decision already made in the Manila Provincial Congregation for it seems that the three nominees of the Philippine Provincial were already on their way or at least preparing to set sail, when the letters reached their destination.³⁹

The "breakthrough" into China of these three pioneers from the Philippines forms one of the most dramatic incidents in the China Jesuit Mission history of this period. It fell to Simon Rodriguez, Jesuit missionary at Fuchow and thus closest to the port of entry, to get his Spanish confreres safely through the Koxinga-Manchu battlelines.⁴⁰ The adventure was a dangerous one and could easily have ended in disaster. When through a number of exciting escapades the three newcomers finally reached safety, Rodriguez wrote up in Portuguese a long, detailed narrative of the event and sent it to Verbiest, vice-provincial.⁴¹ It so happened that Verbiest was composing the "Annae Litterae" for 1678-1679 (a customary report for Rome on the situation in the Jesuit areas), and under the chapter "Fokien Province," translated Rodriguez' letter into Latin.⁴² Rodriguez' letter to Verbiest about the arrival of the Philippine Jesuits is dated 13 November 1678. On 24 June of the same year Rodriguez had informed Verbiest that the three Philippine Jesuits were about to leave or had left Manila.

The Philippine mission in China, in spite of all the above-

39. No official response has been found in the archives.

40. In order to understand the political situation at this time one must remember the struggle Koxinga [Cheng Ch'eng-kung, 1624-1662] and his son Cheng Ching, both Ming loyalists, waged against the Manchus, and the situation created thereby in Formosa and on the China coast. (See Arthur Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*, [Washington, 1943-1944], 1:108-110, 111). The Dutch succeeded in maintaining a foothold between the two fighting forces. Since the Fathers from the Philippines were sailing to China by way of Formosa and Fukien, their voyage and landing in these parts were a most hazardous operation.

41. Most, if not all, of Rodriguez' report to Verbiest on the arrival of the three Philippine Jesuits — ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 117 (of transcript) — is given textually by Dunin-Szpot, *Collection Jap. Sin.* 104, ff. 325v-329v.

42. "Annae V Provinciae Sinensis Anni 1678 and 1679" (Ferdinand Verbiest). In the "Annae Sinarum" of ARSI there are two copies of this long report, both original Latin made in Peking. The first seems to be in the hand of Verbiest. The second is a smaller, clearer hand. No date of composition is given. These two copies are in *Collection Jap. Sin.* 117, ff. 161-182 and ff. 183-198. Under the chapter on "Fokien Province" Verbiest translates the letter from Rodriguez in Fuchow, narrating in detail the adventures of the three Philippine Jesuits in reaching China. This section is ff. 191-193. This was translated by Father Charles McCarthy, S.J., and published in *Philippine Studies* 18 (1970):634-44.

described efforts, was short-lived, lasting at most eight years. Only two of the three rendered active service, following the untimely death of their Superior, Ignacio de Monte, on 30 July 1680,⁴³ namely Irigoyen and Gayoso. They were assigned to separate "christianities" (mission stations) and hence separated from each other and remained always under the jurisdiction of the Vice-Province of China. Personally, however, they held the Provincial of the Philippines as their superior and addressed him as such in their correspondence. Their extant letters conserved in the Jesuit Archives in Rome together with letters of others about them give us a picture of their apostolic work, their impressions of the Chinese, hardships, conversions, etc.⁴⁴

Most important of all are two long reports by Juan Irigoyen, the first dated 3 December 1685 from Macao while he and Gayoso were waiting for a ship to return to Manila,⁴⁵ the second dated 19 June 1686 from Manila and addressed to the General in Rome.⁴⁶ The first is in Spanish, the second, as usual, in Latin. His first letter (of 1685) is a long detailed historical exposition of twenty in-folio pages in the original. It covers his labors among the Chinese from

43. ARSI, *F.G.* 722 *Regist.* 7. He died at Fu-chou in Kiangsi; *Jap. Sin.* 105, f. 75v; *Fil.* 12, f. 82r, an extract of a letter by Giovanni Dominico Gabiani, without dates, copied with extracts of other letters from China. It is a eulogy of sorts.

44. ARSI, *Lus.* 9 [Assist. Lusit Prof 4 Votorum 1670-1679] ff. 274, 275: On 15 August 1679 Johannes de Yirigoyen, in Collegio Hangchow, in the church of SS. Peter and Paul, pronounced his profession of four vows authenticated by Father Prosper Intorcetta, Rector of the College; *Phil.* 12, ff. 83r-v. Letter of Juan de Yirigoyen from Changchow, dated 14 September 1679, to Juan Andreas Palavicino, Provincial of the Philippines at Manila. He tells about how Father Ignatius de Monte sent him and Gayosso into the interior on assignments following the instructions of Verbiest, the Vice-Provincial; hardships of the winter travel to Hangchow; his ministries in Changchow; praises Rougemont who had died three years ago; gives an account of Martino Martini's incorrupt body; *Phil.* 12, ff. 81-83 contains "copies of different letters written by [or to] different Jesuit Fathers concerning Chinese affairs"; *Jap. Sin.* 116, ff. 214-267. Herdtich: "Litt. Ann. V. Prov. Sin. 1677-1680, reports on all missionaries; *Phil.* 12, ff. 81-r-v. Letter of Yrigoyen from Changchow, dated 3 August 1680, to Father Messina, Manila. Describes his relations with mandarin authorities; narrates the "miraculous" cure of the lunatic son of a high official and other instances of conversions; Maggs Bros. *Bibliotheca Asiatica II* [London 1924] n. 1243, pp. 20-22, p. 20 "On the 20th of June 1682, I received in Signan, the capital of the Province of Chensi, two letters from you, the date of both being 7th October 1680, and when I saw your signature, I thought they contained some instructions for me, for, seeing that you are Vice-Provincial of the Philippines, I am under your orders, though in China. . . Your prudence and instructions have contributed greatly to the good organization of the Mission in China; and especially do I owe much to the Province of the Philippines which disposes me to obey any orders from you or any other from there"; Archivo Histórico Nacional (Madrid), *Jes* 272, int. 73, Francisco Gayoso's letter, dated 23 November 1683, to Verbiest; etc.

45. ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 124, ff. 184-194a.

46. ARSI, *Phil.* 12, ff. 88r. Appendix gives an English translation.

the moment of his arrival, and in a particular way the obstacles that made the missionary activity unbearable and that led to his decision to abandon the China field, all the more so in that the Provincial of the Philippines — doubtless prompted by the reports of these obstacles — recalled him to Manila. He returned to Manila in December of 1685. Both this, and especially his letters to Father General (June 1686), may be called Irigoyen's "Apologia" for "deserting" the China Mission. His principal arguments are: the prescribed oath to the Vicars Apostolic and friction with these ecclesiastics, as well as the dispute and uncertainties over the Rites question.

The internal dissensions indicated by Irigoyen in these two letters undoubtedly influenced him and his associate Gayoso in experiencing a certain pessimism toward the whole China scene. But they were certainly not the determinant factors leading them to break away. All the Jesuits felt an uneasiness on these points. Despite the Padroado's intransigent antagonism toward the "Propagandists" (the Vicars Apostolic and the Missions Etrangères de Paris), the Jesuits of the Vice-Province of China, obligated under obedience by Father General, took the oath to the Vicars Apostolic; as to the Rites they were safe in following the permissions granted to Martino Martini by the Holy Office in 1656, as did a good number of non-Jesuit missionaries, especially the Franciscans. In fact a state of "truce" existed between the opposing parties, at least until Maigrot's prohibition (1693).

It is true, however, that the religious orders in the Philippines (including the Society of Jesus, by virtue of the "Patronato Regio" and of their own papal exemptions) forbade their subjects working outside the Philippines (e.g., in China) to submit to the "Juramentum" prescribed by the Propaganda.⁴⁷ It is understandable, then, that Gayoso and Irigoyen had serious scruples in the

47. ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 163, f. 252r: Letter by Joseph Tissanier, Visitator of Macao, dated 21 November 1684, writing to Charles de Noyelle, General, says that he had a letter from the Philippine Provincial, Salgado, instructing him to send back the two Fathers of the Philippine Province so that they not be forced to take the "Juramentum" or oath of obedience to the Vicars Apostolic. Tissanier says that he replied that these men are applied to the Chinese Vice-Province at the General's orders. Otto Maas, O.F.M., *Cartas de China* (segunda séries) (Sevilla, 1917), pp. 175-178, reproduces a Report by Irigoyen dated 20 March 1688, to the Jesuit Provincial — also by the order of the "Gobernador" — on their China work. Irigoyen says that he returned to the Philippines rather than submit to the Vicars Apostolic because taking the oath is contrary to "las reglas del Rey." He does not mention the fact that he had

matter. Nonetheless, Irigoyen, under pressure from the China Superiors, consented to write out and sign the text of the oath, in the presence of Fray Glemona, O.F.M., representative of della Chiesa. This fact was not known until Father Rouleau discovered in the Archives of the Propaganda Fide [APF] the original authenticated text.⁴⁸ Since he had already made up his mind to return to his home Province, the Philippines, where such an act, if the superiors found it out, would meet with their disapproval, Irigoyen kept it secret when reaching Macao and remained non-committal when questioned by the Jesuit Visitator whether or not he had fulfilled Father General's precept about the oath. Evidently he did not want to compromise himself. He says nothing in his two long letters of 1685 and 1686 about his "fall from grace" in the matter of the Juramentum.⁴⁹

Briefly put — and so needing to be elaborated — the following are the reasons for the frustration of the Spanish-Philippine missionary hopes in China.

The first was the Portuguese antipathy toward the Spaniards, the "Castillians," not only by reason of the Padroado but also because of Portugal's long political subjection to Spanish sovereignty, which left incurable scars in Portuguese souls long after the revolution that finally wrested back their national freedom from Madrid. There was also long-standing rivalry, mercantile and nationalistic, between Manila and Macao.

However, a more important reason was the misunderstanding from the beginning of the "status" of the Philippine Mission in China. It is clear from the *Acta* of the Manila Provincial Congregation that they envisaged a territory of their own, notably a coastal province or two (Fukien and Chekiang), out of which they would carve a mission dependent on the home province and under the direction of the Philippine province. This seemed to have been promised them, at least tacitly, at Macao,⁵⁰ and in clear terms by the most energetic promoter of Spanish missionary assistance, Francesco Brancato.⁵¹ It inspired the Chinaward movement

48. Also ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 94, f. 242.

49. ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 94, f. 250r. Irigoyen defends himself: why could he and did he continue his apostolate after refusing to take the Juramentum, which, of course, he had taken.

50. See footnotes 26-28 above.

51. See footnote 25.

among a considerable number of Philippine Jesuits and motivated the three who finally came.⁵²

This objective, however, proved to be illusory. From the standpoint of the China Mission the Philippine recruits were simply to be inducted into the one jurisdictional entity, the Vice-Province of China, and thus subordinate to the direction of its superiors. To block any idea of "independence," Father Philip Couplet, appointed by Vice-Provincial Verbiest as procurator to Rome, had as one of his "postulata" a decision by the General making missionaries from the Philippines dependent on the Vice-Province of China.⁵³ It is interesting to note that in the same year 1681 the *Acta* of the twelfth Provincial Congregation of the Philippine Province also requested of the General that the Philippine Province be given two or three provinces of China with the right to name a Vice-Provincial and other Superiors.⁵⁴

The abrupt departure of Irigoyen and Gayoso, "deserting" their Christian congregations and leaving them without available pastors,⁵⁵ brought consternation to Bishop della Chiesa and a critical letter about this "desertion."⁵⁶ Moreover, Verbiest, the man chiefly responsible for the initial opening of China to the Spaniards, also sharply criticized their action.⁵⁷ It must have been a great disappointment to his apostolic heart. Almost as soon as the Philippine Fathers pulled out of Macao, Manila-bound, the "Royal Mathematicians" of France began their penetration of the Middle Kingdom, thus creating a new and immensely graver problem for the unity of the Vice-Province of China. If we can believe della Chiesa writing to the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of

52. ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 103, f. 236. Dunin-Szpot says that the three Philippine Jesuits came with secret instructions to establish a vice-province (founded after de Monte's death) and when they were frustrated they pretended, in order to save face, that they were called back by their Superiors because of the Vicars Apostolic. *Jap. Sin.* 105, ff. 75v-76r.

53. ARSI, FG 722 Regist 51 f r-v "Postulata V Provinciae Sinensis. . . per Coupler." The third of eight "Postulata" reads "That the workers of the Province of Manila be, in all matters, exclusively under the moderators of the Vice-Province of China, *Jap. Sin.* 163 ff. 120-121. Couplet writing, on 24 April 1681, from Macao to the Jesuit General de Noyelle in Rome, urges the same thing; as does Verbiest as a Consultor of the Vice-Province. See *Jap. Sin.* 145, ff. 41-44.

54. ARSI, *Congr.* 81, ff. 109-111r.

55. ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 105, ff. 76r-v [Dunin-Szpot, *Collectanea T.2 CVII An C 1685 Kamhi 24*] is based on a letter by A. Thomas in Peking dated 12 September 1686. It is an original Latin letter from A. Thomas to General de Noyelle in *Jap. Sin.* 148, ff. 115-116.

56. *Sinica Franciscana V*, pp. 449-450.

57. ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 145, ff. 101-102. For the reaction of the General, González, see *Phil I* [Epistolae Soli].

the Faith, the Philippine Jesuits were watching the outcome of this domestic feud with intense interest, and a large number of them were poised for a thrust into China should the French succeed in their ultimate design of securing a Vice-Province status dependent on the French Assistancy.⁵⁸ This would indicate that Manila attributed their pioneer attempt and its frustration, in the first place, to the refusal of the China Jesuits to allow any autonomous mission group to operate within their territory, that is to say, the Vice-Province dependent on the Padroado.⁵⁹

After the Irigoyen-Gayoso withdrawal, a fourth member of the Province of the Philippines entered China and rendered distinguished service up to his death in 1706. This was Carlo Turcotti,⁶⁰ an Italian born in Milan in 1644. Turcotti was educated in Manila, where he was also ordained a priest. Writing on 8 February 1681, from Macao to Francisco Garcia in Madrid, he says that it has been seven years since he finished his theological studies in Manila. Then he proceeds to describe his experiences in Celebes and Macassar, where he worked as a missionary, was captured by the Dutch, and held prisoner for three years before he was taken to Batavia for transportation to Holland. After nine months he came to Macao, and seeing the great needs of the Japan and China Missions, he asked and received permission to stay, although his heart was in the Mariana Islands where he had also worked as a missionary.⁶¹ His principal sphere of action in China was Canton and its environs. He held the office of Visitator for a term from 15 October 1698 to October of 1701. In 1701 he was named by the Holy See Vicar Apostolic of Kweichow and titular bishop of Andreville. However, from all appearances he refused to be consecrated. He died on 15 October 1706 at Kweichow.⁶²

58. *Sinica Franciscana V*, pp. 449-450. A letter of della Chiesa, dated 22 November 1702, to Fabroni of the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of Faith. See also ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 167, f. 309v: a letter of "Jean de Fontaney, Paris 27-9-1700 to Guibert, Substitute de l'Assistance de France."⁶³

59. In this matter the China Jesuits acted in accordance with the General's desire. General Oliva in a letter, dated 25 January 1681, writing to Sebastian de Almeyda, Visitator, says that if the China Vice-Province needs help in manpower and wants to invite help from the Philippines, Almeyda would do well first to check with and ask the permission of the King of Portugal. ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 167, f. 179v.

60. Phil 2/I + 2/II contains a detailed curriculum vitae of Turcotti. For other details of his life see, Maggs, *Biblioteca Asiatica II*, p. 128; ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 113, ff. 96-7.

61. Maggs, *Biblioteca Asiatica II*, pp. 109-110.

62. Rodrigues, Francisco, *A Companhia de Jesus em Portugal et nas Missões. Esboço Historico-Superiores-Colegios, 1540-1934*. Segunda edição. (Porto. 1935) pp. 45-48, paragr. 7, n. 15.

According to Turcotti, Irigoyen, made Province Procurator of the Philippines at Madrid, aspired to return to China to resume the apostolate he had abandoned years before. On 19 July 1699, as Procurator of the Philippines, Irigoyen wrote from Madrid to the General of the Society of Jesus, Tirso González. The General's annotation on the margin of this letter says that Irigoyen died on 13 October 1699 in Italy.⁶³

APPENDIX

ARSI

Phil 12

Irigoyen, 19 June 1686

//88r//P.Xpti. [Pax Christi] etc.

In my letter, sent last year from Macao, among other things, I notified Your Paternity of the idea to return to my Province (because of the order of Father Provincial, Francisco Salgado, as well as because of my own initiative, things in China being as they are) as soon as possible, giving also the most pressing reasons which pushed me to that idea. In the first place among these reasons, is the arrival in China of the Vicars Apostolic and the sworn obedience which they demand of all missionaries and especially of Ours [Jesuits]. From this will spring forth such physical and spiritual hardships incompatible with nature, our life-style, and us, that only those who are broad-shouldered and strong in spirit will not be frightened by them; not to say that they are morally impossible on the basis of the Lord's saying: nobody can serve two masters. And it is beyond question that the evil of that day was sufficient unto itself, and the hardships and labors by which the productivity of the vineyard of the Lord was based were immense. This and other similar things were the reason why the Most Illustrious titular Bishop of Heliopolis, from the moment of his arrival, declared in a pastoral letter in which he explained the intention of the Sacred Congregation, that no missionary is forced to accept the burden imposed by the Bulls and Decrees absolutely but only under the condition that they [the missionaries] want to continue dispensing the sacraments in that mission. Father Andreas Lubelli, at that time the Visitator, communicating the opinion of the Macao Fathers, had in a circular letter, written in

63. ARSI. *Jap. Sin.* 166, f. 427.

1687 after the arrival of the Vicars Apostolic to all the members of the Society in China, stated the same thing, saying that no one can be forced to take the oath [of obedience to the Vicars] and that consequently all those who consider this beyond their capability should immediately return to Macao. But now, since Father Visitator, Joseph Tissanier, in a letter written to Father Provincial Salgado, has indicated that Your Paternity, in a letter written to the members of the Chinese Vice-Province (about which I heard, while I was there, but not officially), has ordered all those five or six sent to China from here [Manila] to comply, I am forced to beg Your Paternity to ratify (since the situation in China at present, as I have said before, is vastly different from what it was when we entered China) my return to my Province, which was caused not by my own desire but by the unstable situation. Especially since that expedition of charity was not undertaken by us as a permanent job but as a temporary one, according to our as well as our superior's intent, that is to say, we were to fill the shortages which the Vice-Province of China experienced temporarily but which have been taken care of sufficiently with the arrival of the vicars. Nor can the words of an oral reply which Your Reverence gave Father Balthasar de Roche while he was in Rome as Procurator of Japan be interpreted otherwise, since they mean what in the above letters has been mentioned; namely, that what was decreed with regard to the Manila Jesuits' application (assignment) to the China Vice-Province was not an absolute but a conditional decision; i.e., they would go if they wanted, and if their Superiors should act in accordance with the customs of the Society relevant to the transfer of members from one Province to another. Therefore, I ask with the confidence of a child towards its parents and with the greatest humility that my return to my Province be considered as just and right by Your Paternity. Nor do I doubt that I will be exonerated by Your Paternity with the love and benevolence of a father towards his children.

We Philippine Jesuits, while we were in China, had a servant, whom we took with us from here to China and brought back again. His name is Julian Cruz. He is an exceptional young man from the point of view of good morals, modesty, pious devotion; and in the handling of things he has practical ability. This young man, having already taken the vows of chastity, ardently desires to enter the Society, something that all the Fathers who know the young man

approve. However, according to the customs of this Province this cannot be done without Your Paternity's approval, because he is a mestizo, that is to say, of Chinese and Indio parentage. Therefore I ask Your Paternity to grant the permission so that he may be admitted as a temporal coadjutor (lay Brother), because I am sure that if admitted he would be a great asset to this Province. I pray God that he may keep Your Paternity safe and with us (alive) for the good of the entire Society.

Manila, 19th day of June of the year 1686.

Your Very Reverend Paternity's
Humblest servant in Christ

Juan de Yrigoyen, S.J.