

The Japanese Embassy to Europe (1582–1590)

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Background to *De Missione*

The decision to send a number of young Japanese to Europe, known retrospectively in Japanese as the *Tenshō shōnen shisetsu* (the Tenshō era boys' embassy), was made spontaneously by Alessandro Valignano, *visitor*, visitor or inspector, of the Jesuit missions in the East Indies, covering the area from Goa to Japan, in the autumn of 1581. Valignano, one of the most remarkable individuals in the early history of European relations with Japan, indeed in the early history of European expansion *tout court*, had been appointed visitor in 1573 and in that capacity made three visits to Japan between 1579 and 1603. Valignano did not envisage the boys' visit as a formal embassy, even if that is how it came to be seen in Europe and how Valignano himself referred to it retrospectively. It did, however, have an official character in that two of the boys chosen went as representatives of three of the most important Christian daimyo, or feudal lords, in western Japan to perform obeisance to the pope, acknowledging him as their pastor. *De Missione*, the English edition of which we are launching this evening, is partly an account of that embassy.

Objectives of the Embassy and the Individuals Chosen

As Valignano originally conceived it, the boys' journey had two objectives.¹ First, the presence of noble and refined Japanese youth would raise awareness of Japan amongst the clerical and secular elites in Europe and demonstrate that what the Jesuits had been writing about Japan, some of which had been published and circulating for almost thirty years, was not, as was put about by the Society's detractors, a fabrication. Second, the visit would impress upon the Japanese participants the glory and grandeur of the Christian religion, the majesty of the European rulers who had embraced it, the richness and splendour of Europe's kingdoms and cities, and the honour and authority that the Christian religion enjoyed throughout Europe.² Valignano placed great emphasis on the second objective because he considered that the Japanese knew nothing concrete about Europe and tended to view the missionaries as people of low standing in their native lands who had come to Japan ostensibly to preach the gospel but in reality to make their fortune.³ To counter such a negative image, and to heal the 'great disunion and aversion' that existed between the European Jesuits and the Japanese *irmãos* or brothers,⁴ it was essential that a few intelligent, young Japanese of high social status should see for themselves the reality of Europe, or rather what Valignano intended them to see, and report back to their compatriots what they had witnessed.

[In view of the length of many of the footnotes, they are formatted as endnotes in this document. – Ed.]

The boys chosen for this bold experiment in Jesuit diplomacy were about fourteen years old. The senior member of the party was Mancio Itō Sukemasu and the junior member was Michael Chijiwa Seizaemon. Two other boys, Julian Nakaura and Martin Hara, went along as companions of Michael and Mancio, although they were also treated as if they were themselves envoys.

Valignano and his charges left Nagasaki on 20 February 1582.⁵ The visitor intended to accompany the boys on the long, hazardous, unfamiliar journey to Europe and back. More importantly, he wanted to present his proposals, some of which were controversial, about the future policy and governance of the vice province of Japan, in person before the relevant authorities in Europe: the Jesuit superior general and the Holy See in Rome, and Philip II in Spain.⁶ However, once in Goa he found instructions from the superior general ordering him to remain in India as provincial. Disappointed, he accepted the decision and in the detailed instructions he gave to Nuno Rodrigues, the rector of the Jesuit college in Goa, to whom he entrusted the welfare of the boys and the documents concerning the future of the Japan mission, he expressed his hopes that the boys' presence in Europe would significantly boost the case for his policies. The young Japanese, he wrote, would be a 'carta viva', a living letter or embodiment of what Valignano had been writing about Japan.⁷ In this capacity they performed exceptionally well.

More than two years after their departure from Nagasaki, the boys finally disembarked in Lisbon on 11 August 1584 and for almost another two years travelled through Portugal, Spain and Italy as far as Rome, the highpoint of their journey, before returning to the Portuguese capital, from where they finally set sail on the long voyage home on 13 April 1586. They reached Nagasaki on 21 July 1590, amidst great rejoicing, over eight years after their departure, but in the midst of a major crisis for the Jesuit mission in Japan following an edict issued in 1587 (although one that was not strictly enforced) by the new hegemon of Japan, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, ordering the missionaries to leave Japan.

By any standards their journey had been remarkable. During their travels in Europe the boys had audiences and less formal meetings with the most powerful European monarch, Philip II, two popes, Gregory XIII and Sixtus V, and were received by many of the most important political, ecclesiastical and social figures in the places they visited.

Valignano's insistence that the visit be conducted in an unostentatious way was ignored in Europe for reasons beyond the visitor's control. As the Jesuit superior general, Claudio Aquaviva, later informed him, the decision to receive the boys in Rome in a public consistory with 'pomp and public honour' was made by Gregory XIII and some of his cardinal advisors. Amongst other things, the pope intended to show the Protestants how far the 'glory of the Holy Roman Church which they persecute' extended.⁸ On learning of the embassy's reception in Europe Valignano did not complain that his instructions had been ignored. He was elated. The visit had gone better than he could ever have hoped or imagined.⁹

Publication of *De Missione*

Determined to capitalise on this success, Valignano conceived the idea of a book based on the boys' travels, one that could also be used for teaching purposes in Jesuit colleges in Japan. The outcome was *De Missione*, a series of thirty-four colloquia in which the participants are

the members of the embassy, Michael, Mancio, Julian and Martin, and two other speakers, Leo and Lino, in fact historical persons related to Michael.

The book was published in Macao early in 1590, although printing had begun in the middle of the previous year.¹⁰ It was the third work to be published on the printing press that Valignano had requested to be sent from Europe for use in Japan.¹¹ The reasons for publishing such a lengthy work in Latin are set out in Valignano's preface and in the prefatory letter to Aquaviva at the beginning of the book by Duarte de Sande, the individual responsible for putting the text into Latin. Both men emphasized that *De Missione* was not intended for a European readership but as a text for Latin studies in Jesuit seminaries and as a guide for the Japanese to things European.¹² While the literary quality of *De Missione* has been rightly praised as 'written in a Humanistic rhetorical style of the first water',¹³ a style which Joseph Moran's fine translation captures extremely well, opinion is divided as to how effective it would have been as a Latin textbook in Japan. No matter, Latin was an essential part of the Jesuit curriculum. In Japan command of Latin was considered essential for those aspiring to become Jesuits or secular priests. Accordingly, Latin, along with the study of Japanese, was emphasised in the daily routine for young seminarians.¹⁴

Valignano intended that a Japanese version of *De Missione* should appear shortly after the original, but the individual to whom this daunting task was to be entrusted, Jorge Loyola, died in Macao on 16 August 1589.¹⁵ Valignano also hoped translations into various European languages would appear.¹⁶ None did.

In the event, only a portion of *De Missione* appeared in a European vernacular, part of Colloquium 33, on China. This was published in English by Richard Hakluyt in *The Principal Navigations* of 1599 under the title 'An excellent treatise of the kingdome of China, and of the estate and government therof: Printed in Latine at Macao a citie of the Portugals in China, An. Dom. 1590 and written Dialogue-wise. The speakers are Linus, Leo, and Michael'. Hakluyt obtained the volume from the booty of the Portuguese vessel *Madre de Dios*, seized on her homeward voyage by the English off the Azores in 1592. In the Epistle Dedicatory to Sir Robert Cecil in the second volume, Hakluyt described *De Missione* as being 'inclosed in a case of sweete Cedar wood, lapped up almost an hundred fold in fine calicut-cloth, as though it had beene some incomparable jewell'.¹⁷ It was also one of the books which Hakluyt cited in a paper he prepared for the directors of the newly-chartered East India Company to use when lobbying the queen, to reassure her that their intended voyages would be to places in the Indies beyond the Spanish monarch's 'power, Jurisdiction or comaunde', an early hint, perhaps that a voyage to Japan was among the fledgling Company's ambitions.¹⁸

Authorship of *De Missione*

The question of authorship of *De Missione* – whether it was Valignano or de Sande, himself a distinguished Portuguese humanist scholar and one of the most intellectually-gifted among the Jesuits in Asia – remains, at least for some, a matter of controversy.¹⁹ The title page says that it was 'put into Latin by Duarte de Sande', and this is correct. De Sande himself would have preferred that the Spanish version, from which he worked, had been sent to Rome where, he modestly noted, others more capable than himself could have put it into Latin, but Valignano was adamant that the translation had to be done in Macao.²⁰ De Sande accepted his assignment, albeit reluctantly, doubtless unhappy about the prospect of having the exacting Valignano constantly breathing down his neck.²¹ It is unknown whether the Spanish text de Sande worked from was drafted by Valignano himself, or drawn up under his

supervision, but we do know that the visitor had been working on a text before departing from Goa for Macao which, as with many of his literary projects, he failed to complete before reaching Macao.²²

In my assessment, *De Missione* was the outcome of a collaborative effort put together under the driving force and firm supervision of an editor-in-chief, Valignano. No single authorial 'I' speaks out from its pages.

Sources of *De Missione*

To impress the intended Japanese readership, both Valignano and de Sande emphasised that the book was based on journals kept by the boys during their trip, and that the boys, whose time was strictly governed, had been diligent in keeping them. Unfortunately, these journals are no longer extant and we have no knowledge about which language they used for writing them although fragments (descriptive not analytical) found their way into another account of the embassy written later in Japan by the Jesuit, Luís Fróis.²³ Another two short narratives of the embassy survive among the Jesuit archives in Rome. One, partly written by Dogo de Mesquita, the boys' tutor, is dated 10 August 1585, and records the journey from Japan to Madrid.²⁴ The other is a narrative of the trip from Lisbon to Alicante with a brief description of what the boys did after returning to Portugal, including their visit to Coimbra.²⁵ Material from these sources was incorporated into *De Missione* as were reports from the Jesuits ordered to accompany the boys on their travels in Europe. One of these individuals, Alessandro Leni, accompanied the boys from Rome to Lisbon and then sailed in the same fleet as them to start a career in India. Once in India, he gave Valignano first-hand information about the visit.²⁶ Official records, such as the *Acta Consistorii* (the official account of the obeisance before Gregory XIII), as well as the Italian *avvisi* or newsletters, some of which were printed during the boys' travels, also provided material for *De Missione* and it is possible that Guido Gualtieri's *Relationi della venuta de gli ambasciatori giapponesi à Roma*, published in 1586, was another source.²⁷

Other sources were used to flesh out the descriptions of Lisbon, Rome and Venice. The detailed and invaluable description of Lisbon before the catastrophic earthquake struck in 1755 owes nothing to Valignano, who spent only three months in Portugal, mostly preparing for his new assignment in the Indies.²⁸ Both de Sande and Mesquita were Portuguese and would have been familiar with the famous description of Lisbon by their fellow countryman, Damião de Góis, *Urbis Olisiponis Descriptio*, published in 1554. The influence of de Góis's famous publication is easily detectable in *De Missione*. The description of the churches of Rome draws upon Andrea Palladio's *Descrizione de le chiese... che sono in la città de Roma* (1554). The description of Venice, a city which gets much attention in *De Missione*, relies heavily on Francesco Sansovino's *Venezia Descritta*, published in 1581. Valignano himself had no fondness for Venice having been detained in prison there for more than a year, from late 1562 until March 1564, and then banned from Venetian territory for four years over an incident involving a sword cut administered to the face of one Franciscina Throna.²⁹

Contextualizing *De Missione*

To a modern reader and critic *De Missione* appears to boast endlessly, even arrogantly and smugly, about the superiority of Europe vis-à-vis Japan. Having said that, *De Missione* is not an easy work to categorise. Unlike José de Acosta's more famous and influential work, the

Historia natural y moral de las Indias, it cannot be neatly described as an early contribution to ethnology.³⁰ But this does not mean that it can be dismissed, as its detractors suggest, as crude propaganda, the product of a deeply entrenched eurocentricism embedded in the heart of the Christian missionary project which, in the case of Japan, it has been alleged, contributed greatly to a disastrous and inevitable, failure.

De Missione is a far richer and more complex work than its detractors allow and can be identified within certain established sixteenth century literary traditions, the most obvious being the dialogue, a genre which especially flourished in Italy during the sixteenth century before suffering a decline in the following century. Professor Virginia Cox has argued that the dialogue enjoyed widespread popularity in Italy during the sixteenth century because it created ‘an elusive union between the spoken and written word’. At a time when the print revolution was still relatively young, the dialogue provided an antidote to the alienating effects of the printed medium by linking the impersonal quality of text with earlier but still familiar oral methods and practices of argumentation. As Professor Cox puts it, ‘the dialogue offers the closest approximation possible within a written text to the responsiveness of the spoken word’.³¹

In the context of the Jesuit mission in Japan, and Valignano’s aspirations for Jesuit pedagogy there, one can easily see the attractions of writing *De Missione* in dialogue form as a way to bridge the divide between European and Japanese ways of thought and debate. In a telling, if somewhat inelegant, characterisation of the Italian context within which the sixteenth-century dialogue thrived, Professor Cox describes the genre as ‘the means by which a subject-matter of socially dubious status can assert a sort of squatters’ right to residence in courtly discourse’.³² In other words, the means by which something, and, by extension, someone outside official, established circles could become inside; in Japanese for something or someone *soto*, outside the house or household (and by extension, Japan), to become *uchi*, a part of the house or household.³³ The Jesuits were fully aware of this important Japanese concept, and the quest to find ways to cross the formidable barrier separating *soto* and *uchi* lay at the very heart of the policy of accommodation.³⁴ *De Missione* was a vital part of the Jesuit ambition to secure squatters’ rights for Europe within Japan’s epistemological and cognitive worlds and, ultimately, permanent residency within Japanese society and culture.

Another context within which to understand *De Missione* and its jarring praise of Europe and things European is the *laudes civitatum* or civic *descriptiones* which date back to the Middle Ages. These *descriptiones* followed certain simple conventions for describing or ‘praising’ a city.

One of the most striking examples of such Renaissance *descriptiones* was Leonardo Bruni’s panegyric, *Laudatio Florentinae Urbis* (c.1403–04). The opening words of Bruni’s work, which was a *laudatio* of Florentine republican virtue contrasted with Milanese despotism, provide a useful comparison with the aspirations and rhetorical tone of *De Missione*:

Would that God immortal give me eloquence worthy of the city of Florence, about which I am to speak, or at least equal to my zeal and desire on her behalf; for either one degree or the other would, I think, abundantly demonstrate the city’s magnificence and splendour. Florence is of such a nature that a more distinguished or more splendid city cannot be found on the entire earth.³⁵

De Missione is firmly situated within this other humanist, rhetorical tradition of how Europeans and European polities projected themselves to each other. Its uniqueness lies in the fact that the authors intended it to be used as a vehicle to project Europe, or at least an idealised panorama of counter-reformation Europe, to a non-European audience. This was, of course, an audience that was totally unfamiliar with the literary conventions and rhetorical style the book incorporated. As a result, the possibilities for misunderstanding were immense.

The Boys after their Return to Japan

Once back in Japan the four young men, as they had become, underwent a role reversal. In Europe, dressed in Japanese clothes, they had been representations of Japan. In Japan, dressed in the European clothes given them by Gregory XIII, they portrayed Europe. In Valignano's words, they had become 'so Portuguese-like and accustomed to our world' that they seem like Europeans, much to the astonishment of the Japanese brothers.³⁶ They accompanied Valignano, in his capacity as ambassador of the Portuguese viceroy in Goa, on his visit to Hideyoshi in Kyoto in 1591. On the way, Valignano used every opportunity to show off the young men before Japanese notables. They relished their role as teachers on such occasions. Speaking in Japanese, and utilising the books, which included Abraham Ortelis's *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, artefacts, including an astrolabe and a globe, and musical instruments they had brought back from Europe, they described their travels. According to Luís Fróis, they did this more effectively and skilfully than most Europeans in similar circumstances would have been able to do.³⁷ These impromptu tutorials were a *tableau vivant* of the colloquia in *De Missione* and a rehearsal for how the book was intended to be used.

After the visit to Kyoto, the young men who had undertaken the remarkable eight-year journey from Japan to Europe and back, were eager to fulfil their ambition and become Jesuits. They were able to do so despite some initial obstacles. Mancio, had to overcome the strong opposition of his mother and Michael had to face the joint opposition of his mother and the daimyo, Arima Harunobu, who wanted the young man to enter his service where he would have been of great use. After a few days pursuing Ignatius of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* to determine their state of mind, and after finally securing the approval of their mothers and the daimyo, the boys got their way. On 25 July 1591, the feast of St James or Santiago, the patron saint of Spain, they were admitted to the Society. In a major departure from the usual manner of receiving novices, the young men were accepted after a solemn high mass in which organs and other musical instruments were played. In addition, there were festive celebrations and a banquet attended by their families and the daimyo. Valignano permitted this departure from the usual austere manner of admission to the Society because, as he put it, it was the custom in Japan to mark such occasions with ceremony and that as they were men of status it would please (or rather, under the circumstances, appease) their families.³⁸

In September 1608, Mancio, Julian and Martin, who had all remained in the Society, were ordained in the presence of Diogo de Mesquita, by then rector of the Jesuit college in Nagasaki, and by the bishop of Japan, Luis Cerqueira, whose office they had personally lobbied Philip II to establish. Mancio died at Nagasaki in 1612. Julian remained in Japan after the decree ordering all Christian religious to leave Japan was issued in 1614 and was arrested in 1632, tortured, and martyred the following year. Martin left Japan in 1614, died at Macao in 1639 and was buried in the Jesuit church of São Paulo where Valignano's remains had been interred in 1606. Michael, the principal speaker in *De Missione*, left the Jesuit order

around 1603 when his name disappears from Jesuit personnel records, and subsequently (exactly when is unknown) apostatized. His later career is unclear and there are conflicting accounts of his activities, economic situation and fate. What is clear is that he married, had four sons, and, on the basis of the names on a tombstone discovered in 2003 in Isahaya City near Nagasaki, it has been suggested that he died in 1633, an adherent of the Nichiren sect of Buddhism.³⁹

Conclusion

Valignano's major writings on Japan, as well as the Tenshō Embassy and *De Missione*, all reflect his ambitions to encourage Europeans and Japanese to shed their mutual prejudices and misconceptions and attempt to engage with each other in a manner that would produce what he called a 'union of minds'. Such a union or accommodation was essential to advance the mission and capitalise on what had been achieved thus far with relatively few resources of men and money since Francis Xavier's arrival in 1549. The policy of accommodation was expected to produce even greater success. But accommodation had to proceed in both directions so, obversely, and this is something which figures unmistakably in *De Missione*, the Japanese were expected to step outside the confines of their world. As an inducement, they were offered membership in the nascent global, Roman Catholic, community portrayed so vividly in the book.

In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, however, Japan's new rulers rejected this particular global vision. As the civil wars which had devoured the country since the late fifteenth century drew to an end, the Japanese house or state was being reconstructed, first by Hideyoshi and then, building upon his achievement, by the Tokugawa shogunate. In performing this task, Japan's new leaders decided to use existing, familiar materials drawn from indigenous and deeply-rooted sources of tradition and legitimacy. Exotic foreign materials of dubious provenance, alien to Japan's traditional cultural world, were excluded lest they undermine the foundations. Japan's leaders, especially the Tokugawa, judged that Christianity, already too entrenched on the still insecure western periphery of the country, posed a threat to the new order. As a result, it had to be extirpated, although, it should be emphasised, that Japan's early modern rulers did not reject involvement in another globalising phenomenon that was transforming the world at this time: trade.

Unlike the numerous anti-Christian tracts that appeared in the seventeenth century, *De Missione*, despite its authors' intentions, made no lasting impact on Japanese perceptions of Europe. This was not the case with the information about Europe provided by another Jesuit source, the Italian Giovanni Battista Sidotti, who entered Japan illegally from the Philippines in 1708 and was put to death in Edo in 1714. Drawing mainly upon his conversations with Sidotti, the Confucian scholar, Arai Hakuseki, produced an account of Europe, *Seiyō kibun*. This work greatly influenced Japanese *kokugaku*, or national learning, thought in the eighteenth century and helped shape Japan's subsequent response to European and American overtures and threats in the nineteenth, culminating in Commodore Matthew Perry's unwelcome arrival in 1853, which, in turn, contributed to another re-formation of the Japanese polity, the Meiji Restoration.⁴⁰ After the Meiji Restoration of 1868, of course, the Japanese, for a variety of reasons, and quite unlike the sixteenth-century experience, became very much impressed by the magnificence of Europe and the standard of civilization it embodied, and they sought ways to emulate such majesty in pursuit of their goal: the creation of a modern nation state. Once again, however, Christianity was not included among the means chosen by the Meiji revolutionaries to achieve that ambition, the attainment of which,

ironically, disproved the key thesis of *De Missione* that the civilization / grandeur / magnificence, or, in nineteenth-century terms, the modernity of the European achievement and Christianity, were inextricable. They were not.

ABBREVIATIONS

ARSI: Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu (Rome). Manuscript source.

Cartas: *Cartas que os padres e irmãos da Companhia de Jesus escreverão dos reynos de Japão e China*, 2 vols, Evora, 1598; facs. edn, Maia, 1997.

Valignano, *Apologia*: Alessandro Valignano, *Apologia de la Compañia de Jesus de Japón y China*, ed. José Luis Álvarez-Taladriz, Osaka, 1998.

Valignano, *Historia*: Alessandro Valignano, *Historia del principio y progreso de la Compañia de Jesús en las Indias Orientales (1542–64)*, ed. Josef Wicki, Rome, 1944.

¹ Valignano stated his objectives for the embassy in several letters: to Aquaviva, Macao, 17 December 1582 (ARSI, Jap.Sin 9: I, f. 117v) and Cochin, 28 October 1583 (ARSI, Jap.Sin 9: II, f. 174); to Father Manuel Rodríguez, Goa, 15 December 1583 (ARSI, Jap.Sin 9: II, f. 223r–v); to Theotonio de Bragança, archbishop of Évora (*Cartas*, II, ff. 88v–89); and in the ‘Regimento e instrução’ which he drew up for Father Nuno Rodrigues who accompanied the boys to Europe (ARSI, Jap.Sin 22, ff. 51–58v esp. ff. 52r–v). The relevant passages of the letters are printed in Valignano, *Apología*, pp. 59–61 n. 25. The letter to Aquaviva of 28 October 1583 is printed fully in *Documenta Indica*, ed. Josef Wicki and John Gomes, Rome, 1948–88, vol. XII, pp. 827–44 esp. pp. 833–4, and in José Luis Álvarez-Taladriz, ‘En el IV centenario de la embajada Cristiana de Japón a Europa’, *Sapientia*, 16, 1982, pp. 126–36 esp. pp. 129–30. The ‘Regimento e instrução’ is printed fully in *ibid.*, pp. 136–51, esp. pp. 139–40 and partially in João do Amaral Abranches Pinto and Henri Bernard, ‘Les instructions du Père Valignano pour l’ambassade japonaise en Europe’, *Monumenta Nipponica*, 6, 1/2, 1943, pp. 392–403 esp. pp. 395–6. Valignano repeated the objectives in his *Apología*, pp. 57–61.

² Abranches Pinto and Bernard, ‘Les instructions’, pp. 395–6; Álvarez-Taladriz, ‘En el IV centenario de la embajada’, pp. 139–40. According to Valignano the more prejudiced Jesuits considered that their interpretations of Japanese people’s outward behaviour could be applied willy-nilly to the whole society and culture, and rashly proceeded to categorise all Japanese as simple and devout or cunning and secretive and so on. Others, he noted caustically, while having a better grasp of Japanese society and culture, produced edifying commentaries that caused people in Europe to think that the Japanese were imbued with ‘truth and an inner spirit’ (i.e. they had already accepted the Christian revelation and had experienced regeneration without the precondition of baptism, absurdities from the missionary viewpoint). Others again wrote about the spiritual fervour with which people had embraced Christianity on the orders of their lords who wanted to have the Portuguese ships call at their ports. This gave the impression that the whole country was motivated by such spiritual fervour. Finally, some writers who found little good in some aspect of Japan then proceeded to paint the whole society with a negative brush. To counter such deficiencies, he intended to write a useful, greatly edifying history. He repeated these criticisms of the reporting of Japan over the years and frequently referred to his planned history. It was never

completed. See ARSI, Jap.Sin 8: II, ff. 243r–v printed in Valignano, *Historia*, pp. 483–4; Abranches Pinto and Bernard, ‘Les instructions’, p. 396 n. 46; Álvarez-Taladriz, ‘De la primera visita del P. Alejandro Valignano, S.J. a la Cristiandad de Japón (1579)’, *Tenri Daigaku Gakuhō*, 124, 1980, pp. 90–91. See also *Documenta Indica*, XV, p. 63; J. F. Moran, *The Japanese and the Jesuits: Alessandro Valignano in Sixteenth Century Japan*, London, 1993, p. 39.

³ Valignano, Alessandro, *Il cerimoniale per i missionari del Giappone*, ed. Giuseppe Fr. Schütte, Rome, 1946, p. 172, and is taken up in Colloquium VII.

⁴ ARSI, Jap.Sin 8: II, f. 298, Valignano to the Jesuit general, 27 October 1580, printed in Schütte, *Valignano’s Missionsgrundsätze für Japan*, I: 2, Rome, 1951, 1958, p. 489.

⁵ In the annual Japan letter for 1581, dated 15 February 1582, just before their departure, Gaspar Coelho says that the boys ‘had not [yet] passed fourteen’. Valignano, writing to the Jesuit general from Cochin en route to Goa with the boys in October 1583, says they were aged fifteen (*Cartas*, II, f. 17v; *Documenta Indica*, XII, p. 828). These are the most reliable estimates of their ages. The Jesuit historian and rector of the Jesuit college in Belmonte in Spain, Luís de Guzman, whom they met, commented profusely that although ‘they appeared to be boys in age, in judgement and discretion they were men’ (Guzman, *Historia de las misiones que han hecho los religiosos de la Compañía de Jesus...*, Alcalá, 1601, II, p. 294).

⁶ After the union of the crowns in 1581, also Filipe I of Portugal.

⁷ ARSI, Jap.Sin 22, f. 53 printed in Álvarez-Taladriz, ‘En el IV centenario de la embajada’, p. 142.

⁸ Valignano, *Apología*, p. 62; Luis Fróis, *La Première ambassade du Japon en Europe, 1582-1592*, ed. João do Amaral Abranches Pinto, et al., Tokyo, 1942, p. 143, n. 526; Michael Cooper, *The Japanese Mission to Europe, 1582-1590*, Folkestone, 2005, pp. 84–5. The original of Aquaviva’s letter to Valignano is no longer extant. See *Documenta Indica*, XIV, pp. 161, 426.

⁹ ARSI, Jap.Sin 10: II, f. 288, printed in Álvarez-Taladriz, ‘En el IV centenario de la embajada’, pp. 152–3.

¹⁰ ARSI, Jap.Sin 11: I, f. 157v; Josef Franz Schütte, ‘Der Lateinische Dialog: “De Missione Legatorum Iaponensium ad Romanum Curiam”...’, *Analecta Gregoriana*, 70, 1954, p. 268; Valignano, *Apología*, p. 55.

¹¹ The first was *Oratio habita À Fara D. Martino Iaponio*, Goa, 1588; the second João Bonifacio, *Christiani Pueri Institutio, Adolescentiaeque per fugium: autore Joanne Bonifacio Societatis Iesu*, Macao, 1588. See Johannes Laures, ed., *Kirishitan Bunko: A Manual of Books and Documents on the Early Christian Mission in Japan*, 3rd edn, Tokyo, 1957, pp. 29–32.

¹² ARSI, Jap.Sin 11: I, f. 157; Schütte, ‘Der Lateinische Dialog’, p. 261; Moran, *Japanese and the Jesuits*, p. 148.

¹³ Charles Burnett, ‘Humanism and the Jesuit Mission to China: the case of Duarte de Sande (1547-1599)’, *Euphrosyne*, new ser., 24, 1995, p. 426.

¹⁴ ARSI, Jap.Sin 8: I, f. 265; printed in José Luis Álvarez-Taladriz, ‘Apendice documental para el estudio del *Sumario de las cosas de Japón*’, *Osaka Gaikokugo Daigaku Gakuhō*, 46, 1980, pp. 55–6; Josef Franz Schütte, *Valignano’s Mission Principles for Japan*, I: 1, St Louis, MI, 1980, pp. 351–3. In 1581, while still in Japan, Valignano had given instructions for a Latin dictionary and grammar to be prepared. In September 1589 he wrote to Aquaviva that he hoped these would be well-advanced on his return to Japan. See ARSI, Jap.Sin 11: I, f. 157v; Laures, *Kirishitan Bunko*, p. 50; Moran, *Japanese and the Jesuits*, p. 149. Valignano had clear-cut ideas about suitable textbooks from which the Japanese could learn Latin. In a letter to Diogo Mesquita, dated Cochin

25 December 1584, he urged Mesquita to acquire *Emmanuelis Alvari e Societate Iesu, De institutione grammatica libri tres* by the Portuguese Jesuit, Manuel Álvares (first edition, Lisbon, 1572, with many subsequent ones), which was used widely in Jesuit colleges, and dictionaries by Jerónimo Cardoso. The latter included *Hieronymi Cardosi Lamacensis Dictionarium ex Lusitanico in latinum sermonem* (Lisbon 1562); *Dictionarium iuventuti studiosae admodum frugiferum* (second edition, Coimbra, 1562) and *Dictionarium latinolusitanicum et viceversa Lusitanico latinum* (Coimbra, 1570). On no account was Mesquita to acquire works by Virgil, Ovid or other works which mentioned ‘profane matters’ because it was not possible to profit from them nor to use them as yet in Japan. See *Documenta Indica*, XIII, pp. 761–2. Álvares was acquired, and an abridged version was printed in Japan in 1594 with conjugations in both Latin and Japanese and containing numerous examples from the Japanese classics (Laures, *Kirishitan Bunko*, pp. 49, 50–51). The Latin dictionary, *Dictionarium Latino-Lusitanicum ac Iaponicum*, was published in Amakusa in 1595; Moran, *Japanese and the Jesuits*, p. 155. On 22 December 1586 Valignano wrote to Aquaviva again mentioning Hieronymous and requesting the general to send 600 or 800 copies of Lucius Coelius Firmianus Lactantius, who had written about Christianity to confound the arguments of pagan philosophers in the third century and whom he believed would be an appropriate author for Japan. The work he had in mind is unknown but the *Divine Institutes*, of which many editions were published in the sixteenth century, seems the most likely. He also asked for 400 or 500 copies of the *Catechismus Romanus*. There appear to have been some reservations about Lactantius in Rome and nothing was printed for Japan. See *Documenta Indica*, XIV, p. 775; Josef Franz Schütte, ‘Christliche Japanische Literatur...’, *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu*, 11, 1940, pp. 270–71; J. F. Moran, ‘The Real Author of *De Missione Legatorum Iaponensium ad Romanam Curiam. Dialogus*’, *Bulletin of Portuguese / Japanese Studies*, 2, 2001, p. 16.

¹⁵ ARSI, Jap.Sin 11: I, f. 157v; Schütte, ‘Der Lateinische Dialog’, p. 263; Laures, *Kirishitan Bunko*, p. 33; Moran, *Japanese and the Jesuits*, p. 150; Josef Franz Schütte, ed., *Monumenta Historica Japoniae I*, Rome, 1975, p. 284. On Loyola’s command of Latin see his letter to Aquaviva from Goa in 1587 (*Documenta Indica*, XIV, pp. 741–6).

¹⁶ ARSI, Jap.Sin 11: I, f. 157v; Valignano, *Apología*, p. 55.

¹⁷ Richard Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations Voyages Traffiques & Discoveries of the English Nation*, edn Glasgow, 1903–05, VI, pp. 348–77; *ibid.*, I, p. lxxii; E. W. Bovill, ‘The *Madre de Dios*’, *The Mariner’s Mirror*, 54, 2, 1968, pp. 129–52; C. R. Boxer, ‘The Taking of the *Madre de Dios*, 1592’, *The Mariner’s Mirror*, 67, 1, 1981, pp. 82–4; D. B. Quinn, ed., *The Hakluyt Handbook*, I, London, 1974, pp. 305–6).

¹⁸ Heidi Brayman and Peter C. Mancall, ‘Richard Hakluyt the Younger’s Notes for the East India Company in 1601...’, *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 67, 3, 2004, pp. 433–4.

¹⁹ The case for Valignano, rather than de Sande, as the author of *De Missione* is made by Moran in ‘Real Author’, *passim*. The case for de Sande is made by Américo da Costa Ramalho in ‘Portugueses e Japoneses no Dialogus de Duarte de Sande (1590)’, in Roberto Carneiro and Artur Teodoro de Matos, eds, *Ó século Cristão do Japão*, Lisbon, 1994, pp. 346–68; and Duarte de Sande, *Embaixadores Japoneses à Cúria Romana*, ed. Américo da Costa Ramalho and Sebastião Tavares de Pinho, I, Coimbra, 2009, pp. 11–12. Laures (*Kirishitan Bunko*, p. 33) splits the difference and says that Valignano compiled the rough draft and de Sande gave it its final form. On de Sande see Schütte, ‘Der Lateinische Dialog’, pp. 263–8; Burnett, ‘Humanism and the Jesuit Mission to China’, pp. 427–43.

²⁰ ARSI, Jap.Sin 11: I, f. 169.

²¹ ARSI, Jap.Sin 11: I, f. 169; Schütte, 'Christliche Japanische Literatur', p. 274; Burnett, 'Humanism and the Jesuit Mission to China', p. 439 n. 60.

²² *Documenta Indica*, XIV, pp. 123–4; Henri Bernard, 'Valignani ou Valignano, l'auteur véritable du récit de la première ambassade japonaise en Europe', *Monumenta Nipponica*, 1, 2, 1938, p. 87; Schütte, 'Der Lateinische Dialog', p. 260; Moran, 'Real Author', p. 11.

²³ See Fróis, *Première ambassade*, pp. 64–8 (Toledo), 98–106 (the Escorial and Madrid). Fróis's description of the Vila Viçosa (pp. 50–53) incorporates notes made by Constantine. Guzman notes that the boys were meticulous in writing down everything they saw and heard. See Guzman, *Historia*, II, p. 294; Cooper, *Japanese Mission*, pp. 194–5.

²⁴ ARSI, Jap.Sin 22, ff. 59–73v. The text in folios 59 to mid f. 63v is written in Italian, the remainder is in Spanish, in Mesquita's hand and autographed by him at the end. It has the appearance of having being put together in a hurry possibly from other notes.

²⁵ ARSI, Jap.Sin 22, ff. 76–83. This is in Spanish. The author notes (f. 82v) that what the Japanese did after departing from Alicante for Italy until their return to Lisbon he would leave to Lazaro Catano, an Italian brother who accompanied them, to write about. Unfortunately, this was not done, but the fact that it was intended suggests that the Jesuits in Europe planned to produce their own account of the visit. They may have abandoned this plan in view of the numerous publications that appeared concerning the embassy.

²⁶ The Jesuit reports are contained in ARSI, Ital.: 159. They have been translated into Japanese. See Ryōgo Yūki, 'Shinshiryō Tenshō shōnen shisetsu, 1590-nen-1990-nen', *Kirishitan Kenkyū*, 29, 1990. On Leni, who had originally intended to serve in Spain but had, on the recommendation of Nuno Rodrigues, been allowed to proceed to India, see ARSI, Jap.Sin 10: II, f. 214v; *Documenta Indica*, XIV, pp. 15*, 45–6 and XV, p. 195.

²⁷ On the many printed works resulting from the visit see Adriana Boscaro, *Sixteenth Century European Printed Works on the first Japanese Mission to Europe*, Leiden, 1973. Some of the private letters and diplomatic correspondence from the *relazioni* or formal reports which ambassadors of the Italian states sent to their masters is published in *Dai Nihon Shiryō*, ed. The Historiographical Institute, The University of Tokyo, 1901–, XI: 1 and XI: 2, although none of this would have been available for the writing of *De Missione*.

²⁸ Schütte, *Valignano's Mission Principles*, I: 1, pp. 64–91.

²⁹ See Schütte, *Valignano's Mission Principles*, I: 1, p. 32 esp. n. 106.

³⁰ The *Historia* was first published in Seville in 1590 and was soon translated into other European languages. The first English translation appeared in 1604. For a modern English edition see José de Acosta, *Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, ed. Jane E. Mangan, Durham, NC, 2002.

³¹ Virginia Cox, *The Renaissance Dialogue: Literary Dialogue in its Social and Political Contexts, Castiglione to Galileo*, Cambridge, 1992, pp. 44, 103, 105, 112–3.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 39.

³³ On *soto* and *uchi*, 'outside' the house or household (the fundamental unit of Japanese society), and 'inside', see *Vocabulário da lingua de Iapam com a declaração em Portugues, feito por alguns padres, e irmãos da Companhia de Iesu*, Nagasaki, 1603–04, ff. 227, 270.

³⁴ After his return to Japan in 1590, Valignano realised the immensity of this challenge within the Jesuit institutions in Japan, never mind the broader society. Such a challenge was far greater than he had imagined a

decade previously, when, in the *Sumario*, he had written about the need to maintain a ‘spiritual union’ (*‘unión de los ánimos’*) between the Japanese *irmaōs* and *dōjuku* (assistants) and the European Jesuits, without which the whole enterprise in Japan would collapse. See Alessandro Valignano, *Sumario de las cosas de Japón (1583)*, ed. José Luis Álvarez-Taladriz, Tokyo, 1954, p. 198; *Adiciones del Sumario de Japón (1592)*, ed. José Luis Álvarez-Taladriz, Tokyo, 1954, pp. 567–83, esp. pp. 574–6; Moran, *Japanese and the Jesuits*, pp. 169–77.

³⁵ Benjamin G. Kohl and Ronald G. Witt, eds, *The Earthly Republic: Italian Humanists on Government and Society*, Philadelphia, 1978, p. 135.

³⁶ ARSI, Jap.Sin 23, f. 203v, printed in Álvarez-Taladriz, ‘En el IV centenario de la embajada’, p. 154.

³⁷ Luís Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, ed. José Wicki, Lisbon, 1976–84, vol. V, pp. 189, 225–6, 280–81.

³⁸ Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, V, pp. 353–4; José Luis Álvarez-Taladriz, ‘Relación del P. Alejandro Valignano, S.J. sobre su embajada a Hideyoshi (1591)’, *Osaka Gaikokugo Gakuhō*, 28, 1972, p. 55. The fast tracking of the young men’s admission to the Society can be compared with the lengthier process which the future saint Aloysius Gonzaga, eldest son of the marquis of Castiglione, endured before finally having his wish to join the Jesuits fulfilled. As was the case with Mancio and Michael, there was strong family opposition to such a move.

³⁹ Valignano, *Sumario*, p. 87; Anthony Farrington, ed., *The English Factory in Japan 1613–1623*, London, 1991, vol. I, p. 257; Diego Pacheco, ‘Los cuatro legados japoneses de los daimyos de Kyushu despues de regresar a Japón’, *Boletín de la Asociación Española de Orientalistas*, 1973, *passim*, and *Os quatro legados dos dáimios de Quiuxu após regressarem ao Japão*, Macau, 1990, *passim*; Cooper, *Japanese Mission*, pp. 184–92; Oishi Kazuhisa, *Tenshō ken-Ō shisetsu: Chijiwa Migeru no boseki hakken*, Nagasaki, 2005, pp. 84–122; J. S. A. Elisonas, ‘Journey to the West’, *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 34, 1, 2007, pp. 48–9.

⁴⁰ See George Elison, *Deus Destroyed: The Image of Christianity in Early Modern Japan*, Cambridge, MA, 1973, pp. 237–41; Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, *Anti-Foreignism and Western Learning in Early-Modern Japan: the New Thesis of 1825*, Cambridge, MA, 1986, pp. 93–7. For an English translation of *Seiyō kibun* see ‘*Sei Yo Ki-Bun* or Annals of the Western Ocean, translated by S. R. Brown’, *Journal of the North-China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, new series, II, 1865, pp. 53–84; *ibid.*, III, 1866, pp. 40–62.

The Tensho Embassy (1582-1590): First Japanese Trip to Europe. Whilst historic both due to its size and importance, it should be noted that Tsunenaga's Keicho Embassy (1582) was not Japan's first diplomatic mission to Europe. Rather it was both a successor to and inspired by previous efforts committed under the Tensho Embassy (1582), which had been launched from 1580-1582 based also on religious undertones. Come April 13, 1586 the Tensho Embassy departed for Nagasaki where they arrived nearly four years later on July 21, 1590 amidst a hero's welcome. For when they had just departed, the four Japanese boys had been just that, boys. The Japanese Mission to Europe, 1582-1590 (Kent: Global Oriental, 2005). Iwao Seiichi. Biographical Dictionary of Japanese History (Tokyo 1978). Lach, Donald F. Asia in the Making of Europe, Vol. 1, Book 2 (Chicago: U of Chicago P., 1965), 688-701.[2]. Massarella, Derek. "The Japanese Embassy to Europe (1582-1590)," Journal of the Hakluyt Society (Feb. 2013), 1-12.[3]. The World and Japan: the embassies of Tensho and Keicho (1582-1590) (Sendai City Museum, 1995). External links. Spiritual saga, the Japanese mission to Europe, by Michael Cooper. Categories. Categories The Newly Discovered Portrait of ITO MANCIO, a Japanese Ambassador to Europe ¼ Japanese Gallery (Honkan) Room 7 May 17, 2016 (Tue) - July 10, 2016 (Sun). Portrait of Ito Mancio (detail), By Domenico Tintoretto, Dated 1585 (Fondazione Trivulzio - Milano). In the 10th year of the Tensho era (1582), the embassy departed from Nagasaki. It represented the three Christian daimyo, or feudal lords, of Kyushu and consisted primarily of Ito Mancio and three other young men. They sailed from Japan to China, India, Portugal, and Spain before reaching Italy during the time of its brilliant Renaissance. They were welcomed in the major cities of Florence, Rome, and Venice; received an audience with Pope Gregorius XIII; and participated in a dazzling ball before returning to Japan in 1590.