



ANAIIS DE HISTÓRIA DE ALÉM-MAR

Vol. XII (2011)

ISSN 0874-9671 (impresso/print)

ISSN 2795-4455 (electrónico/online)

Homepage: <https://revistas.rcaap.pt/aham>

Sri Lanka in the Missionary Conjuncture of the 1540s

Alan Strathern 

Como Citar | How to Cite

Strathern, Alan. 2011. «Sri Lanka in the Missionary Conjuncture of the 1540s». *Anais de História de Além-Mar* XII: 89-122. <https://doi.org/10.57759/aham2011.37222>.

Editor | Publisher

CHAM – Centro de Humanidades | CHAM – Centre for the Humanities
Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas
Universidade NOVA de Lisboa | Universidade dos Açores
Av.^a de Berna, 26-C | 1069-061 Lisboa, Portugal
<http://www.cham.fcsh.unl.pt>

Copyright

© O(s) Autor(es), 2011. Esta é uma publicação de acesso aberto, distribuída nos termos da Licença Internacional Creative Commons Atribuição 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.pt>), que permite o uso, distribuição e reprodução sem restrições em qualquer meio, desde que o trabalho original seja devidamente citado.

© The Author(s), 2011. This is a work distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted reuse, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.



As afirmações proferidas e os direitos de utilização das imagens são da inteira responsabilidade do(s) autor(es).
The statements made and the rights to use the images are the sole responsibility of the author(s).

SRI LANKA IN THE MISSIONARY CONJUNCTURE OF THE 1540s*

by

ALAN STRATHERN**

Towards the end of 1543, a boat dropped anchor at Colombo and disgorged a group of five barefooted Franciscan friars. One could be forgiven for passing quickly over the scene as a minor event amidst the great political dramas of sixteenth century Sri Lankan history, notable perhaps as a staging post in Church history given that they represented the first Christian mission to have arrived there, but otherwise not so remarkable. They would fail, after all, in their attempt to convert the emperor or *cakravarti* of Sri Lanka, King Bhuvanekabahu VII (r. 1521-1551), and their mission would not extend much beyond some successes among the fisher-folk of the South-western seaboard. Yet, within a few years of their arrival in Sri Lanka, the diplomatic *statu quo* of some twenty years or more had been over-turned. From that day onwards, the politics of the island would routinely be perturbed by the question of religious identity.¹

* This text is extracted from my PhD thesis of some years ago: Alan STRATHERN, *Bhuvanekabahu VII and the Portuguese: Temporal and Spiritual Encounters in Sri Lanka, 1521-1551*, Oxford University, 2002. It may not therefore incorporate more recent historiography of the wider missionary moment. Most of the remainder of that thesis has been revised and published as part of A. STRATHERN, *Kingship and Conversion in Sixteenth-Century Sri Lanka: Portuguese Imperialism in a Buddhist Land*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007, which can be turned to for further context to these events. This paper also draws on some material from "Os Piedosos and the Mission in India and Sri Lanka in the 1540s", in Roberto Carneiro and Artur Teodoro de Matos (ed.), *D. João III e o Império. Actas do Congresso Internacional comemorativo do seu nascimento*, Lisboa, CHAM/CEPCEP, 2004, pp. 855-864.

** University of Oxford.

¹ The principal sources for this paper will be the following ones: Fernão de QUEYROZ, *The Temporal and Spiritual Conquest of Ceylon*, trans. e introd. S. G. Perera, 3 vols., reprint, New Delhi, Asian Educational Services, 1992 (1st ed., Colombo, A. C. Richards, 1930); A. da Silva REGO (ed.), *Documentação para a História das Missões do Padroado Português do Oriente*, 12 vols., Lisboa, Agência Geral do Ultramar, 1947-1958; Georg SCHURHAMMER and E. A. VORETZSCH (ed.), *Ceylon zur Zeit des Königs Bhuvaneka Bahu und Franz Xavers, 1539-1552*, 2 vols., Leipzig, Verlag der Asia Major, 1928; Vito PERNIOLA (ed.), *The Catholic Church in Sri Lanka, The Portuguese Period, Volume 1, 1505-1565*, Dehiwala, Tisara Prakasakayo, 1989; J. WICKI (ed.), *Documenta Indica*, 18 vols., Rome, Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu, 1948-1988.

The purpose of this paper is to explain this turning point by placing the Lankan mission in the context of the development of Catholic religiosity and evangelism in the *Estado da Índia* more generally, and to reflect on the different contributions made by Franciscans and Jesuits to this resurgent missionary appetite. In this sense, events in Sri Lanka are consonant with a broader pattern, for across the *Estado* spiritual priorities were beginning to find a new purchase during the 1540s.

The friars had had reason to journey to the royal city of Kotte in triumphant spirit. Bhuvanekabahu himself had requested them through the magnificent embassy that he had dispatched to Lisbon in order to cement his relationship with his Portuguese liege. The chroniclers tell us that the reception of the embassy was a great occasion: the nobility were summoned and public festivities commissioned to celebrate the submission of this oriental potentate.² Moreover, the Portuguese were given to believe that Bhuvanekabahu also promised to undertake a personal conversion to Christianity. When the friars arrived, however, it was to find him denying knowledge of any such promise. Missionary despair then swiftly turned to hope: other princes in Sri Lanka, nominally Bhuvanekabahu's vassals – also of course his rivals –, suddenly became eager for baptism.³ As the decade wore on, Portuguese adventurers began to set up alliances with other rulers, such as the King of Kandy in the highlands or even Bhuvanekabahu's deadliest rival, his younger brother Mayadunne, King of Sitavaka (r. 1521-1581). Alliances coalesced and disintegrated amidst diplomatic chaos.⁴

The advent of Christian mission had scrambled the usual signals of diplomacy through its new and insistent focus on religious identity.⁵ As the decade wore on, the embittered friars played a key role in damaging the Kotte king's reputation among parts of Portuguese officialdom. Bhuvane-

² F. QUEYROZ, op. cit., pp. 234-235; Diogo do COUTO, *Década Quinta da "Ásia"*, Coimbra, Coimbra Editora, 1937, pp. 118-119; Paulo da TRINDADE, *Conquista Espiritual do Oriente*, ed. Fernando Félix Lopes, 3 parts, Lisboa, Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos, 1962-1967, Part III, pp. 38-39. A. SURAWEERA (trans. and ed.), *Rajavaliya*, Colombo, Vishvalekha Publication, 2000, p. 73.

³ The matter of the attempts to convert rulers is discussed in detail in the book *Kingship and Conversion*, or in a more condensed form in "The Conversion of Rulers in Portuguese-Era Sri Lanka", in Jorge Flores (ed.), *Re-exploring the Links: History and Constructed Histories*, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz Verlag, 2007, pp. 135-154.

⁴ The author is currently at work on the Kongo, and there is an intriguing analogy to be pursued here with the experiences of King Afonso of Kongo who complained in the 1520s that Portuguese adventurers were undermining the loyalties of his vassals. See António BRÁSIO, *Monumenta Missionaria Africana*, Vol. 1, Lisboa, Agência Geral do Ultramar, 1952, Doc. 140, Letter of King of Congo to D. João III, 18/3/1526, pp. 459-464.

⁵ Jorge Manuel FLORES, *Os Portugueses e o Mar de Ceilão: Trato, Diplomacia e Guerra (1498-1543)*, Lisboa, Cosmos, 1998, p. 195, finishes his book by glancing forward in this way: "... the *Estado da Índia* saw itself forced to cede ground to the Church, as the Cross became the compass of relations between the Portuguese and the local potentates."

kabahu had been a generous patron of the Church, but by 1547 the settlers were coming to represent him as a heathen tyrant making life insufferable for the small communities of Christianity that had begun to take root on the shores of the island.⁶ He would ultimately pay a heavy price. When the Viceroy Afonso de Noronha washed up on the shores of Sri Lanka in 1551, it was these friars who bent his ear and turned his mind against the king.⁷ In that same year, Bhuvanekabahu died, shot by a Portuguese bullet. Noronha denied having anything to do with it, but it is most likely that he had ordered the assassination of the last truly independent king of Kotte.⁸

There had been, however, somewhat more to the complaints of the friars and the local settlers than propaganda pure and simple. In fact there is enough evidence to show that Bhuvanekabahu came to mount effective opposition to the Christian mission amongst his subjects. And this was largely because the new focus on religious identity had destabilized the internal *statu quo* too, threatening to destroy existing social, political and legal understandings and allegiances. It is not that the mere existence of a new indigenous religious minority would be problematic for the kind of heterogeneous, cosmopolitan early modern polity that Kotte undoubtedly was. It is simply that the converts themselves refused to play their allocated role, and sought to remove themselves from the jurisdiction and obligations owed to their sovereign – in imitation, perhaps, of the extra-territorial liberties of their Portuguese mentors. Their identity became a *tabula rasa* onto which they could write their own desires, and onto which the king and his court could project some disturbing visions of chaos.

A major task of this paper will therefore be to investigate who these friars were that they should effect such transformations, and why they behaved so differently to other Franciscans who had visited the island. This means elucidating the background of the particular branch of Franciscanism from which these *piedosos*, as they were known, derived. In doing so, we shall hope to make a contribution to the wider narrative of the development of the Asian mission in the 1540s. The master-story of this decade is normally the arrival of the Jesuits and the Counter-Reformation, but we shall emphasize the way in which, for a few years at least, it was the *piedosos* who gave the mission its new lease of life. Lastly, we shall consider how these pugnacious mendicants fared in set-piece debates with the religious priests and virtuosi of the Kotte court.

Before we proceed, however, we should just clarify that the term “conversion” is not intended here to convey any rigid assumptions about the interior sentiments and mental lives of individuals. Our overwhelmingly Portuguese sources rarely allow us the luxury of such insight. In any case,

⁶ V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., pp. 238-240.

⁷ G. SCHURHAMMER and E. A. VORETZSCH (ed.), op. cit., p. 564.

⁸ F. QUEYROZ, op. cit., pp. 293-294; G. SCHURHAMMER and E. A. VORETZSCH (ed.), op. cit., p. 618.

it is analytically more helpful to see converts as simply those who accepted their identification as such.⁹ For missionaries, the principal boundary-stone was the ceremony of baptism. Naturally, many neophytes may have been unaware of the import and consequences of this ritual; no doubt the missionary language of “conversion” and “apostasy” can conceal processes that are more casual, ignorant, or calculating, more blurry than these categories allow.

The Conversion Process: From Organic Growth to Missionary Cultivation

In turning to discuss the nature of the conversion process in Sri Lanka, we suddenly find ourselves in an area of long-lived and still lively historical controversy. Judging by the letter pages in the Sri Lankan newspapers, the methods of conversion used by the missionaries and the motives of those who converted are still liable to arouse strong feelings. Thankfully, the inexhaustible and sometimes ill-informed debate about whether the Portuguese made “forced conversions” need not detain us here, for there was no question of such methods being employed while the missionaries worked under the forbearance of an unconverted Sinhalese King.¹⁰ That debate has largely focussed on the period after the conversion of Dharmapala in 1557. It is only after then, and indeed particularly after the Portuguese began to assume direct rule in the 1590s, that the destructive measures against Buddhist and Hindu sacred buildings could be implemented and only then could the pro-Christian bias of bureaucracy begin to come into play. We shall cast a sweeping glance at the beginnings of this process in Goa in the 1540s. But Goa was a rare case. In the allied states of Malabar and elsewhere where Portuguese authority did not – in theory – run beyond the walls of the *feitoria* or fortress the problems of mission were altogether different.

The complicities between the Portuguese empire and the Catholic Church have been given an extensive airing in the historiography, as have the series of papal bulls and briefs from 1452 to 1514 which granted the Portuguese king the *Padroado Real*, the patronage of all Church activity in the new dominions.¹¹ Yet the relationship involved profound tensions too,

⁹ There is a huge bibliography on how to conceptualize conversion. See, for example, Robert W. HEFNER (ed.), *Conversion to Christianity. Historical and Anthropological Perspectives on a Great Transformation*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1993.

¹⁰ For a very recent example of a Lankan critique, on the Christian mission as a ruthless form of extermination see Gaston PERERA, *The Portuguese Missionary in 16th and 17th Century Ceylon: The Spiritual Conquest*, Colombo, Vijitha Yapa, 2009, reviewed by the author in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 70, 2011, pp. 287-289.

¹¹ Charles R. BOXER, *The Church Militant and Iberian Expansion: 1440-1770*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978, pp. 77-79; Martin QUÉRÉ, *Christianity in Ceylon Under the Portuguese Padroado 1597-1658*, Colombo, Colombo Catholic Press, 1995; A. Vasconcelos de SALDANHA, “Sobre o *Officium Missionandi* e a Fundamentação Jurídica da Expansão Portu-

and in the first few decades of Portuguese expansion into the East power was heavily skewed towards the state: the missionary voice was weak and struggled to be heard. The secular clergy in particular were accused of indiscipline and doctrinal ignorance.¹² The Franciscans, a pioneering missionary order from their inception, were a rather different matter. The apostolic commissary, the Bishop of Dume, whose report of 1522 on the state of the Church in India was otherwise so grim, singled them out for special praise and they were apparently held in high esteem by the people of Goa.¹³ With António do Louro's establishment in Cochin in 1518, we see the first concerted attempt to proselytise to the indigenous. But the numbers of Franciscans were regularly diminished by deaths from disease until the custodian began to accept men of mixed blood into the order in the 1530s. In general terms missionary activity was sporadic and small-scale and there was little provision for systematic religious instruction.

Consequently, the chief process of conversion at this time was what could be termed "organic" as indigenous people who were already inclined to live or work among the Portuguese community accepted baptism as a form of social lubrication. Where Portuguese initiative did come into play it tended to be in the form of offering material inducements. The report by the Captain of Cochin, Pedro de Mascarenhas, to King Manuel on the native Christian flock under his supervision in 1514 presents a paradigmatic picture.¹⁴ He tells us that all had converted "out of their own interest" (*por seu emterresse*) and there is little suggestion that this is worrisome. The largest group were women engaging in more or less formal relationships with the Portuguese men, together with their offspring. Of those who had received baptism, he could only vouch for the Christianity of those who were actually resident in the Portuguese community itself, some 344 persons. Mascarenhas bluntly contended that many had converted because they were given a *cruzado* (a gold or silver coin minted in Portugal) and some cloth. As soon as this practice was stopped the candidates for baptism dried up. His policy for making more conversions was equally simple: more gifts. The practice of issuing a daily dispensation to converts had been instituted by Afonso de Albuquerque (1509-15) as a *charitable* device in the first instance. The great majority of those who converted were of low caste and often very poor and conversion tended to only intensify their destitution.¹⁵ Our inter-

guesa", in *Missionação Portuguesa e Encontro de Culturas, Actas de Congresso Internacional de História*, 4 vols., Braga, UCP/CNCDP, 1993, Vol. III, pp. 597-605.

¹² "Relatório do Bispo de Dume a El-Rei", Kochi, 12 Jan. 1522, in A. da Silva REGO (ed.), op. cit., Vol. 1, pp. 443-457, see p. 453; A. Mathias MUNDADAN, *History of Christianity in India*, Vol. 1, Bangalore, Theological Publications in India, 1984, p. 515.

¹³ Georg SCHURHAMMER, *Francis Xavier: His Life, His Times*, trans. M. J. Costelloe, 4 vols., Rome, Jesuit Historical Institute, 1973-1982, Vol. II, p. 162.

¹⁴ A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 224-227, and the lists of converts compiled that year on pp. 232-239.

¹⁵ *Idem*, Vol. I, pp. 240-243. We are told that before the grant was instituted the people

pretation of these alms must remain moored somewhere between bribery and humanitarian compensation. This stage of the mission has a great deal in common with what Humphrey J. Fisher described as the “quarantine” phase of Islamic expansion in Africa – in which the new religion is largely held at arm’s length from indigenous society and tends to attract only a few of the more opportunistic elements among low status groups.¹⁶

The most striking manifestation of the vulnerability of the evangelical project is the multitude of complaints that were directed at Portuguese officialdom. The vicars of the fledgling convert communities in India were regularly outraged by the attitude of many officers that when a native baptized he somehow became a possession of the Portuguese. In 1518, the Vicar of Cochin urged action against these converts being treated “worse than slaves”, citing the example of the convert Indians who worked as seamen on Portuguese trade-routes and were treated so badly that the majority died.¹⁷ Such complaints were all too standard.

As in the allied or protectorate states of Malabar, the native Christian community in Sri Lanka was to be found clustered around the Portuguese settlement. In 1518, the first resident priest was installed in Colombo and by 1521 the community was sizeable enough for Manuel to issue specific instructions concerning its welfare, including the distribution of alms to poor Christians.¹⁸ It seems that the construction of the fortress of Colombo in 1518 attracted many to baptism. One official tells us that from the time the walls were raised “around seventy natives have become Christian, most of them being mothers with sons and daughters, and they came to the Portuguese settlement with their belongings where they now live, going to Church on Sundays and holy days.”¹⁹ Inter-marriage then provided the mainstay of converts: few Portuguese women travelled to the East and the majority of *casados* would have taken local wives who would naturally convert, pulling in extended kin as they did so. Our official went on to ask for alms to be made available, just as in Goa, because many more would convert if this were so; for the potential converts “are so poor and subject to the nobles of the island.” It is likely that the Governor Duarte de Meneses (1522-24)

were so poor that they killed their own female children so they would not die of starvation. During the governorship of Lopo Soares de Albergaria (1515-1518) the grants were suspended, leading to cries of protest from the clergy. In 1518, the Vicar of Cochin wrote that many converts had perished as a result (*Idem*, Vol. I, p. 342). When Duarte de Meneses took up the governorship of the *Estado* in 1522 the alms were restored (*Idem*, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 437).

¹⁶ Who are rather scorned by most of the locals. Humphrey J. FISHER, “Conversion Reconsidered: Some Historical Aspects of Religious Conversion in Black Africa”, *Africa*, 43, 1973, pp. 27-40.

¹⁷ A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 241-242, 341, including complaints of the Vicar of Cannanore in 1514 and see further telling criticisms in 1527, A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 143.

¹⁸ João RIBEIRO, *The Historic Tragedy of the Island of Ceilão*, ed. and trans. P. E. Pieris, Colombo, s. n., 1948, p. 8; V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., pp. 7-9.

¹⁹ Geneviève BOUCHON (ed.), “A Letter: Cristóvão Lourenço Caraço, to D. Manuel, Cochin 13 Jan 1522”, *Mare Luso Indicum*, 1, 1971, p. 163.

followed the king's specific orders to make funds available to this small body of poor Christians. There does also seem to have been some form of active proselytization undertaken on private initiative, at least according to Queirós' narrative. He states that after the dismantling of the fortress of Colombo the factor Nuno Freire de Andrade took a personal interest in persuading the locals to convert aided by a Franciscan called Paulo de St. Boaventura.²⁰ By 1540 the Christian community was established enough to support a confraternity which enjoyed royal patronage.²¹

The arrival of the mission in 1543 then ushered in a quite new form of activity. The conditions did not yet lend themselves to mass baptisms: we have to wait until the death of Bhuvanekabahu for anything similar.²² However, the Franciscans did venture forth into Kotte proper with some success. It is difficult to estimate the overall number of converts they made. One does come across the odd vague reference to numbers in the correspondence, such as when Diego Bermúdez refers to the "thousands" who converted in the early years of the mission.²³ But Bermúdez only arrived in India after this time and he was writing to emphasise how things had fallen since then. Statements about the rate of conversion were generally part of a highly pointed rhetorical agenda.²⁴ Perhaps Gonzaga's figure of some 3,000 is not too far off the mark as an estimate of those who accepted baptism at some point, with a general pattern of initial success hampered by a worsening political climate.²⁵ We can say that the Franciscans managed to extend the mission outside of the Colombo-Kotte region: by 1552 they had established churches in five sea-ports along the South-west coast, each one with a friar to baptise and teach converts.²⁶ Caste was clearly structuring the expansion of faith, as friars found success among the maritime communities of Lanka just as they had among their Parava and Karava cousins on the mainland.²⁷

²⁰ F. QUEYROZ, op. cit., pp. 212-213, states that by this time Nuno Freire was living in the royal city of Kotte.

²¹ G. SCHURHAMMER and E. A. VORETZSCH (ed.), op. cit., pp. 400, 412.

²² See A. STRATHERN, *Bhuvanekabahu VII*, cit., Chapter 10.

²³ V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 246. In 1555, a Jesuit claimed that 25,000 Sinhalese had apostatised (*Idem*, p. 342).

²⁴ For example, André de Sousa's claims [V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., pp. 105, 110, 122], which Perniola asks us to compare with a *casado*'s comment that no-one had become Christian that year.

²⁵ FRANCESCO GONZAGA, *De Origine Seraphicae Religionis Franciscanae eiusque progressibus...*, Vol. 1, Romae, Typographia Dominici Basae, 1587, but the relevant Vol. 2, *De Principiis*, published in Venice, s. n., 1603, p. 1208.

²⁶ According to João Noe they were in Colombo, Galle, Negombo, Beruwela, Weligama. See V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 311.

²⁷ See A. STRATHERN, *Kingship and Conversion*, cit., Chapter Five. One motivation was to escape from burdensome social roles. Since a version of this argument has received perceptive criticism in relation to a very different context, by Richard M. EATON, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 117-119, it is worth pointing out that in Malabar those most attracted to conversion were obviously those of low-

We have moved, then, from a picture of a few dozen opportunistic converts huddled next to the Portuguese to a genuine indigenous conversion movement sustained by ardent missionary activity. What is the proper context for understanding this shift? We have to widen our horizon to the subcontinent and to more general characterizations of the development of the Asian mission.

A Reconsideration of the Reform of the Eastern Mission

The story of the eastern mission under the aegis of the Portuguese is generally narrated along the lines sketched by a seminal essay by Luís Filipe Reis Thomaz: in this view the largely moribund phase of mendicant mission gave way in the fifth decade of the sixteenth century to the dynamism of the Jesuits. Slow and largely ineffectual evangelisation was replaced by dramatic conversions *en masse* in India and Brazil as the Counter-Reformation pushed spiritual objectives further up the imperial agenda.²⁸

Leaving aside for a moment the question of mission, one can certainly see a process of internal christianization in the *Estado da Índia*. If King Manuel (1495-1521) had revealed a genuine concern for the details of evangelisation, education and Christian life in the East, under his successor, João III, these aspirations were given a solid institutional basis.²⁹ The most important step was the creation of the diocese of Goa in 1534: the Indian Church had previously been subject to the Bishop of Funchal, situated thousands of miles away in the Atlantic. With the consecration of the first Bishop of Goa, Juan de Albuquerque, in 1538, the various vicars were now emanci-

status, and this was a process often accompanied by the distinct whiff of rebellion and social unrest. In contrast to the indigenized Islam attractive to Bengalis, it was perhaps precisely the foreignness of Iberian Catholicism that was attractive here – although our evidence does not clearly indicate whether this was because of the opportunity to carve out new status roles or simply the politico-economic advantages of eschewing former obligations. See Xavier, “Uneasiness in the Village” for conversion as dissent in sixteenth-century Goa. Note that in *Kingship and Conversion*, I refer to clear evidence that conversion to Islam, on the other hand, could lead to an increase in *indigenous*-perceived status within Malabar. It is possible that this concentration on the coast may have reflected the traditional Franciscan desire to work and preach among the more humble or lower orders.

²⁸ Luís Filipe F. R. THOMAZ, “Descobrimentos e Evangelização: da Cruzada a Missão Pacífica”, in *Congresso Internacional de História: Missionação e Encontro de Culturas*, Vol. 1, Braga, UCP/CNCDP, 1993, pp. 81-129. See also the discussion in Charles R. BOXER, *Portuguese Seaborne Empire: 1415-1825*, London, Hutchinson, 1977, pp. 65-66, and Glenn J. AMES, *Renaissant Empire? The House of Braganza and the Quest for Stability in Portuguese Monsoon Asia, ca. 1640-1683*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2000, p. 59.

²⁹ See Maria Augusta Lima CRUZ, “Notes on Portuguese Relations with Vijayanagar, 1500-1565”, *Santa Barbara Portuguese Studies*, 2, 1995, p. 30; and Stephen Charles NEILL, *A History of Christianity in India*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984, Vol. 1, pp. 114-129.

pated from the military administration based in the fortresses.³⁰ The autonomy of the Franciscans was buttressed in 1542 by the raising of the Commissariat to a Custody, and in 1544 they obtained permission to establish a convent in Cannanore.³¹ By this time there were also a number of confraternities, including the Confraternity of Conversion to the Holy Faith in Goa, recently established by the learned ex-Franciscan Master Diogo de Borba.³²

At about the same time clerics began to persuade the secular authorities that any form of toleration of non-Christian practices in Portuguese territories (especially Goa) had to be obliterated. The central figure in this process was the energetic Miguel Vaz Coutinho, a lay-person installed as Vicar-General in Goa who also set about scourging the clergy of its less respectable elements and attempting to halt the oppression of poor converts.³³ He urged the wholesale destruction of Hindu temples and their funds diverted into Christian foundations. This had already begun by 1541 and when the Jesuits arrived four years later one remarked that in Goa there were no longer any temples to be seen.³⁴ In 1543 Vaz wrote a long letter to the king outlining a raft of anti-Hindu measures and in 1545 he journeyed to Lisbon in order to reiterate the importance of these matters at court. They included the outlawing of the cinnamon weighing ceremony (a rite conducted each year in the presence of the king on the occasion of the weighing of the first bahar of cinnamon), for all Hindu Brahmins currently employed in offices of state to be stripped of their positions, for active powers to be bestowed on the missionaries to search out and destroy hidden religious statues, and for the governor himself to be involved in evangelising to local chiefs.³⁵ King João III promptly gave his backing to these measures in a letter to the governor in 1546.³⁶

³⁰ Fortunato de ALMEIDA, *História da Igreja em Portugal*, 4 vols., dir. Damião Peres, Porto, Livraria Civilização, 1967-1971, Vol. 2, pp. 35-36.

³¹ A Franciscan convent had been established in Chaul in 1534 and a seminary for indigenous students founded in Cranganor in 1540: see, J. M. CORREIA, *Os Portugueses no Malabar (1498-1580)*, Lisboa, Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 1997, p. 160.

³² See Francisco BETHENCOURT and Kirti CHAUDHURI (ed.), *História da Expansão Portuguesa*, Vol. 1, Lisboa, Círculo dos Leitores, 1998, pp. 385-387 on the importance of confraternities.

³³ G. SCHURHAMMER, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 156-161.

³⁴ S. C. NEILL, op. cit., p. 131. This is contrary to the suggestion in F. BETHENCOURT and K. CHAUDHURI (ed.), op. cit., Vol. I, p. 377, that the policy of destruction was first unleashed by the Jesuits, who did nevertheless become the key agents in its extension.

³⁵ G. SCHURHAMMER and E. A. VORETZSCH (ed.), op. cit., pp. 229-260. The weighing ceremony is discussed on p. 241, where it is described as "a great ceremony of the sorcerers (*feiticeiros*) of the King of Cochin", and later as "heathen ceremonies". These "sorcerers" determined the appropriate hour of the day or night for the weighing to take place, thus delaying the work of Portuguese officers eager to conduct business. This attitude does mark a shift from earlier decades. For example, in a letter from 1510 the Captain of Cochin makes provision for the 'Ova Puravaa' rite at the weighing of cinnamon (A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 97).

³⁶ A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 315-322.

It is not difficult to see why historians have seen this in terms of the “Counter-Reformation”, invoking a shift from a more tolerant, even humanist spirit to one of increasing dogmatism. No doubt clergy in India were sensitive to the hardening of the atmosphere in Lisbon in the 1540s.³⁷ It seems paradigmatic that the St. Thomas Christians, who had previously been welcomed as brothers in the faith, were now increasingly suspected of heresy and were subjected to the Latin hierarchy.³⁸ However, it is arguably not until the office of the first Archbishop of Goa, Gaspar de Leão (1560-67, 1574-76) that we see a distinctively “Counter-Reformation” approach becoming institutionalised in India with the systematic definition of dogma and missionary policy, and, of course, the establishment of the Inquisition.³⁹

More importantly, on an ideological level, there was nothing particularly innovative about many aspects of Miguel Vaz’s anti-pagan crusade. There had been voices arguing for similar measures for some time. In 1522, the Bishop of Dume, who had travelled to the East as an apostolic commissary, had written a long missive to the king proposing drastic measures to rid Goa of paganism: all heathen churches should be destroyed and the populace evicted from their properties unless they converted.⁴⁰ In Mexico a couple of years later, the Franciscans destroyed any existing religious structures they encountered as a matter of course.⁴¹ Indeed it is worth remembering just how early our reformers arrived in India: Miguel Vaz in 1533, the Cathedral Preacher Master Diogo de Borba and the Bishop of Goa in 1538. What this might suggest is the need to employ a much broader conception of Catholic reform, one that encompasses the movements animating late fifteenth and early sixteenth century.

The shift from relatively peaceful religious co-habitation to the greater intolerance of the 1540s must also reflect the increasing power and territorial control of the *Estado*. Indeed, from a broad comparative perspective on mission one might conclude that the extent to which Christian missionaries felt able to insist on a dogmatic or exclusivist conception of conversion was

³⁷ J. S. Silva DIAS, *Correntes de Sentimento Religioso em Portugal (Séculos XVI a XVIII)*, Vol. 1, Coimbra, Instituto de Estudos Filosóficos da Univ. de Coimbra, 1960, pp. 428-432.

³⁸ As argued by João Paulo Oliveira e COSTA, “Os Portugueses e a Cristandade Siro-Malabar (1498-1530)”, *Stvdia*, 52, 1994, pp. 121-178.

³⁹ The Inquisition, founded in Portugal in 1536, was finally established in India in 1560. See F. BETHENCOURT and K. CHAUDHURI (ed.), op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 376-377. Only in 1559 was a royal decree finally passed to ban the *Estado*’s employment of Brahmins or other infidels. See V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., pp. 360-362, and *Idem*, Vol. II, pp. 34-35 for 1568 decrees.

⁴⁰ *Documentos sobre os Portugueses em Moçambique e na África Central, 1497-1840*, 8 vols., Lisboa, Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos, 1962-1975, Vol. 6, p. 80.

⁴¹ These were discalced Franciscans from the same branch of reform that produced the *piedosos* in 1540s India. Manuel de MONFORTE, *Chronica da Provincia da Piedade...*, Lisboa, M. Manescal da Costa, 1751, pp. 300-302, boasts that in one day one member of the Twelve managed to burn 1000 idols by his own hand. Much later the *piedoso* António do Porto would display a similar zeal for the destruction of heathen temples, allegedly disposing of some 200 in Bassein (A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. IV, pp. 63-64, and see G. SCHURHAMMER, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 312-313, footnote 62).

usually a function of the balance of power between imperial and local elites. Certainly, repressive measures were difficult to enact in areas where political relationship and jurisdiction between the Portuguese settlements and the neighbouring rulers remained a delicate one. And some recent work has suggested that the impetus to create a new Christian space in the East, one that was ordered, pure, disciplined and educated, belongs to a distinctively Joanine imperial vision that began to emerge in these years. Taking inspiration from the model of ancient Rome, this sought to emphasize a more territorial and homogeneous vision of dominion.⁴²

At any rate, we should not lose sight of the fact that the attempt to push spiritual objectives up an already precarious and overloaded imperial agenda could not but aggravate the governors and viceroys who had to oversee the *Estado* as a whole.⁴³ João de Castro (governor/viceroy 1545-48) was by all accounts an unusually godly man, yet his diplomatic judiciousness incurred the wrath of Francis Xavier and the friars in Sri Lanka. In turn, Castro complained to the king about the damage that the hectoring religious could do to the affairs of the empire.⁴⁴ At the same time it does seem as if the religious affiliation of allies and vassals acquired a new significance, a shift in priorities that was quickly exploited by a number of Asian princes who offered to convert as a means of ensuring Portuguese favour. Tabarija, the King of Maluku, had undergone baptism in 1537. In 1545 hope rose higher. Along with the refugee princes from Kotte and the lesser rulers encountered deep in the Sri Lankan interior, the kings of the Indian principalities of Tanor and Chaul had also requested baptism in return for Portuguese backing. A strong gust of optimism swept through the clerical community. The preacher Diogo de Borba wrote a letter in which he spoke of the great hopes which these overtures had produced: the ancient idolatry of India was about to give way to the Cross.⁴⁵

⁴² See Ângela Barreto XAVIER, “‘Aparejo y disposición para se reformar y criar otro nuevo mundo’. A evangelização dos indianos e a política imperial joanina”, in R. Carneiro and A. T. de Matos (ed.), op. cit., pp. 783-805, and Zoltán BIEDERMANN, “Do regresso do Quarto Império: A China de João de Barros e o Imaginário Imperial Joanino”, in R. Carneiro and A. T. de Matos, op. cit., pp. 103-120. The former work has much in common with my argument here, in its concern with a nexus of lateral spiritual connections between Spain and Portugal, empire and kingdom, that allows us to be less beguiled by the “Jesuit effect”. Indeed see also A. B. XAVIER, *A invenção de Goa: poder imperial e conversões culturais nos séculos XVI e XVII*, Lisboa, Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, 2008.

⁴³ While Martim Afonso de Sousa (Governor 1542-1545) was generally on good terms with Miguel Vaz and Francis Xavier, he entered into such conflict with the Franciscans that he eventually imprisoned their first custodian, Pedro de Atouguia (1542-1545). Achilles MEERSMAN, *The Ancient Franciscan Provinces of India*, Bangalore, Christian Literature Society, 1971, pp. 12-13.

⁴⁴ V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 193; and G. SCHURHAMMER and E. A. VORETZSCH (ed.), op. cit., pp. 440-441.

⁴⁵ A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 241, and also see p. 257. One still gets a sense of this in João de Vila do Conde’s letter of 1547: G. SCHURHAMMER and E. A. VORETZSCH (ed.), op. cit., pp. 455-458.

Evangelical rhetoric did not merely add a sanctimonious gloss to diplomatic manoeuvres. Otherwise there would have been little reason for the *Estado* to become involved in the schemes contrived by the likes of André de Sousa and Nuno Álvares Pereira – adventurers who set about undermining the alliance with Kotte as they sought more promising royal neophytes in the interior.⁴⁶ Moreover, the 1540s dynamic acquired a particular intensity in Sri Lanka because of the promises made at the Lisbon embassy: Bhuvanekabahu's daring move ended up – perhaps due only to a slip of the interpreter's tongue – multiplying the significance of his own religious affiliation.⁴⁷

Jesuits and *Piedosos* in India

The second element of the general story is that the mission never acquired an effective dynamic in the East until the arrival of the Jesuits, with Francis Xavier reaching Goa in 1542, followed by small groups of confreres in 1545 and beyond.⁴⁸ Unencumbered by the constraints of monastic life, renowned for their rigorous standards of organisation and education and issuing forth under the special protection of King João III, the Jesuits are often seen as the bearers of a new Counter-Reformation spirit into the East.⁴⁹ It is rather symbolic, for instance, that the Jesuits took as their headquarters the Confraternity of the Holy Faith, founded by the Franciscans a few years before but lately dwindling with neglect until its new masters revived it as an active centre of indoctrination.

The Jesuits only received canonical approbation in 1540 but they enjoyed an astonishingly rapid rise to prominence. In that same year, Francis Xavier arrived in Lisbon at the request of King João III. As the personal confidant of the Portuguese king and Papal nuncio to the East, he set off for India in April 1541. Such an authoritative brief combined with his aristocratic provenance meant that he enjoyed unusually close relationships with the governors and viceroys of the *Estado*.⁵⁰ This hardly compromised his frankness. In 1548 he urged King João to make the governors of India personally responsible, on sworn oath, for the spread of the faith. Arguing that they were failing to protect the converts, he wrote that, "there is nothing

⁴⁶ See A. STRATHERN, *Kingship and Conversion*, cit., for the consequences for the political history of Sri Lanka.

⁴⁷ It is still ambiguous as to whether Bhuvanekabahu intended for the embassy to offer his conversion or whether this was a Portuguese misinterpretation of the embassy and Bhuvanekabahu's request of a Franciscan mission.

⁴⁸ As argued by, for example, F. BETHENCOURT and K. CHAUDHURI (ed.), op. cit., Vol. I, p. 375.

⁴⁹ John W. O'MALLEY, *The First Jesuits*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1993, on the development of the Jesuit concept of mission.

⁵⁰ See A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 319.

more required for making all in India Christians than that Your Highness should punish a governor severely.”⁵¹ He chose to work among the semi-autonomous Tamil-speaking Paravas, a pearl-fishing community who lived on the coast from Cape Comorim to Rameswaram. From the mid 1530s they had been nominally Christian but they had been baptised *en masse* with the barest of instruction and then left largely to themselves without any pastoral attention. Xavier set out to evangelise them for the first time, walking amongst them ringing his bell to attract listeners.⁵²

However, Xavier was not closely followed by great numbers of confreres. The Jesuit Province of India was not established until 1549 and it is only in ensuing decades that the Jesuits began to conduct mass baptisms on a scale that made previous efforts look paltry. A more finely tuned chronology picks up an interesting preliminary stage in the development of mission in the 1540s, when the Jesuits were still out-numbered by the Franciscans. From 1540, the Portuguese crown displayed a greater willingness to co-operate with all religious orders in the organisation of mission.⁵³ In 1542-43, João Calvo, the minister general of the Franciscans, visited Portugal and he seems to have initiated a rejuvenation or at least re-organisation of the Indian mission.⁵⁴ The king now turned to a branch of strictly reformed Franciscans belonging to the Portuguese Province of Our Lady of Piety who were sometimes referred to as *capuchos* or *piedosos*. Their role in India of the 1540s is not often acknowledged, and so we ought to pause now to ask: who were these friars?

St. Francis of Assisi had been inspired by a visionary spiritualism and a desire to return to the experience and example of Christ. The movement that he founded in the thirteenth century in turn generated constant attempts to draw back to his vision. The late fifteenth- and early sixteenth- centuries in Portugal and Spain saw one such reformist surge as various institutions sprung up to provide a life committed to a literal observance of the Rule of St. Francis.⁵⁵ They sought to go beyond the strictures of the mainstream reformist wing of the Franciscans, the Observants, in their emphasis on

⁵¹ V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 244.

⁵² Laurence A. NOONAN, “The First Jesuit Mission in Malacca”, *Studia*, 36, 1973, p. 430, argues that this active seeking out of people represented a new method of evangelisation in the East. See the doubts expressed by Susan BAYLY, *Saints, Goddesses and Kings: Muslims and Christians in South Indian Society 1700-1900*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 328, on its lasting effectiveness.

⁵³ See Donald F. LACH, *Asia in the Making of Europe*, 3 vols., Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1965, Vol. 1, p. 29.

⁵⁴ Fernando Félix LOPES, “Fr. André da Ínsua, Geral dos Observantes Franciscanos”, *Archivo Ibero-Americano*, 45, 1952, p. 19, argues that Calvo was probably involved in the creation of the Custody of St. Thomas, whose first Custodian, Pedro de Atougia, left Lisbon in March 1542.

⁵⁵ Duncan NIMMO, *Reform and Division in the Medieval Franciscan Order (1226-1538)*, Rome, Capuchin Historical Institute, 1987, pp. 638-643. On the origins of the Province of Piety see also M. de MONFORTE, op. cit., Book 1; F. de ALMEIDA, op. cit., Vol. 2, pp. 168-169; Victor

poverty, asceticism and meditation. One such group was founded by Juan de Guadalupe who was given permission to found a hermitage in Spain in 1496. Guadalupe's friars showed their abjuration of material values by forgoing footwear (hence they were "discalced") and their disavowal of the compromises that had penetrated the Franciscan order itself was clear in their return to the original habit – light brown as opposed to the more bluish tone of the Observant dress. These privileges were renewed in 1499 when they became the Custody of the Holy Gospel. Over the next seventeen years they resisted all attempts to bring them under the purview of the Observants, swearing obedience only to the Minister General. Meanwhile Juan de Guadalupe had moved to Portugal in 1500 and five years later Duke Jaime of Bragança had granted him a convent a short distance from Vila Viçosa, where there was a hermitage to Our Lady of Piety. In 1509 they separated from Spanish houses to become the Custody of Piety. In 1517 they were finally united with Observants and made to adopt the common habit, but they were now raised to the level of the Province.

The discalced friars displayed a commitment to mission from the start. The Spanish branch, now established as the Province of San Gabriel de Estremadura, had worked hard to preach the gospel to the *moriscos* of Granada, and in 1524 they were chosen to form the first mission to Mexico ('the twelve') under Martín de Valencia. It may have been this glamorous role in the conquest of New Spain that aroused the interest of the Lisbon court in the sister branch of these discalced friars in Portugal. The patronage of the powerful Bragança family would have been a further crucial factor. Juan de Albuquerque, who had twice governed the Province of Piety, had also been confessor to the Duke of Bragança and went on to fulfil this function for King João III himself.⁵⁶ He was then nominated by the king to be the first bishop of the new episcopal see of Goa, and was consecrated early in 1538. Albuquerque was by now rather advanced in years and his efficacy was further undermined by ill-health, but he remained, it seems, committed to the anti-materialist and anti-hierarchical missionary principles of his province. His eager request in 1546 to take part in a mission to the highlands of Sri Lanka, as "a simple priest" begging for alms underlines this.⁵⁷

He arrived in India with another *piedoso*, Vicente de Lagos, who was dispatched to work among the indigenous Syriac-Malabar Christians. Claiming to be the product of the apostolate of St. Thomas, they had largely been left alone to practise their own form of Christianity. Vicente was at the head of a movement to bring them under the Roman Catholic embrace. In about 1540 he set up a college in Cranganore that took in many children of the

Joaquim Fialho MEDINAS, *A Arquitectura Capucha da Província da Piedade*, MA thesis, 2 vols., Lisboa, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 1994; and G. SCHURHAMMER, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 154-156.

⁵⁶ See M. MONFORTE, op. cit., Vol. 1, pp. 398-400. He had been Provincial, 1526-1529 and 1532-1535.

⁵⁷ V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 214.

St. Thomas tradition. By the late 1540s it had over 100 native students and they were subjected to intense indoctrination.⁵⁸ Such work – making the St. Thomas community “good Christians” as Miguel Vaz described it – seems a typical example of the so-called “Counter-Reformation” sensibility that is normally ascribed to the Jesuits.⁵⁹ In fact, Vaz was so impressed by the friars from *Piedade* that he directly requested them in the appeal that he took to Lisbon in 1545. If there were too few Jesuits to spare for the work, then Vaz requested that the missionaries “should be those of St. Francis of Piety, who are less abashed and show zeal in exerting themselves for works of the faith, of which up to half a dozen should be enough”.⁶⁰

When Miguel Vaz returned to India in 1546 he carried a letter from the king which endorsed his appeal, praising the virtue of the six *piedosos* he had dispatched.⁶¹ These, led by their guardian António do Porto, were bound for the virgin mission-field of the island of Bassein in the northern reaches of the Western coast. The secretary of India, Cosme Anes, was favourably impressed: “these Friars of Piety who came to Bassein are very good religious and are doing much good in the area. The Friars of this order... are very well equipped to produce a rich harvest.”⁶² By now there was a powerful network of discalced friars in India: while Juan de Albuquerque remained in his episcopal seat in Goa, Vicente led the mission among the St. Thomas Christians, João and his men toiled in Sri Lanka and António’s group pushed forth into Bassein. Beyond the main Portuguese settlements of Goa and Cochin, these represented the main areas of proselytization. For a brief moment the Indian mission walked unshod.

Zealous preservation of otherworldliness was a great missionary asset, but it seems also to have worked against them in two ways. First, they represented a threat to a Franciscan Observant hierarchy concerned to maintain the fragile unity of the order. This must be why the *piedosos* were sent to India under the jurisdiction of the Observant Custody based in Goa and stripped of some of the privileges granted to them in Portugal.⁶³ From at least 1544 it had been official policy of the Province of Piety to try to reverse this decision and António do Porto lost no time in putting forward detailed proposals once his mission in Bassein was underway.⁶⁴ Naturally he used

⁵⁸ As will be gathered by a perusal of the strict daily regime of the college described in A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. IV, pp. 200-211.

⁵⁹ J. WICKI (ed.), op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 76-77.

⁶⁰ *Idem*, Vol. I, p. 81.

⁶¹ *Idem*, Vol. I, p. 94 (King João III’s instructions to M. Vaz, March 1546), echoed by the Bishop of Goa in A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 421.

⁶² J. WICKI (ed.), op. cit., Vol. I, p. 220.

⁶³ A. MEERSMAN, “Early Franciscan Missions in India”, in W. L. A. Don Peter (ed.), *Franciscans and Sri Lanka*, Colombo, Evangel, 1983, p. 115.

⁶⁴ See letter of “Fr. Sylvestre”, who advised the king to found a *Piedoso* custody in India in 1543: A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 363; P. TRINDADE, op. cit., Part I, pp. 247-248, footnote 1. In the New World they did form a separate custody.

his confrere the Bishop of Goa to voice the appeal. So Juan de Albuquerque dispatched a letter to the viceroy in 1547, which argued that the friars should be placed under their own custody and that their elected custodian should have the powers of the Minister-General himself over his charges.⁶⁵ All the privileges annulled by the decree of the chancellor would thereby be restored and the Province of Piety could actually be enlarged in India, receiving novices and educating them to the highest standards.⁶⁶ Moreover, these *piedosos* would become priestly all-rounders equipped with every power of religious discipline (such as hearing confession, and absolving sin or excommunication), officiation (performing the sacraments) and propagation (the authority to preach in every context, and to “consecrate” – *purificar* – Hindu temples and Muslim mosques to make them into churches). The letter also sets out a grand vision of an educational system run by the *piedosos*, in which they would be able to found colleges without reference to Observant Authorities all along the Malabar coast and in Sri Lanka.⁶⁷

This document can be seen as an attempt to transform the *piedosos* into a missionary group *par excellence* in the mould of the Jesuits who already boasted the training and authority to fulfil many of these functions. Above all, this scheme would endow them with the same high levels of independence and secular backing. Where the Jesuits swore an oath of obedience to the Pope, the *piedosos* would make their vow to the minister-general of the Order. The problem was that some of the powers they requested would conflict with the ethos of their traditions. This is the second obstacle impeding the missionary ambitions of the *piedosos* and it derives directly from the logic of their otherworldly orientation. The hurly-burly of the mission field did not always suit the meditative and ascetic emphases of the Rule.⁶⁸ The discalced friars did set up a thriving college in Bassein but from early 1548 they were asking that a Jesuit be sent to come and manage it, partly so they could continue with the more zealous work of converting the heathen, but equally, and somewhat desperately, because they felt that the very business of administration went against their Rule.⁶⁹ In particular, they abhorred the handling of money and feared that their Provincial might reprimand them for it. Meanwhile, Vicente de Lagos had been managing his college in Cranganore

⁶⁵ A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 526-532. The custody would be called “Mother of God”.

⁶⁶ A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 527.

⁶⁷ This educational scheme was contained in an appendix to the letter; a copy of the list of requests which Domingos, who was returning to Portugal, would present to the king on behalf of the Bassein friars.

⁶⁸ As the Conventual Franciscans argued, the otherworldly, in seeking to encompass and shape this-worldly practice, must sometimes drop down to its level, something which Juan de Albuquerque briefly referred to in his letter (A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 528). João de Vila do Conde complained that in Sri Lanka the friars “have not kept our obligations: no prayer, no recollection; but great disturbance and restlessness”. See V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 237.

⁶⁹ J. WICKI (ed.), op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 268, 413-414, 562-563. In 1549, Belchior Gonçalves travelled north to take charge.

with great success, but he too was seeking to mitigate charges that he was handling money by offering masses, bestowing alms and purchasing rice.⁷⁰ By the late 1540s the *piedosos* were already arousing jealousy. António do Casal, who was Custodian of the Franciscans in India (1545-51), wrote in 1549 to ensure that the Observants were not forgotten in these days of *pie-doso* mission.⁷¹ The *capuchos*' anti-materialism – these men “full of lice” and covered in coarse wool cloth – could arouse suspicious criticism.⁷² In 1549 the appeal for an independent Indian custody of the Province of Piety was turned down. This is not surprising for it would have made them uniquely privileged and powerful.

It is surprising that few scholars have sought to compare the eastern mission with the way the missionary orders were used in the New World. It is surely a telling point that in Spain the Jesuits had only the most marginal influence until comparatively late into the sixteenth century. Their very independence was a disadvantage in the eyes of the Spanish monarchs. As a result, the mass conversions in Mexico and elsewhere were achieved by Franciscans and Dominicans who could hardly be said to lack missionary zeal or pedagogic ambition.⁷³ This was partly because Charles V (1519-56) turned immediately to the discalced friars and other devotees of strict observance. The spiritual and organisational renewal that swelled among the mendicant orders during the reign of the Catholic kings was thus allowed to flow into imperial mission from early on. In other words, we should not consider that successful evangelisation in the East was inevitably dependent on the arrival of the Jesuits.

This is not to say that the reformed friars matched the Jesuits in every way. The Jesuits were all proficient preachers, whereas Franciscans were not bound to be so.⁷⁴ The importance of learning the native tongues was embedded in the very constitution of the Jesuits, while the Portuguese Franciscans in Asia were much slower than their Spanish confreres in this regard. Above

⁷⁰ A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. IV, pp. 200-211. Vicente also indicated that his work was not always appreciated by the Observant Franciscans and he asked for a companion of another order in order to forestall malign gossip.

⁷¹ A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. IV, pp. 253-259, and see A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. V, p. 102.

⁷² See the letter by António Pereira Maramaque, 6 November 1558, in BIBLIOTECA DA AJUDA, Cod. 51-II-33, p. 68, where the writer accuses *piedosos* such as João de Chaves (“cheyo de piolhas e de Burel”), Diogo da Silva, and Juan de Albuquerque, of hypocritical greed.

⁷³ Where Thomaz does draw a comparison with the new world (op. cit., p. 113), it is to argue that the Spanish Franciscans confined themselves to converting those who had been actually conquered and that in this respect they were less innovative than their forbears in the thirteenth century who had struck out into heathen Asia. However, this glosses over how massive and urgent a task it was to convert the conquered throughout the vast territories of the New World; how nugatory the state apparatus was in many areas where they set up station, and the way in which they confronted the task of intellectual translation. Indeed the mendicants showed themselves to be enthusiastic frontiersmen.

⁷⁴ Morais claimed that none of the Franciscans in Sri Lanka were preachers. See V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 319.

all – and this has particular force for the *piedosos* –, the Franciscans could not, ultimately, match the autonomy, freedom of movement and organisational power of the Jesuits.⁷⁵ In Sri Lanka, their educational schemes suffered as a result. Nevertheless, before the Jesuits started to sweep into Asia in increasing numbers, the discalced friars did have a real and much neglected role in the 1540s. And these Franciscans can only be associated with the Counter-Reformation in the loosest sense of the term. As our brief history of the Franciscan order shows, the *piedosos* had their origins in a resurgent Iberian spirituality that pre-dates the Protestant reformation and its Catholic response, to those movements of Franciscan reform that cut across Spain and Portugal in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century.⁷⁶

... And in Sri Lanka

The Jesuits did play a role in the intensification of religious politics in Sri Lanka. Before Xavier left for the East in 1541 the possibility of Bhuvanekabahu's conversion was apparently on his mind.⁷⁷ A few years later King João used Xavier in an ambassadorial role to take a letter to Bhuvanekabahu, urging him to make good his "promise" to convert. At some point then, Xavier and Bhuvanekabahu must have met and (considering his usual methods) the future saint no doubt contributed a great deal to the intemperate clerical pressure of these years.⁷⁸ In particular, Xavier was interested in those coastal areas in the north-west inhabited by pearl-fishers – the counterparts to his fishery folk on the other side of the straits. The most lucrative pearl-fishery was situated off the island of Mannar and it was likewise subject to the Muslim chiefs on the Indian coast. It is not surprising then that they too asked for Xavier to come and baptise them. In his place he sent a secular priest who effected the first mass baptism in Sri Lanka.⁷⁹ Their subsequent massacre by Sankili had a profound affect on Xavier and he spent much energy trying to rouse a retaliatory expedition against the King of Jaffna.

But Mannar really belonged to the socio-political world of South India. The next three Jesuits to arrive in India displayed a keen interest in Sri

⁷⁵ See Joan-Pau RUBIÉS, *Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance. South India through European Eyes*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 314-315.

⁷⁶ Note also the Houses of Recollection: see D. NIMMO, *op. cit.*, p. 643.

⁷⁷ V. PERNIOLA (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 13.

⁷⁸ G. SCHURHAMMER, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 411-412, footnote 36, assembles a case to argue that Xavier visited Sri Lanka in both 1544 and 1545 and that he carried out this diplomatic mission on the former occasion. It is clear that Xavier must have handed over his letter before Barbudo's embassy in late 1545 [V. PERNIOLA (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 297]. However, the only actual evidence offered for the 1544 visit is that Xavier undertook a voyage to the Fishery Coast which took longer than one would expect, implying that he had taken a detour to Sri Lanka.

⁷⁹ V. PERNIOLA (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 51, 53-54, 114, 125, 137.

Lanka, issuing from their responsibility to catechise to the noble followers of the Kotte princes who fled to Goa in the year of their arrival.⁸⁰ But none of their order had a hand in the mission among the Sinhalese until some months after the death of Bhuvanekabahu when two Jesuits, Balthasar Gago and António Gomes, accompanied the expedition to the island led personally by the viceroy, Afonso de Noronha. They intended to establish a “house of the Society” and make many conversions amongst this reputedly receptive people.⁸¹ This would have been a considerable challenge to the Franciscan hold over the island, yet it never transpired. Why not remains a mystery: Brother Gago merely refers to the work of the devil and the Viceroy’s lust for treasure. The following year another two Jesuits, Manuel Morais and António Dias, came to Kotte intending to convert young Dharmapala, but also with a much wider evangelical brief. Although they were well-received by the Franciscans, Dias wrote stressing, “how necessary it is for this country to be cultivated by the Fathers of the Society, for I believe that if our fathers had already been here, the result of their labours would be seen by now.”⁸² It is difficult not to agree that the Jesuit presence gave a definite boost to the progress of Christianity. The brothers preached regularly at Kotte and drew crowds of notables. They succeeded in attracting a noble woman to their faith and her subsequent baptism was used as an opportunity for a first public celebration of faith, which involved the firing of mortars and muskets.⁸³ We hear of attempts to engage the *bhikkhus* in debate; indeed anyone encountered on the road was liable to be subject to an impromptu evangelism.⁸⁴

The brothers catechised to the newly converted and their children, something they suggest was not undertaken properly before:

Thinking that I might be on their side many pagans have become Christians. I baptised them knowing that they were asking to become Christian for this reason and not for any other motive. For some, though they enter by this door, are sometimes good. I sincerely believe that all would be good if they had someone to instruct them. But it is a pity to see that there are many Christians here who have never been taught to make the sign of the cross or to recite the Our Father. They know nothing of what it means to be a Christian because there is nobody to teach them. Since I noticed this, I do not easily baptise unless they have first requested me many times.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ All three mention Sri Lanka in their correspondence: see *Idem, passim*, and p. 121.

⁸¹ *Idem*, pp. 285-287; G. SCHURHAMMER and E. A. VORETZSCH (ed.), op. cit., pp. 636-637.

⁸² V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 335. See A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. VI, p. 46, for a later reflection on their success.

⁸³ V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 333.

⁸⁴ *Idem*, pp. 324, 335.

⁸⁵ *Idem*, p. 322, and Dias’ comments on p. 335, echoing other Jesuit criticism of quick Franciscan baptisms: Criminali in Goa 1545, and Lancillotto in Kollam in 1550 [J. WICKI (ed.), op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 13-14, 126].

Why then had Franciscans been chosen for the Sri Lankan mission? The simple answer is that Bhuvanekabahu asked for them. Trindade tells us that of the friars “he had received satisfactory reports, for he had spoken with them both in his own city and at our fortress of Colombo where ordinarily our friars were, accompanying the soldiers who were there, as they were accustomed to do.”⁸⁶ It does seem as if João de Vila do Conde’s mission had its origins in a relationship carefully cultivated by the Franciscans in Kotte in the late 1530s and early 1540s.⁸⁷ It is important to recognise that Bhuvanekabahu was behaving in a manner that was entirely typical of rulers across early modern Asia. Foreign specialist groups were much sought after, and many of his Theravada counterparts in Southeast Asia had likewise attempted to fix the Portuguese in their territories through patronising Catholicism.

Yet how far do the claims of Morais and Dias hold up? Was the mission in Sri Lanka severely damaged by Franciscan control? Could we go further and say that the Jesuits would even have restrained the rapacity of the secular Portuguese in the 1540s, so much so that their reformation of Christian life would have touched high politics itself? Given our conclusions regarding the *piadosos* in India we should now be willing to exert some forceful scepticism about such claims. João de Vila do Conde and all but one of his five companions came from the Province of Piety.⁸⁸ Moreover, this picture of sweeping Jesuit superiority is partly the result of the superiority of the historical evidence that they left behind, their copious and inquisitive letters and the many chronicles based upon them. For example, none of the surviving letters from friars in Sri Lanka mention any religious disputations, but we know from Gonzaga’s history of the order that a major debate did occur in 1543.⁸⁹ The discalced friars were no less strict with regard to the conduct of Christian life and we shall see how their missionary zeal produced results under difficult conditions. But one has to conclude that the *piadosos* in Sri Lanka did not have quite the effect that they strove for. In particular, their pedagogic ambitions remained unfulfilled and the explanation lies again in the implications of their otherworldliness.

⁸⁶ P. TRINDADE, *op. cit.*, Part III, pp. 24-25, confirmed by F. QUEIROZ, *op. cit.*, p. 235, and adding that Bhuvanekabahu’s wrote to Lisbon directly to ask for Franciscans on the advice of Henrique.

⁸⁷ In 1539 the Commissary Paulo de Santarém, visited the court and helped Bhuvanekabahu’s dislodge the undesirable factor, PeroVaz Travassos [V. PERNIOLA (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11]. The Bishop Juan de Albuquerque may also have been involved since, as Provincial of Piety, he had personally accepted four of the Sri Lanka mission into the order. See G. SCHURHAMMER and E. A. VORETZSCH (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 435-437.

⁸⁸ See Perniola’s discussion of personnel on V. PERNIOLA (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 37. The Italian Francisco de Monteprandone was the odd one out. Is this why we hear so little about him even though it was he who baptised the King of Kandy?

⁸⁹ *Idem*, pp. 42-45; F. GONZAGA, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 1403-1410.

Bhuvanekabahu asked for Franciscans based on his experience of the modest activities of the one or two Observants in Kotte, who effected very small-scale conversions and regularly consulted with him. These mendicants, their behaviour, appearance, and function in life, would have been strongly familiar to the Sinhalese. Given that both Christianity and Buddhism were “transcendentalist” systems, they both placed a high value on asceticism.⁹⁰ As much later King Senerat of Kandy would remark in a letter to Philip III, “(...) for though we are Heathens, we well understand that virtue consists in the disregard of the things of this earth and of the riches of the world.”⁹¹ In the seventeenth century Paulo da Trindade remarked that the Buddhist monks, “Though they are pagan, they are friendly towards our religious, since they consider them as men of the same profession, especially since, also like us, they go out each day and in great silence beg for alms from door to door.”⁹² On one level the *pidosos* would merely have reinforced that sense of familiarity. The use of fasting was a marker of otherworldliness common to both sets of virtuosos, as was the strictly vegetarian diet, a strong symbol of spiritual cleanliness in South Asia and potentially a source of immediate respect.⁹³ Even their bare feet would have served to emphasise their closeness to the *bhikkhu* role.

But it soon became apparent that a quite different kind of Franciscan had walked off the boat in 1543. One aspect of their behaviour would have jarred almost immediately. Bhuvanekabahu offered the new mission his munificence in the shape of a considerable sum of money to support them in Colombo. In an equally grand gesture, they rejected it.⁹⁴ They continued to reject it for five or six months until the king stopped asking. Given our discussion of the anxieties of António do Porto and Vicente de Lagos in India this should not surprise us. The words which Gonzaga gives to Vila do Conde are far from implausible: “For we care not for money, nor for your riches, nor for any other temporal goods, but only for your salvation and that of

⁹⁰ On transcendentalism, see A. STRATHERN, “Transcendentalist Intransigence: Why Rulers Rejected Monotheism in Early Modern Southeast Asia and Beyond”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 49, n.º 2, 2007, pp. 358-383. G. SCHURHAMMER and E. A. VORETZSCH (ed.), op. cit., p. 649 [V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 334; echoed by his companion on p. 324].

⁹¹ F. QUEIROZ, op. cit., p. 711. This letter also appears in P. TRINDADE, op. cit., Part III, pp. 80-81. It seems to have been drafted by a Portuguese friar, and as such it may represent, initially, the latter’s perception of similarity.

⁹² P. TRINDADE, op. cit., Part III, p. 33 [an interpolation in his rendition of Gonzaga’s account – compare V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 46].

⁹³ The *capuchos* fasted on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and spent two and a half hours each day meditating. See G. SCHURHAMMER, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 155. W. L. A. DON PETER, *Education in Sri Lanka under the Portuguese*, Colombo, Colombo Catholic Press, 1978, pp. 268-270, gives evidence of the continuing importance attached to vegetarianism as reflected in royal edicts and so on.

⁹⁴ See V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., pp. 38-41, 96, 181-182. According to Bhuvanekabahu this was 200 *pardaos* per year, according to Gonzaga an initial sum of 70 *cruzados* with an annual payment of 100 *cruzados*.

your people.”⁹⁵ For the friars this was a perfect opportunity to display their adhesion to the literal observance of the Rule, to advertise their position in the debate that had defined the fissiparous history of the Franciscans.

But Sinhalese traditions of monastic asceticism did not place the same emphasis on the corrupting nature of money.⁹⁶ For Bhuvanekabahu the traditional means of ensuring religious harmony had been rudely dismissed. Sinhalese kings, whatever their personal inclinations, had bestowed their patronage on both Buddhist and Hindu institutions. Indeed, this was a crucial marker of Sinhalese monarchism. Bhuvanekabahu had merely extended this principle to Christianity with his lavish gifts to the Church in Colombo and his courtly hospitality to the missionaries. The discalced friars now changed the frame of reference: patronage, financial and physical, was not enough – indeed it was to be despised – what was needed was the interior and personal devotion of the king. In a multi-religious environment, the affiliation of religion and state can be maintained when what matters is outward form, correct obeisance, ritual observance and so on. This is directly challenged by the introduction of exclusivist claims to interior states of being. In a more general sense the otherworldly zeal, the transcendent fixation of the *piedosos*, had a profound effect on the hardening of court politics between 1543 and 1545.⁹⁷ It is they who were famously dismissive of the diplomatic consequences of their strident addresses. “He who is against my faith is against me,” wrote António Padrão, a telling phrase and one that leaves any diplomatic imperatives for dead.⁹⁸ According to the Governor João de Castro, they were largely responsible for Bhuvanekabahu’s ill-will, harassing him with “such harsh ways as to cause astonishment.”⁹⁹

In 1545 direct control of the Sri Lanka mission passed over to the Observant Custodian António do Casal.¹⁰⁰ This may have been a deliberate decision to restore some stability to the Kotte scene. Certainly Casal was a much less troublesome cleric, telling his workers in Ceylon not to be “unduly worried” by the failure of Bhuvanekabahu to convert.¹⁰¹ In fact, there is a marked dissonance between the anti-Bhuvanekabahu sentiments of the *piedosos* in Sri Lanka and the more temperate judgements of their Observant superior. Vila do Conde chafed under this arrangement and he argued that

⁹⁵ V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 40.

⁹⁶ Ilana Friedrich SILBER, *Virtuosity, Charisma and Social Order: A Comparative Socio-logical Study of Monasticism in Theravada Buddhism and Medieval Catholicism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 113.

⁹⁷ I mean by this in particular, the new conflict among the Portuguese between pro- and anti-Bhuvanekabahu camps, on, which see A. STRATHERN, *Kingship and Conversion*, cit., Chapter Four.

⁹⁸ V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 234.

⁹⁹ *Idem*, pp. 192-193.

¹⁰⁰ P. TRINDADE, op. cit., Part I, pp. 101-106, footnote 1; G. SCHURHAMMER, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 599.

¹⁰¹ V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 256.

the failures of the Sri Lankan mission resulted from their lack of autonomy and asked Bishop Albuquerque to write to support his case anew.¹⁰² But a unified Franciscan order and interests of state conspired against it. This was in itself one major reason why the Jesuits found such a state of religious disrepair in Sri Lanka in 1552. Nevertheless we have learned enough about the nature of these *piedosos* over the course of this chapter to conclude that their particular spiritual traditions had formed a serious obstacle to rapprochement with indigenous rulers in Sri Lanka, and were partly responsible for the anti-Christian sentiments of the later 1540s.

From Vila do Conde's perspective, of course, the problem was that even when he did have the express permission of the king to proselytise, he could not ultimately guarantee protection for his neophytes. This was the general predicament of the mission outside the territorial conquests of the Portuguese empire.¹⁰³ As a result, missionaries could view the gifts and privileges that they bestowed on converts simply as a way of levelling the playing-field, and this could translate into a general argument for the inclusion of temporal incentives in the spiritual project of evangelism. For temporal realities were already there and militating against them. In particular, the missionaries saw themselves as struggling against the great weight of tradition. A frustratingly common response to missionary queries ("we do this because our forefathers did"), the sheer obstinacy of custom would become a cornerstone of sixteenth century treatises seeking to provide a theoretical explanation as to why peoples in other parts of the world betrayed the dictates of natural reason by behaving so differently to Christians.¹⁰⁴ This helps to explain the missionaries' tolerance of those converts who took the initiative in fashioning temporal advantages for themselves by acting *as if* they were indeed under Portuguese jurisdiction.¹⁰⁵ The distinction between mission fields within and without Portuguese control was thereby liable to blur, as the conversion process itself warped jurisdictional arrangements.

At any rate, the conclusion was quickly reached that it would be much easier to transform the state first. A great emphasis was therefore placed on evangelising to the ruler. The religious problems caused by the jurisdictional independence of vassals would thereby be dissolved. Once the ruler converted, his people were expected to follow suit. There was every reason to expect this, as it had been a constant of Christian history since the defining

¹⁰² Referring to the papal decree that all friars should remain within the custody he writes, "It will be clear to Your Highness that if in Ceylon much more work has not been done it is because we went as we did": see Albuquerque, November 1547, A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 526-532.

¹⁰³ As a Jesuit remarked in 1555. V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 342.

¹⁰⁴ See Anthony PAGDEN, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986, pp. 100-101, 137, 160-161.

¹⁰⁵ Letters of Juan de Albuquerque in 1547, in A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 532-523, and António do Porto in 1548, in A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. IV, pp. 61-62, which argues that alms would make up for the shame and destitution that resulted from conversion.

conversion of the Roman emperor Constantine, in the early fourth century. It was also the chief missionary method used by King João II in Africa, which had its greatest success with the conversion of the King of Kongo in the early 1490s.¹⁰⁶ If this was combined with a tendency to underestimate the cultural obstacles to imposing religious conversion this may well owe as much to crude ethnographic observation as it does to an unthinking extension of European mores. The *casados* of Colombo averred that “His [Bhuvanekabahu’s] example would have been enough for all to accept baptism at once. Your Lordship can be sure of it, *because this is the way with these people* [emphasis added].”¹⁰⁷ After all, the initial mass conversion of the Paravas had been conducted in negotiation with a few headmen.¹⁰⁸ Whatever the reasons, in the first years we find that missionary letters often assumed an unproblematic equation between the conversion of the ruler and that of his subjects. Royal neophytes were weighed up in terms of the thousands or millions of souls under their charge.¹⁰⁹ Such were the expectations and rhetorical manoeuvres of both missionaries and laymen in the 1540s – which would be painfully frustrated in the decades to come.¹¹⁰

Religious Disputation in the 1540s

One of the most tantalising features of the 1540s mission concerns the possibility for set-piece debate – for we are faced here with one of the first encounters between two world religions, Christianity and Theravada Buddhism, in the early modern period. Because of their ultimate origins in the Eurasian “Axial Age” of the first millennium BC, both traditions drew upon highly sophisticated philosophical traditions and were “offensive” ideologies, in Ernest Gellner’s sense – that is to say, predicated on a notion that other attitudes to salvation and divinity were possible but mistaken.¹¹¹ In other words, we have here an opportunity for a discussion conducted within very roughly the same terms of debate, an opportunity that we do not find in most of Africa or the New World. But, at this early stage in the Portuguese expansion in the East, was either side really ready for this?

¹⁰⁶ L. F. F. R. THOMAZ, “Descobrimentos e Evangelização”, cit., p. 118; and J. THORNTON, “The Development of an African Catholic Church in the Kingdom of Kongo, 1491-1750”, *Journal of African History*, 25, 1984, pp. 147-167.

¹⁰⁷ V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 240.

¹⁰⁸ S. BAYLY, op. cit., pp. 325-326.

¹⁰⁹ See Simão de Coimbra’s comments in V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 198. There were however people who were sceptical about the top-down model. A. S. REGO, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 303.

¹¹⁰ See A. STRATHERN, *Kingship and Conversion*, cit., for just how misguided these assumptions were.

¹¹¹ On the “Axial Age” and the concept of “offensive” ideology, see A. STRATHERN, “Transcendentalist Intransigence”, cit.

The most natural place to turn to first would be the Jesuits, who are often associated with a more intellectualist approach to conversion. Indeed, the reports of the Jesuit visitors in 1552 at their word show little esteem for either Franciscan or local religious specialists in this regard. They represent the *bhikkhus* as decidedly ill-prepared to tackle their Christian opponents:

They have such little learning that a person of good intelligence and skill in matters of the church, even if he is unlettered, can defeat them. But they do not have the capacity of men who can come to know their errors through reason. And besides, they are very attached to following what their ancestors did. The only arguments that they bring forward are that this is their custom, and the custom of their ancestors, and that it is their duty to accept the same. They very much avoid being put to dispute, and there is nobody willing to do this.¹¹²

While it is possible that the *bhikkhus* they encountered were influenced by the quietist strand in Buddhist thought or were forest-monks barred from such worldly encounters, it is most likely that Manuel Dias assumed that the *bhikkhus* would engage in a very familiar form of dialectics. The feeling that one's interlocutors have poor logical faculties is a common manifestation of the failure of cross-cultural dialogue, a failure that seems almost inevitable once we realise that these encounters would have proceeded via interpreters.¹¹³

If the *samgha* continued to be held in high esteem by the Sinhalese then comparison with missionary efforts in Southeast Asia suggests that it could represent a serious obstacle to evangelism.¹¹⁴ It is difficult to know, however, whether this took the form of direct intellectual opposition. Early Buddhism contained a strong predilection for avoiding the heated contentiousness of debate – somewhat similar to the early Franciscans' distaste for aggressive point-scoring.¹¹⁵ But by the sixteenth century there had been a long history of antagonism with theist sects, through textual polemic and set-piece disputations.¹¹⁶ The *Budugunalankaraya*, written circa 1470, reveals a world of religious competition between opposing Saivites, Vaisnavas, devotees of Agni,

¹¹² G. SCHURHAMMER and E. A. VORETZSCH (ed.), op. cit., p. 649 [V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 334; echoed by his companion on p. 324].

¹¹³ Perniola refers to the lack of language training in his Introduction, V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. XIV.

¹¹⁴ Anthony REID, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450-1680*, 2 vols., New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1988-1993, Vol. II, p. 161. Fernão de Queirós (F. QUEIROZ, op. cit., p. 141), as a senior churchman in seventeenth-century Goa, despaired about the prospect of converting the Theravada peoples of Southeast Asia on these grounds.

¹¹⁵ L. de SILVA, "The Buddhist Attitude to Other Religions", *Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities*, 11, 1985, pp. 111-129.

¹¹⁶ Ronald INDEN, Jonathan WALTERS and Daud ALI (ed.), *Querying the Medieval: Texts and the History of Practices in South Asia*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 23, 133, 152, emphasize the divisions between theists and non-theists in medieval South Asia.

Buddhists and Jains.¹¹⁷ The great educational centres – the *pirivenas* – that flourished in Parakramabahu VI's reign would have prepared their students for inter-religious debate through the comparative study of Brahmanic texts.¹¹⁸

At any rate, these Jesuits were ignorant of the rather important set-piece disputation that had taken place only a few weeks after the arrival of the first mission – and which represents one of the earliest formal debates between Portuguese and Asian holy men that we have on record. Can we take João de Vila do Conde's instigation of it as an indication that this friar valued the role of the intellect in the conversion process? The first point to acknowledge is that it came about largely a result of desperation. Having made no headway with the king for weeks, he wanted to challenge his opponents in the most direct manner possible.¹¹⁹ When the debate was called to a halt and Vila do Conde found that he had had little effect, he asked the king to hold a trial by fire or by crocodile-infested river; he would plunge into these torments with a Sinhalese religious and whoever survived would be proved right. He was told that this would not be necessary. It seems to have been the theatricality and publicity of the occasion that was most attractive to the friar.

What of the actual content of the debate? We have two reports of it, one by Francesco Gonzaga and the other by Queirós. They offer entirely different accounts of what happened and after some investigation it becomes apparent that Queirós' version is largely fictitious.¹²⁰ On the other hand, there are good reasons for thinking that Gonzaga offers a much more reliable, though

¹¹⁷ Christopher REYNOLDS (ed.), *An Anthology of Sinhalese Literature up to 1815*, London, Allen & Unwin, 1970, pp. 269-273. See Kitsiri MALALGODA, *Buddhism in Sinhalese Society 1750-1900*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1976, p. 34, for inter-religious debates held in early eighteenth-century Kandy.

¹¹⁸ We know also that the *Brahmajala sutta*, which discusses a wide range of metaphysical positions as a list of 62 false beliefs, was taught at the Karagala monastery of the *vanavasi* sect in Parakramabahu VI's time. See Annesley MIRANDO, *Buddhism in Sri Lanka in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, Dehiwala, Tisara Prakasakayo, 1985, p. 10. The latter established the large Sunethradevi Pirivena. See W. I. SIRIWEERA, "The City of Jayawardena Kotte: History, Form and Functions", *Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities*, Vol. 19, n.º 5, 1993, pp. 11-14. At the Vijayabahu Pirivena there were Brahmin students who learnt the four *vedas*. See C. R. de SILVA, "Algumas Reflexões sobre o Impacto Português na Religião entre os Singaleses durante os Séculos XVI e XVII", *Oceanos*, 34, 1998, p. 106. The *pirivenas* fall out of our sources in the sixteenth century. If this gives some credence to the suggestion that education was not as highly developed in Kotte as in previous capitals, it does not necessarily follow, as H. B. M. ILANGASINHA, *Buddhism in Medieval Sri Lanka*, New Delhi, Sri Satguru, 1992, p. 156, suggests, that after Parakramabahu VI the *pirivenas* lost their educational efficacy. Chandra R. de SILVA, "Sri Lanka in the Early Sixteenth Century: Political Conditions" in K. M. de Silva (ed.), *University of Peradeniya, History of Sri Lanka*, Vol. II, Peradeniya, University of Peradeniya, 1995, p. 35, assumes that the Vijayabahu *pirivena* at Totagamuva and the Sri Nanananda *pirivena* at Vadagama referred to in sixteenth-century Portuguese sources maintained this capacity.

¹¹⁹ Gonzaga, in V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., pp. 36-47.

¹²⁰ See A. STRATHERN, "Representing Eastern Religion: Queyroz and Gonzaga on the first Catholic-Buddhist disputation in Sri Lanka, 1543", *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka*, 43, 1998, pp. 46-52, and "Fernão de Queirós: History and Theology", *Anais de História de Além-Mar*, 6, 2005, pp. 47-88.

hardly unbiased account. We are only told how Vila do Conde commenced the debate:

Fr. João spoke, "O king since we have assembled here for the sake of having a disputation about the true law that is to be followed, ask your party to come forward and to propose the principle point of their law and their difficulties so that I may satisfy them". The king replied, "I will not do that at all, since that is your responsibility. You, of your own accord called for this disputation." Then Fr. João said, "Very well, let it be so, but on the agreement that your wise men satisfactorily reply to all my questions and propositions". When they finally agreed, he asked them: first, "what sort of thing is a God?" Second, "What does paradise mean?" Third, "What sort of thing is an angel?" Fourth, "What is a holy person?" Fifth, "What is a demon?" Sixth, "What is a virtue?" Seventh, and last, "What is a vice and a sin?"¹²¹

It seems that the friar was using this public arena in order to make a formal evangelism. It was common for missionaries to reserve thorough explanations of doctrine for assemblies of the elite, in the hope that doctrinal understanding would thereby filter down from the elite to the more ignorant masses. The most resonant model for Vila do Conde's group may have been the "Twelve", the first Franciscan missionaries in New Mexico. Martín de Valencia's first speeches to the chiefs and priests of Mexico constituted a highly detailed pre-baptismal instruction. Vila do Conde's questions revolve around three questions which seem today an inevitable part of any explanation of Christianity – viz. the nature of God, the nature of the afterlife, and the nature of Christian life – together with a fourth issue which now seems rather more particular, that is the nature of the secondary supernatural beings, the angels and the devils. These four points are the crux of many of the pre-baptismal catechisms that have survived.¹²² Therefore, a good case can be made that Vila do Conde was rehearsing a catechism either as a model for subsequent debate – or even to displace debate altogether. Indeed, at almost exactly this time in late 1543 Francis Xavier was engaged in debate with the Brahmins of Tiruchendur temple on the Fishery Coast. His own account tells us that after an initial exchange of views, Xavier launched into a recital of the Apostle's creed, the Decalogue and a sermon.¹²³ A natural approach for such men to take, perhaps, but one which was more suited to the patterned dialogues of the seminary than the problems faced by friar

¹²¹ F. GONZAGA, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 1406.

¹²² The points put before the Indians of New Galicia in 1541 had all four but included the divinity of Christ and a recognition of their subjection to the Pope and Habsburg emperor. See Robert RICARD, *The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1966, p. 84.

¹²³ Richard F. YOUNG, "Francis Xavier in the Perspective of the Saivite Brahmins of Tiruchendur Temple", in Harold G. Coward (ed.), *Hindu-Christian Dialogue: Perspectives and Encounters*, Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1989, p. 70.

João in a steamy Sri Lankan court with *bhikkhus* and Brahmins arrayed before him.

What does Gonzaga's report tell us of Bhuvanekabahu's response to this religious assault? That it finished like this:

The King replied "I will on no terms permit that since it is *not necessary* at all. For, whatever I have received from my parents and drank in at the breast, that I know for certain is most true and *quite sufficient* to obtain salvation. I do not strive or desire to know or understand anything else, because I judge it to be *entirely superfluous* [italics added]."¹²⁴

Bhuvanekabahu is refusing Vila do Conde's request to reiterate the Christian answers to questions the friar had put forward at the beginning of the debate. Gonzaga intended to convey a sense of stubborn traditionalism but it seems that his source had preserved another meaning. The repetitious emphasis of the italicised phrases is not that the friars' teachings are wrong *per se*, but that they are irrelevant. Given the layers of reportage behind Gonzaga's account, the following reading is obviously risky, but we may see here an echo of the Buddhist teaching that all such considerations do not bear on the core religious question of how to achieve salvation.¹²⁵ It is possible then that Bhuvanekabahu was rejecting the gospel according to the logic of Theravada metaphysics.

Many historians have been content to present Gonzaga's account of this debate without comment, even in suggesting that it represented a Christian victory.¹²⁶ In all probability it was a philosophical mess. The questions Vila do Conde set out were simply not abstract enough to initiate a cross-cultural dialogue. When Gonzaga tells us that the Kotte holy men began to squabble among themselves, Schurhammer is being too literal-minded in suggesting that this was the result of the different opinions on these matters by the Hindus and the Buddhists.¹²⁷ Conceptual and linguistic incommensurabilities between Portuguese and Sinhalese account for any such confusion. Gonzaga, or his source Gaspar de Lisboa, is a far from innocent narrator: his comment that Bhuvanekabahu stopped the debate because the royal party were losing esteem seems odd when we consider that the disputations had

¹²⁴ F. GONZAGA, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 1407: "necessarium,... sufficientissimum,... superfluum". My thanks to Dr. Bryan Ward-Perkins, who has altered the translation only very slightly from that in Perniola, pp. 43-44.

¹²⁵ The textual problems surrounding this are explored much more fully in A. STRATHERN, "Representing Eastern Religion", cit.

¹²⁶ See Léon BOURDON, *Les Débuts de l'évangélisation de Ceylan vers le milieu du XVI siècle d'après des documents récemment publiés*, Lisbonne, Institut Français au Portugal, 1936, p. 13.

p. 13; G. SCHURHAMMER, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 423; Martin QUÉRÉ, "Beginnings of the Portuguese Mission in the Kingdom of Kotte", *Aquinas Journal*, 5, 1988, p. 79, although Quéré does chastise the chroniclers for unduly dramatising the affair.

¹²⁷ The wording of Gonzaga's account might suggest that Vila de Conde had two kinds of opponent. See V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., pp. 42, 44-45. G. SCHURHAMMER, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 423.

been going on for fifteen days! In fact affairs of state had intervened: by this time Mayadunne was again advancing upon Kotte and Bhuvanekabahu had sent his ambassador back to Goa to plead with the governor for assistance.¹²⁸

At this point an attentive reader of Queirós might tell us that another, more dramatic set-piece debate involving Vila do Conde took place at Kotte a few years later – yet, I have argued that this is another account of the 1543 disputation, which has mistakenly been set down as a separate affair.¹²⁹ Much more reliable is the report that in 1552 the young Dharmapala put off demands that he receive baptism by saying that “as soon as the war was over, the matter of his conversion would be taken up in the presence of their Fathers [i.e. indigenous holy men] and of our own.”¹³⁰ This, at least, does suggest that the conversion of the king could be seen as a matter of publicly deciding between competing claims to the truth.

Despite the claims of the Jesuits, it seems that during Bhuvanekabahu’s reign there had been something approaching a history of inter-religious dialogue with the Franciscans at court.¹³¹ Some may, however, consider “dialogue” to be too sanguine a term for an exchange in which our zealous *piedosos* were entirely unprepared to budge from a stalwart recitation of the one form of truth.

It was not then, that the Franciscans yielded anything to the Jesuits in terms of missionary drive and ambition, it is rather that their qualities of restlessness and intransigence were always going to cause political ructions in a land where the Portuguese had not yet translated their imperial influence into imperial rule. The Jesuits may not have done any better, however: when they arrived in Kongo (1548-55) at roughly the same time that their confreres did in Sri Lanka, their mission was notable for their inability to countenance the syncretic form of Christianity that was developing among royal and elite circles at court, and the rancour into which their relationship with the king fell. Part of the problem here was precisely the Jesuitical concern with beliefs and thoughts, with education and understanding – an emphasis which can often form an obstacle to the indigenization of Christianity.¹³² What does seem apparent is that attempts to clarify long-lasting characteristics of the Catholic missionary orders will be best advanced by a comparative and global perspective that tries to make sense of what was going on in the Spanish expansion just as much as the Portuguese.

¹²⁸ V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., pp. 47-48.

¹²⁹ F. QUEIROZ, op. cit., pp. 258-261. See A. STRATHERN, “Fernão de Queirós”, cit., pp. 77-78.

¹³⁰ As quoted by the Jesuit Dias in 1552. See V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 331.

¹³¹ See also Prince João/André de Sousa’s claim in 1546 that the people of Kotte were defending their beliefs with “words and false arguments” in V. PERNIOLA (ed.), op. cit., p. 105.

¹³² On the Jesuit mission see Carlos ALMEIDA, “A Primeira Missão da Companhia de Jesus no Reino do Congo (1548-1555)”, in R. Carneiro and A. T. Matos (ed.), op. cit., pp. 865-888.

Manuscript Sources

BIBLIOTECA DA AJUDA

Cod. 51-II-33

Bibliography

- ALMEIDA, Carlos, "A Primeira Missão da Companhia de Jesus no Reino do Congo (1548-1555)", in Roberto Carneiro and Artur Teodoro de Matos (ed.), *D. João III e o Império. Actas do Congresso Internacional Comemorativo do Seu Nascimento*, Lisboa, CHAM/CEPCEP, 2004, pp. 865-888.
- ALMEIDA, Fortunato de, *História da Igreja em Portugal*, 4 vols., dir. Damião Peres, Porto, Livraria Civilização, 1967-1971.
- AMES, Glenn J., *Renascent Empire? The House of Braganza and the Quest for Stability in Portuguese Monsoon Asia, ca. 1640-1683*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2000.
- BAYLY, Susan, *Saints, Goddesses and Kings: Muslims and Christians in South Indian Society 1700-1900*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- BETHENCOURT, Francisco and CHAUDHURI, Kirti (ed.), *História da Expansão Portuguesa*, Vol. 1, Lisboa, Círculo de Leitores, 1998.
- BIEDERMANN, Zoltán, "Do regresso do Quarto Império: A China de João de Barros e o Imaginário Imperial Joanino", in Roberto Carneiro and Artur Teodoro de Matos (ed.), *D. João III e o Império. Actas do Congresso Internacional Comemorativo do Seu Nascimento*, Lisboa, CHAM/CEPCEP, 2004, pp. 103-120.
- BOUCHON, Geneviève (ed.), "A Letter: Cristóvão Lourenço Caração, to D. Manuel, Cochín 13 Jan 1522", *Mare Luso Indicum*, 1, 1971, pp. 163-168.
- BOURDON, Léon, *Les Débuts de l'évangélisation de Ceylan vers le milieu du XVI siècle d'après des documents récemment publiés*, Lisbonne, Institut Français au Portugal, 1936.
- BOXER, Charles R., *Portuguese Seaborne Empire: 1415-1825*, London, Hutchinson, 1977.
- BOXER, Charles R., *The Church Militant and Iberian Expansion: 1440-1770*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978.
- BRÁSIO, António, *Monumenta Missionaria Africana*, Vol. 1, Lisboa, Agência Geral do Ultramar, 1952.
- CORREIA, José Manuel, *Os Portugueses no Malabar (1498-1580)*, Lisboa, Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 1998.
- COSTA, João Paulo Oliveira e, "Os Portugueses e a Cristandade Siro-Malabar (1498-1530)", *Stvdia*, 52, 1994, pp. 121-178.
- COUTO, Diogo do, *Década Quinta da "Ásia"*, Coimbra, Coimbra Editora, 1937.
- CRUZ, Maria Augusta Lima, "Notes on Portuguese Relations with Vijayanagar, 1500-1565", *Santa Barbara Portuguese Studies*, 2, 1995, pp. 13-39.

- DIAS, J. S. Silva, *Correntes de Sentimento Religioso em Portugal (Séculos XVI a XVIII)*, Vol. I, Coimbra, Instituto de Estudos Filosóficos da Universidade de Coimbra, 1960.
- Documentos sobre os Portugueses em Moçambique e na África Central, 1497-1840*, 8 vols., Lisboa, Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos, 1962-1975.
- EATON, Richard M., *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1997.
- FISHER, Humphrey J., "Conversion Reconsidered: Some Historical Aspects of Religious Conversion in Black Africa", *Africa*, 43, 1973, pp. 27-40.
- FLORES, Jorge Manuel, *Os Portugueses e o Mar de Ceilão: Trato, Diplomacia e Guerra (1498-1543)*, Lisboa, Cosmos, 1998.
- GONZAGA, Francesco, *De Origine Seraphicae Religionis Franciscanae eiusque progressibus...*, Vol. 1, Romae, Typographia Dominici Basae, 1587; Vol. 2, Venitiis, s. n., 1603.
- HEFNER, Robert W. (ed.), *Conversion to Christianity: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives on a Great Transformation*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1993.
- ILANGASINHA, H. B. M., *Buddhism in Medieval Sri Lanka*, New Delhi, Sri Satguru, 1992.
- INDEN, Ronald, WALTERS, Jonathan and ALI, Daud (ed.), *Querying the Medieval: Texts and the History of Practices in South Asia*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2000.
- LACH, Donald F., *Asia in the Making of Europe*, 3 vols., Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1965.
- LOPES, Fernando Félix, "Fr. André da Ínsua, Geral dos Observantes Franciscanos", *Arquivo Ibero-Americano*, 45, 1952, pp. 5-80.
- MALALGODA, Kitsiri, *Buddhism in Sinhalese Society 1750-1900*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1976.
- MEDINAS, Victor Joaquim Fialho, *A Arquitectura Capucha da Província da Piedade*, MA thesis, 2 vols., Lisboa, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 1994.
- MEERSMAN, Achilles, *The Ancient Franciscan Provinces of India*, Bangalore, Christian Literature Society, 1971.
- MEERSMAN, Achilles, "Early Franciscan Missions in India", in W. L. A. Don Peter (ed.), *Franciscans and Sri Lanka*, Colombo, Evangel, 1983.
- MIRANDO, A. H., *Buddhism in Sri Lanka in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, Dehiwala, Tisara Prakasakayo, 1985.
- MONFORTE, Manuel de, *Chronica da Provincia da Piedade...*, Lisboa, M. Manescal da Costa, 1751.
- MUNDADAN, A. Mathias, *History of Christianity in India*, Vol. 1, Bangalore, Theological Publications in India, 1984.
- NEILL, Stephen Charles, *A History of Christianity in India*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- NIMMO, Duncan, *Reform and Division in the Medieval Franciscan Order (1226-1538)*, Rome, Capuchin Historical Institute, 1987.

- NOONAN, Laurence A., "The First Jesuit Mission in Malacca", *Studia*, 36, 1973, pp. 391-457.
- O'MALLEY, John W., *The First Jesuits*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1993.
- PADGEN, Anthony, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- PERERA, Gaston, *The Portuguese Missionary in 16th and 17th Century Ceylon: The Spiritual Conquest*, Colombo, Vijitha Yapa, 2009.
- PERNIOLA, Vito (ed.), *The Catholic Church in Sri Lanka, The Portuguese Period, Volume 1, 1505-1565*, Dehiwala, Tisara Prakasakayo, 1989.
- PETER, W. L. A. Don, *Education in Sri Lanka under the Portuguese*, Colombo, Colombo Catholic Press, 1978.
- QUÉRÉ, Martin, "Beginnings of the Portuguese Mission in the Kingdom of Kotte", *Aquinas Journal*, 5, 1988, pp. 71-99.
- QUÉRÉ, Martin, *Christianity in Ceylon Under the Portuguese Padroado 1597-1658*, Colombo, Colombo Catholic Press, 1995.
- QUEYROZ, Fernão de, *The Temporal and Spiritual Conquest of Ceylon*, trans. e introd. S. G. Perera, 3 vols., reprint, New Delhi, Asian Educational Services, 1992 (1st ed., Colombo, A. C. Richards, 1930).
- REGO, A. da Silva (ed.), *Documentação para a História das Missões do Padroado Português do Oriente*, 12 vols., Lisboa, Agência Geral do Ultramar, 1947-1958.
- REID, Anthony, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450-1680*, 2 vols., New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1988-1993.
- REYNOLDS, Christopher (ed.), *An Anthology of Sinhalese Literature up to 1815*, London, Allen & Unwin, 1970.
- RIBEIRO, João, *The Historic Tragedy of the Island of Ceilão*, ed. and trans. P. E. Pieris Colombo, s. n., 1948.
- RICARD, Robert, *The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1966.
- RUBIÉS, Joan-Pau, *Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance. South India through European Eyes*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- SALDANHA, António Vasconcelos de, "Sobre o *Officium Missionandi* e a Fundamentação Jurídica da Expansão Portuguesa", in *Missionação Portuguesa e Encontro de Culturas, Actas de Congresso Internacional de História*, 4 vols., Braga, UCP/CNCDP, 1993, Vol. III, pp. 597-605.
- SCHURHAMMER, Georg, *Francis Xavier: His Life, His Times*, trans. M. J. Costelloe, 4 vols., Rome, Jesuit Historical Institute, 1973-1982.
- SCHURHAMMER, Georg and VORETZSCH, E. A. (ed.), *Ceylon zur Zeit des Königs Bhuvaneka Bahu und Franz Xavers, 1539-1552*, 2 vols., Leipzig, Verlag der Asia Major, 1928.
- SILBER, Ilana Friedrich, *Virtuosity, Charisma and Social Order: A Comparative Sociological Study of Monasticism in Theravada Buddhism and Medieval Catholicism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995.

- SILVA, Chandra R. de, "Algumas Reflexões sobre o Impacto Português na Religião entre os Singaleses durante os Séculos XVI e XVII", *Oceanos*, 34, 1998, pp. 104-116.
- SILVA, Chandra R. de, "Sri Lanka in the Early Sixteenth Century: Political Conditions", in K. M. de Silva (ed.), *University of Peradeniya, History of Sri Lanka*, Vol. II, Peradeniya, University of Peradeniya, 1995, pp. 11-36.
- SILVA, L. de, "The Buddhist Attitude to Other Religions", *Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities*, 11, 1985, pp. 111-129.
- SIRIWEERA, W. I., "The City of Jayawardena Kotte: History, Form and Functions", *Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities*, Vol. 19, n.º 5, 1993, pp. 11-14.
- STRATHERN, Alan, "Representing Eastern Religion: Queyroz and Gonzaga on the first Catholic-Buddhist disputation in Sri Lanka, 1543", *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka*, 43, 1998, pp. 46-52.
- STRATHERN, Alan, *Bhuvanekebahu VII and the Portuguese: Temporal and Spiritual Encounters in Sri Lanka, 1521-1551*, PhD. thesis, Oxford University, 2002.
- STRATHERN, Alan, "Os Piedosos and the Mission in India and Sri Lanka in the 1540s", in Roberto Carneiro and Artur Teodoro de Matos (ed.), *D. João III e o Império. Actas do Congresso Internacional Comemorativo do Seu Nascimento*, Lisboa, CHAM/CEPCEP, 2004, pp. 855-864.
- STRATHERN, Alan, "Fernão de Queirós: History and Theology", *Anais de História de Além-Mar*, 6, 2005, pp. 47-88.
- STRATHERN, Alan, *Kingship and Conversion in Sixteenth-Century Sri Lanka: Portuguese Imperialism in a Buddhist Land*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- STRATHERN, Alan, "The Conversion of Rulers in Portuguese-Era Sri Lanka", in Jorge Flores (ed.), *Re-exploring the Links: History and Constructed Histories*, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz Verlag, 2007, pp. 135-154.
- STRATHERN, Alan, "Transcendentalist Intransigence: Why Rulers Rejected Monotheism in Early Modern Southeast Asia and Beyond", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 49, n.º 2, 2007, pp. 358-383.
- STRATHERN, Alan, review of Gaston PERERA, *The Portuguese Missionary in 16th and 17th Century Ceylon: The Spiritual Conquest* (Colombo, Vijitha Yapa, 2009), in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 70, 2011, pp. 287-289.
- SURAWEERA, A. V. (trans. and ed.), *Rajavaliya*, Colombo, Vishvalekha Publication, 2000.
- THOMAZ, Luís Filipe F. R., "Descobrimentos e Evangelização: da Cruzada a Missão Pacífica", in *Congresso Internacional de História: Missionação e Encontro de Culturas*, Vol. 1, Braga, UCP/CNCDP, 1993, pp. 81-129.
- THORNTON, J., "The Development of an African Catholic Church in the Kingdom of Kongo, 1491-1750", *Journal of African History*, 25, 1984, pp. 147-167.
- TRINDADE, Paulo da, *Conquista Espiritual do Oriente*, ed. Fernando Félix Lopes, 3 parts, Lisboa, Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos, 1962-1967.
- WICKI, J. (ed.), *Documenta Indica*, 18 vols., Rome, Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu, 1948-1988.

- XAVIER, Ângela Barreto, “‘Aparejo y disposición para se reformar y criar otro nuevo mundo’. A evangelização dos indianos e a política imperial joanina”, in Roberto Carneiro and Artur Teodoro de Matos (ed.), *D. João III e o Império. Actas do Congresso Internacional Comemorativo do seu Nascimento*, Lisboa, CHAM/CEPCEP, 2004, pp. 783-805.
- XAVIER, Ângela Barreto, *A invenção de Goa: poder imperial e conversões culturais nos séculos XVI e XVII*, Lisboa, Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, 2008.
- YOUNG, Richard F., “Francis Xavier in the Perspective of the Saivite Brahmins of Tiruchendur Temple”, in Harold G. Coward (ed.), *Hindu-Christian Dialogue: Perspectives and Encounters*, Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1989, pp. 64-79.