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*A Historical Narrative
from Ignatius of Loyola
to Pedro Arrupe*

Jesuit Studies

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Festo Mkenda, S.J.

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Acknowledgments

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Introduction

Even before the Society of Jesus was officially recognized in 1540, a possible Jesuit mission to Africa was already being considered. Ignatius of Loyola (c.1491–1556), the Society's founder and first superior general (in office 1540–56), probably started thinking about a mission to Ethiopia—or Abyssinia as it was known historically—as early as 1538.¹ He certainly referred to this mission while narrating the story of his life to Luís Gonçalves da Câmara (1520–75) in late 1553, when he suspended the exercise until “the question of Prester John” had been settled.² Prester John was the title of a Christian prince who was supposed to have existed somewhere in the east, the subject of a legend that had its roots in twelfth-century Europe. By the time of Ignatius, Prester John had been identified with the emperor of Abyssinia—known as *negus* within his realm—and “the question” Ignatius was dealing with concerned the missioning of Jesuits to the Prester's lands.

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- 1 Abyssinia was a territory closely, though not exactly, related to what we call Ethiopia today. The two names are often used interchangeably in the sources, and Ethiopia has gradually replaced Abyssinia in modern times.
 - 2 Joseph N. Tylanda, *A Pilgrim's Journey: The Autobiography of Ignatius of Loyola*, revised ed. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2001), 33–34 (cf. *Autobiography* n. 4).

Jesuit interest in Ethiopia originated from several factors. The most important was their connection with Portugal. By the sixteenth century, Ethiopia had become relatively well known in Europe, mainly through Ethiopian pilgrims to the Holy Land and to Rome, European travel reports, and new publications that were circulating in those days. This knowledge bore greater importance in Portugal than elsewhere in Europe due to Portugal's imperial expansion toward the east. With the legitimacy obtained through the *Padroado Real*, granted to it in 1452 by the bull *Dum diversas* of Pope Nicholas V (1397–1455, r.1447–55) and similar subsequent documents, Portugal's eastward expansion was peaking when the Jesuit order was coming into existence. And when Jesuits themselves started going east, the sea route from Europe rounding Africa and leading to Asia, which was famously discovered by Vasco da Gama (d.1524) between 1497 and 1499, was already a well-beaten path. Moreover, Portugal's imperial expansion entailed the construction of several posts on the African coast and the establishment of different settlements in its immediate interior, thus doubly opening the continent to Portuguese imperial influence and to Christian missions, including those of the Jesuits.

Ethiopia continued to occupy a central place in the Jesuits' imagination of Africa because of Portugal's own growing interest in this African empire. In 1487, King João II (1455–95, r.1481–95) had sent to Ethiopia a mission under Pêro da Covilhã (1455–c.1526) in an attempt to establish ties with the empire of Prester John. João II's successor, João III (1502–57, r.1521–57), became an important benefactor of the Jesuits in their nascent years. He too sent a military intervention to Ethiopia under Cristóvão da Gama (c.1516–42), facilitating the killing of Ahmad ibn Ghazi (popularly called "Ahmad Gragn," meaning "Ahmad the Left-Handed" [c.1507–43]) in 1543 and the defeat of the Muslim armies that menaced the eastern African Christian empire. These interventions created a significant Portuguese diaspora in Ethiopia for whom the king of Portugal had a moral and spiritual responsibility. Out of necessity, ties between Ethiopia and Portugal were deepening. And when the king sought spiritual soldiers for the welfare of his people in Ethiopia, the newly founded Jesuits came quickly to mind.

Yet, it was Mozambique, rather than Ethiopia, that was the first African territory to receive Jesuits. Francis Xavier (1506–52), Paulo Camerino (d.1560), and Francisco Mansilhas (d.1565) left Lisbon for India on April 7, 1541, retracing Gama's route around Africa. They wintered on the island of Mozambique for over six months. They reached there in August 1541, and Xavier left the island in February 1542. While in Mozambique, Xavier and his companions ministered to a mainly Portuguese population and to fellow sailors who were for the most part sickly. They attended to their bodily needs, preached to them as often as they could, heard their confessions, and prepared others for a peaceful death. It was also from Mozambique that Xavier wrote his first letter to

his companions in Rome, detailing the experience of their journey since they departed from Lisbon.³

From Mozambique, Xavier sailed northward along the eastern African coast and made a brief but important stop at Malindi in today's Kenya. His description of Malindi as a Muslim city of "peaceful Moors" with up to seventeen mosques in it, as well as an account of his interaction with its citizens, offers an interesting insight into Muslim-Christian encounters in the sixteenth century.⁴ At Malindi, Xavier buried a fellow sailor who had died on board the vessel he was traveling in. The ritual caught the attention of two learned Muslims who subsequently engaged Xavier in a discussion on matters of religion. The first man wanted to know, in Xavier's words, "whether the churches in which we are accustomed to pray are much frequented by us, and whether we are fervent in prayer, since, as he told me, they themselves had lost a great deal of their devotion, and he wished to know if the same had happened among Christians." The second man had very little hope for Islam in Malindi, resolving that "if Muhammad did not come to visit them within two years, he would no longer believe in him or in his sect." Xavier displayed very little sympathy for his Muslim counterparts. "God our Lord, being most faithful in all his works, is not pleased with infidels and still less with their prayers; and this was the reason why God wanted their prayers to cease," argued Xavier, to the utter dismay of his interlocutors. "After we had conversed for a long time," said he, "we still retained our own opinions." Thus did the first recorded attempt at Muslim-Christian dialogue in Malindi end without bearing fruit.⁵

It must be emphasized that Xavier's activities in Mozambique and Malindi were incidental to his mission to Asia, not implementations of an actual mission to Africa. From Malindi, Xavier proceeded to Goa, India, from where his extensive mission in Asia began. Yet, the broad idea of the east always included Africa. Among the papal documents of recommendation that Xavier carried was one addressed to Emperor Dawit II of Ethiopia (c.1496–1540, r.1508–40), whom Pope Paul III (1468–1549, r.1534–49) addressed as "our Son in Christ,

3 MHSI/M.Xav., 1:247–49. An English translation of the latter is found in M. Joseph Costelloe, ed. and trans., *The Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier* (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1992), 39–41.

4 Festo Mkenda, "Francis Xavier," in *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History, Volume 7, Central and Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and South America (1500–1600)*, ed. David Thomas and John Chesworth (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 801–4.

5 Xavier's account of Malindi is found in a letter he wrote from Goa on September 20, 1542, which is printed in MHSI/M.Xav., 1:250–60. An English translation can be found in Costelloe, *Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier*, 45–51.

David, the illustrious king of Ethiopia.”⁶ Moreover, later Jesuit missions directed to Mozambique and Ethiopia were coordinated from Goa.

1 Sixteenth Century: Kongo, Ethiopia, Mozambique/Zimbabwe, and Angola

While planning for Ethiopia continued, Jesuits made missionary inroads into other parts of Africa. The year 1548 saw Jesuits sent directly to Africa for the first time, initiating the African missions of the sixteenth century. Some of them crossed from the Iberian Peninsula to Morocco on the northwestern tip of the continent. João Nunes Barreto (c.1510–62) and a few other companions ministered to slaves at Tétouan, a region that was under Spanish control. Barreto served in this location from 1548 to 1554 before he was named patriarch for Ethiopia and became the first Jesuit ever to be appointed bishop. It was also in 1548 that four Jesuits reached Mbanza, the capital of the then Christian Kingdom of Kongo in west-central Africa.⁷ Fathers Jorge Vaz, Cristóvão Ribeiro, and Jácome Dias, together with scholastic Diogo do Soveral, went to Kongo in the company of Ambassador Diogo Gomes (c.1520–60), a Kongolese of mixed parentage who had been sent to Portugal to appeal for priests. Gomes subsequently entered the Society under the name Cornélio Gomes⁸—probably the first African-born Jesuit in history. Ignatius would later consider him as a possible appointment as patriarch for Ethiopia.

Unique because it started as a response to an existing Christian need in Africa, the first Jesuit mission to Kongo was firmly controlled and guided by Kongolese rulers. The Jesuits were entering into an existing local Catholic tradition and were to be sustained by a subsidy from Kongo’s crown treasury. This arrangement meant that, if they wished to last, the Jesuits would have to accommodate certain local perceptions of Catholicism even when they did not approve of them. Their early assessment of Kongo, as written by Vaz, the superior, admitted that the people were good but then sharply criticized their Christian practice. This could also be read as a Jesuit criticism of the performance of their missionary predecessors in Kongo, who were mainly

6 MHSI/M.Xav., 2:127–28; cf. Georg Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier: His Life, His Times*, trans. M. Joseph Costelloe, 4 vols. (Rome: Jesuit Historical Institute, 1973–82), 1:715.

7 Most of the following discussion on the first Jesuit mission to the Kongo Kingdom relies on [Joseph] van Wing, *Études Bakongo: Histoire et sociologie* (Brussels: Goemaere, Imprimeur du Roi, 1921), 35–43. See also Manuel Nunes Gabriel, *Os jesuítas na primeira evangelização de Angola* (Cucujães: Biblioteca Evangelização e Culturas, 1993), 9–13.

8 John K. Thornton, “Conquest and Theology: The Jesuits in Angola, 1548–1650,” *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 1, no. 1 (2014): 245–59, here 248.

Franciscans, but also included some Augustinian canons, secular priests identified as Canons of St. John the Evangelist, and, later, Dominicans.⁹ From a spiritual point of view, the Jesuits considered the country as entirely lost and in ruins, with the people sunk in “numerous and stupid errors.” They complained about the quality of baptized Christians, whose knowledge of the sacraments did not go beyond a description of the festivities that accompanied the conferment of those sacraments. They found the participation of women in church wanting. And, as did all missionaries to Africa at that time, the Jesuits considered polygamy objectionably rampant in Kongo.¹⁰

In that context, the small band of Jesuits viewed their task as one that involved remedying the situation. They embarked on preaching and baptizing people in large numbers. Sometime in August 1548, they reportedly baptized as many as 2,900 persons in a span of twenty-five days. The teaching of catechism was also emphasized. Most likely with significant input from Gomes, they facilitated the production of a catechism in the Kikongo language, which was first published in 1556 and continued the prior tradition of an inculturated, independent Catholicism in Kongo.¹¹ As part of a long-term strategy for their ministry, a school was established for the children. Soveral was fully occupied in this school, sometimes teaching catechism to groups of up to six hundred children while other Kongolese teachers under his supervision delivered lessons on how to read and write. “The most real fruit that we have obtained from our work has come from the education of the children we have found,” reported the mission superior.¹²

Yet nothing was permanent in Kongo. From 1549, King Diogo I (r.1545–61) became increasingly hostile to the Portuguese, and the missionaries suffered the consequence of his disfavor. Because of their close allegiance to the Portuguese crown, the Jesuits were viewed even more suspiciously. Their standing was not helped by their temerity in questioning certain practices that other missionaries had tolerated, including polygamy and the king’s liberty to marry a close relative. Diogo expressed his displeasure, saying that the Jesuits were virtuous but did not accord him the respect he deserved.

The year 1553 was critical to the struggling Jesuit mission. Out of desperation, Gomes, accompanied by Soveral, went to Lisbon to brief their superiors about the deteriorating situation in Kongo. While they were there, Vaz, the superior in Kongo, died. Gomes returned to Kongo effectively to take charge of

9 C. P. [Charles Pelham] Groves, *The Planting of Christianity in Africa*, 4 vols. (London: Lutterworth Press, 1948–58), 1:128.

10 Van Wing, *Études Bakongo*, 39–40.

11 Thornton, “Conquest and Theology,” 248.

12 Van Wing, *Études Bakongo*, 41.

the mission, accompanied by an ambassador from King João III and four additional missionaries: one priest, referred to as Fr. Nogueira, and three unnamed lay artisans. Gomes went back to Kongo with a plan to direct more resources to the school that the Jesuits were running, hoping to upgrade it to a technical middle school.

Unfortunately for Gomes, the situation he returned to was gradually worsening. The Portuguese ambassador died before reaching Kongo, eliminating any chance of immediate high-powered diplomatic negotiation with Diogo I. Then, Nogueira and one of the lay missionaries died shortly after reaching Kongo. The missionary environment was also becoming more hostile toward the Jesuits, especially because Diogo considered Gomes's journey to Portugal as one that was intended for a smear campaign against him. In response, he suspended the subsidy that the Jesuits received from him and punished anyone else who attended to their needs. In 1554, Gomes made another desperate attempt to seek intervention from Lisbon, but it was all too late. Following a trade dispute with some Portuguese merchants, Diogo I decreed the expulsion of all Europeans from his territories, except those missionaries who had clearly accommodated themselves to the local political and theological context. The Jesuits did not qualify for the exemption, and so Gomes and his two remaining companions left Kongo toward the end of 1555, ending their eight-year mission in what was then Africa's only Catholic kingdom.

As Kongo was closing for the Jesuits, other regions were opening to major missions that would last much longer. New frontiers were opened almost concurrently in Ethiopia, in Mozambique and Zimbabwe, and in the Ndongo kingdom and surrounding territories to the south of Kongo, roughly coterminous with present-day Angola.

In Rome, preparations for the Ethiopian mission were reaching their final stages. In 1553, Ignatius created the province of Ethiopia, to which he was to assign fifteen Jesuits.¹³ He put together elaborate instructions for the missionaries, bequeathing to the Society the most detailed account of his approach to cross-cultural missions. Around September 1554, Ignatius wrote to a group of Jesuits who were leaving Rome for Lisbon and from there for Ethiopia, offering them helpful ideas about how to conduct themselves during their journey.¹⁴ Another collection of long and detailed instructions, probably

13 Pedro Arrupe, "Versio Anglica decreti quo erigitur Regio indep. Africae Orientalis," *Acta Romana* 16, fasc. 4 (1976): 903–6, here 903.

14 MHSI/M.Ign., S1/T8:677–79; cf. Ignatius of Loyola, *Letters and Instructions*, trans. Martin E. Palmer, John Padberg, and John L. McCarthy (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2006), 512–14.

written in February and certainly in early 1555, was addressed to Barreto and his associates.¹⁵ This is the Barreto who had worked at Tétouan in Morocco and who was now reassigned to Ethiopia as Catholic patriarch of the country and the mission's superior. The superior was also supplied with simpler, shorter, bullet-point instructions that were designed to be more readily accessible to him.¹⁶ In general, the instructions were intended to help those designated for the mission to have some idea of what their field of labor was and how they would have to go about carrying out their task of winning Orthodox Ethiopian Christians back to union with Rome, for that was the central aim of their enterprise. That aim, which was obvious enough in the instructions given by Ignatius, was probably best articulated by Jerónimo Lobo (1595–1678), who several years later wrote:

To bring back this people into the enclosure of the Catholic Church, from which they have been separated so many ages, was the sole view and intention with which we undertook so long and toilsome a journey, crossed so many seas, and passed so many deserts, with the utmost hazard of our lives.¹⁷

As missionary strategy in Ethiopia, the Jesuits were instructed by Ignatius to do something akin to combining the wisdom of serpents with the harmlessness of doves:

Take thought of beginning in the course of time some universities or liberal-arts courses. Consider the abuses or disorders that can be corrected gently and in a way that will give the people of the country a chance to see that a reform was necessary, and that it begins with them. This will furnish you with authority for the reform of other abuses. Since Ours have to lessen the esteem for corporal penance that the Abyssinians

15 MHSI/M.Ign., S1/T8:680–90. An English translation of these crucial instructions can be found in various places, including the following: William J. Young, trans., *Letters of St. Ignatius of Loyola* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1959), 381–90; John Patrick Donnelly, *Jesuit Writings of the Early Modern Period, 1540–1640* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2006), 23–31; and Matteo Salvatore, “Gaining the Heart of Prester John: Loyola’s Blueprint for Ethiopia in Three Key Documents,” *World History Connected* 10, no. 3 (2013), https://worldhistoryconnected.press.uillinois.edu/10.3/forum_salvadore.html (accessed September 15, 2021).

16 See MHSI/M.Ign., S1/T8:696–98.

17 Jerónimo Lobo, *A Voyage to Abyssinia*, trans. Henry Johnson (n.p.: Tutis Digital Publishing, 2008 [1735]), 41.

have, in the use of which they go to extremes, set before them charity in word and example.¹⁸

At different times, Ignatius also addressed more personal letters to individual Jesuits he had earmarked for the Ethiopian mission, often encouraging them as they faced a challenging task ahead. In July 1554, for example, he wrote to Barreto, the patriarch to be, urging him to accept his episcopal appointment and assuring him of his own and the Society's spiritual support.¹⁹ On February 26, 1555, he wrote to Melchior Carneiro (1519–83), who was to become one of two coadjutor bishops to accompany the patriarch, literally begging him “in our Lord not to make any difficulty about accepting the burden laid on your shoulders by the Vicar of Christ our Lord on earth.” In addition, Ignatius told Carneiro, “I want to assure you that we on our part, whatever may be your state of life, will always keep you in our hearts, holding you in an interior union all the more tightly as you are farther away from us physically.”²⁰

Finally, when all was ready, on February 23, 1555, Ignatius addressed a letter to Emperor Aṣnāf Säggäd I, more commonly known as Gelawdewos or simply Claudius (c.1521–59, r.1540–59).²¹ In this long letter, Ignatius put forward an elaborate description of his understanding of the nature of the true church. The obvious presumption was that, once that nature was well understood by the emperor, he would be more receptive to the idea of reuniting the Ethiopian church with that of Rome, together with the implied submission of the former to Roman authority. It is this letter that has come to be viewed as the best existing statement of Ignatius's ecclesiology.²² True to the Jesuit position at the time, it was an ecclesiology that was heavily centralized and with exaggerated prerogatives for the Roman pontiff, much similar to what other Jesuits would later defend at the Council of Trent (1545–63).²³ Ignatius died on July 31, 1556, about a year after the theater of the mission that was so close to his heart shifted to Ethiopia, but too early to have received any field report.

The three bishops-elect, that is, Barreto, Carneiro, and Andrés de Oviedo (1518–77), were to be consecrated together in Lisbon before traveling to Goa.

18 MHIS/M.Ign., S1/T8:686–87; cf. Young, *Letters of St. Ignatius*, 387.

19 MHSI/M.Ign., S1/T7:315–16; cf. Loyola, *Letters and Instructions*, 495–96.

20 MHSI/M.Ign., S1/T8:489–90; cf. Loyola, *Letters and Instructions*, 550–51.

21 MHSI/M.Ign., S1/T.8:460–67 (another version of the same letter on 467–76); cf. Loyola, *Letters and Instructions*, 544–49.

22 Harry R. Burns, “St. Ignatius and the Mystical Body,” *Woodstock Letters* 87, no. 2 (April 1958): 107–14.

23 John W. O'Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 303.

When there was a delay, Carneiro's consecration was rescheduled so that it could take place in Goa, and he was asked to lead the first group of Jesuits for Ethiopia that left Lisbon on April 1, 1555. Barreto and Oviedo were consecrated on May 5, 1555, too late to leave for Goa that year. They eventually started their journey on March 30 in the following year, together with the remaining part of the Ethiopian team and in the company of Portuguese ambassador Ferdinand de Souza de Castello. In the same entourage was also Gonçalo da Silveira (1526–61), who was traveling to India as new provincial superior and would later lead a mission into Mozambique and its hinterland. This party of Jesuits reached Goa on September 13, 1556.

Even before their arrival, there had been attempts to prepare a smooth path for the patriarch. The Jesuits Gonzalo Rodrigues (d.1668) and Fulgentius Freire, together with the secular priest Diego Diaz, who acted as Portugal's special envoy, left from Goa and successfully entered Ethiopia via Arquico. They made their way south toward the court of Emperor Claudius, arriving there on May 17, 1555. Their entry marked the beginning of the long-planned Jesuit mission on the soil of Ethiopia. In a letter that Rodrigues wrote from Ethiopia to Portugal on September 13, 1556,²⁴ we are told that the envoys introduced their mission by explaining to the emperor their reasons for holding Catholicism higher than Ethiopian Orthodoxy. The response they received from their hosts was at best a calculated ambiguity and at worst an outright rejection, and everything else in between. The emperor's disposition was extremely hard for the Jesuits to interpret, especially as it changed from refusal to indifference and, finally, to tactical delay. Given the context, Claudius could have hardly behaved differently. He had just won a few battles against his Muslim enemies, thanks to some help from Portuguese fighters sent to him from India. While the help placed on him a burden of gratitude to the Portuguese, he feared that allowing them more room might turn him into a mere vassal of João III. Nevertheless, he still thought he might need their help again, since he was unsure of his security from the Turks along the coast and from the Oromo in the north. Although he was aware of the likelihood of resistance from the Ethiopian clergy, the emperor thought he could make something out of these fresh European contacts. When Claudius gave some indication that he might receive the new patriarch and give him a hearing, the Jesuits returned to Goa

24 Balthazar Tellez, *The Travels of the Jesuits in Ethiopia* (London: J. Knapton in St. Paul's Churchyard, 1710 [1660]), 134–36; Pedro Páez, *Pedro Páez's History of Ethiopia, 1622*, ed. Isabel Boavida, Hervé Pennec, and Manuel João Ramos, trans. Christopher J. Tribe, 2 vols. (London: Hakluyt Society, 2011), 2:20–23.

with the impression that they were bearing some semblance of good news. They reached Goa on time to meet the patriarch on his arrival.

To their credit, the envoys gave a realistic assessment of the Ethiopian missionary terrain. Rodrigues's frank reporting contradicted the image of a benevolent Prester John who awaited missionaries from Rome, which the Jesuits would have brought with them from Europe. As a result, the team in Goa considered the facts and decided that the context was not conducive for the patriarch to enter Ethiopia. Bishop Oviedo led a team of two priests and three brothers that was tasked with addressing the concerns of the ecclesiastical authorities in Ethiopia and further prepare the field for the patriarch. Oviedo, together with Manoel Fernández (d. c.1585/86), Gonçalo Gualdamez (d.1562), Gonçalo Cardoso, Antonio Fernández (d.1593), and Francisco López (d.1597), left for Ethiopia without much delay.

Entering Ethiopia via Arquico on March 19, 1557, Oviedo and his team proceeded to the coastal region of Dəbarwa, where they were well received by the *baḥar nāgaš* (governor of the coastal provinces) and the Portuguese community that resided there. Encouraged by the friendly welcome, Oviedo sent a letter to the emperor, letting him know of his arrival, of his intent to proceed to court, and of the patriarch's readiness to occupy his ecclesiastical see. Memories of what transpired henceforward have been preserved in a letter written on July 29, 1562 by Manoel Fernández and three other companions.²⁵ At the time of writing, Fernández was the local superior of the Jesuits in the beleaguered mission. The letter was addressed to Diego Laínez (1512–65), Ignatius's successor as superior general (in office 1558–65). The very fact that this first report on the mission could only come out of Ethiopia five years after their arrival sets the stage for a somber account.

To begin with, immediately after the Jesuits had entered Ethiopia, the port of Massawa was captured by the Turks. Massawa was Ethiopia's doorway to the outside world. With its capture, the mission was prevented from receiving any supply of resources, including new personnel and information. By 1557, all the seaports were under Turkish control, and Ethiopia had been completely cut off from Portugal and India. To sustain the mission, the five Jesuits locked up in the country had to rely entirely on their own creativity and on whatever their mission environment provided.

What was more, Claudius continued to change his mind as often as it was convenient for him to do so. While not losing sight of the military assistance

25 Tellez, *Travels of the Jesuits*, 138–40, 42–43; Páez, *Pedro Páez's History of Ethiopia*, 2:29–30, 34.

he could still receive from Portugal, he could not allow himself to be persuaded to convert to Catholicism and expose himself to local opposition. When the Jesuits were about eight days away from his camp, they received a noble delegation from the emperor, sent to compliment the bishop. A few days later, they received an order to stop until they should hear from him again. Two days later, they received news that they could proceed. When they were “within a musket-shot,” they were ordered to pitch their tents and wait. Finally, they were invited to meet the emperor, whom they found surrounded by high officials and family members, including his mother, Säblä-Wängēl (d.1568), who had immense influence on Claudius’s political career.

In court, Oviedo and his companions stood face to face with the man on whom they believed the success of their mission depended. Jesuits invested a lot of effort in the conversion of kings, believing that the spiritual aid that is given to important and public persons ought to be regarded as more important, since it is a more universal good. Conversion of influential people carried with it the possibility that they, in turn, would have a positive impact on those they could influence. In that sense, the mission to Ethiopia had to begin with the conversion of the emperor himself, after which everything else would have supposedly fallen into place. Thus, Oviedo took the first opportunity to present his high-powered diplomatic credentials, which included letters from the Portuguese governor of India, from Patriarch Barreto, and from others. Unfortunately for him, the contents of the letters quickly displeased his host. Nevertheless, Claudius excelled in self-mastery and did not wear his heart on his sleeve. He made it almost impossible for the Jesuits to know his mind. Having received the letters, narrated Fernández, the emperor “began to look displeased, being far from any thoughts of a reconciliation with the church of Rome; yet being noble, discreet, and a lover of the Portuguese, he endeavoured to conceal it, though not so much but double dealing might be perceived.” Claudius employed these tactics so well that the Jesuits lingered on hoping for better results. As Fernández further said, Claudius

always behaved [...] civilly towards the Bishop, and whilst he lived none dared to show him disrespect; besides that he furnished us plentifully, because he was naturally generous, especially where the King of Portugal was concerned, as owing an obligation to him. He was so good natured and so much concerned for the sufferings he apprehended the Bishop might be exposed to, that going to engage the Moors, by whom he was killed, he said, “Alas, poor Bishop! What will become of him if I die?” Save for his obstinacy in religion, this Emperor Claudius was so well qualified that I

am positively of the opinion that there was not a wiser man in the empire, or one so fit to govern. He was very well instructed in the Portuguese manners and customs and used so much courtesy towards the Bishop that in the height of his obduracy we still hoped for some good from him.²⁶

That hope of theirs deceived them. Time passed, the emperor remained obdurate, and Oviedo's patience began to wear thin.

A wearied Oviedo decided to take the bull by the horns. He laid bare the errors he judged to be inherent in the faith of the Ethiopians and once again invited Claudius to submit to the pope. Claudius, seated on a throne and looking through silk hangings, responded in kind. "My forefathers had always owned the Chair of St. Mark at Alexandria," said he, "and I can see no occasion to disquiet the people, who are peaceable and satisfied with their Abuna." Even then, the emperor still described Oviedo as the most dignified person ever to come to Ethiopia, adding that he would hear from his council and consult with his learned men before he could give a final answer. At this point, Oviedo's mind was made, and the emperor's intent to consult further amounted to more of the same delaying tactic they had been made to endure for so long with no end in sight. It was now late in December 1558, almost two years since they entered the country. Instead of waiting longer, Oviedo wrote down his theological disputations in the local Ethiopian language and handed them over to Claudius. He was ready to depart, but Claudius would not allow him to leave unanswered. He, too, responded in writing, giving the Jesuits an extended lecture as if to disabuse them of their Roman heresy. Furthermore, he made it clear that he would never submit to the pope. With this written exchange, the first Jesuit attempts in Ethiopia had reached a deadlock.

Oviedo and his team left the imperial court in February 1559 without any idea of what they might do next. Rejected by their hosts and unconnected to the outside world, they were left entirely to their own means. Frustrated, and with nothing more to lose, Oviedo thought it was about time he moved on. He issued yet another circular letter, denouncing Ethiopians as "refractory and obstinate against the Church."²⁷ Now that he could not convert Claudius, he appealed to ordinary Ethiopians, as if to the gentiles, and urged them to disobey their emperor and embrace Catholicism. He focused more on the Portuguese diaspora and their families who were already Catholics, warning them to be very cautious when dealing with "schismatics."

26 Tellez, *Travels of the Jesuits*, 139–40; cf. Páez, *Pedro Páez's History of Ethiopia*, 2:30.

27 Tellez, *Travels of the Jesuits*, 140.

It is impossible to know what Claudius's reaction to the tactless circular would have been had he had time to pay attention to its details. At that time, the security situation in Ethiopia was dire, and the emperor had had to leave for battle, during which he himself was killed on March 23, 1559. Then the situation went from bad to worse. Since Claudius left no male heir, his throne was up for grabs. Minas (Admās Säggäd I [1560–63]), his much harsher brother and successor, initially dealt favorably with the Jesuits, hoping to use them as a bargaining chip for Portuguese support. Oviedo insisted that if he sought Portuguese help, it would necessarily be linked to conversion to Catholicism. The negotiations took a new turn when there were attempts, organized by a section of the imperial army and the nobility, to replace Minas with Tezkaro, his brother, whom they considered the rightful heir. For his part, Tezkaro sought to win Catholic support against his brother, an extremely attractive proposition to the Jesuits since a significant proportion of the population was probably genuinely tired of Minas's cruelty and were looking forward to his deposition.

Under the circumstances, Oviedo was carefully watched by both sides. He seems to have betrayed himself by manifesting an inclination toward Tezkaro. That inclination heightened suspicion among the Orthodox clergy who had always feared that the Catholic bishop in their midst, even when ignored and left alone, might acquire some influence. Now, aligning themselves with Minas, they promoted the idea that Oviedo supported Tezkaro, thus turning the conflict into one between a state in power and one in waiting, and between an established church and one that was proscribed.

Minas responded mercilessly. He began to hunt Catholics down and appeared as if he would be satisfied by nothing less than their utter destruction. He even blamed Catholicism for his brother's premature death. He started to grab the land that had been given to the Portuguese as compensation for their services to his predecessors in different battles. While Claudius had tolerated native Ethiopian spouses of the Portuguese who converted to Catholicism, Minas punished those who converted, some by beheading, others by public whipping, yet others by imprisonment. He took the children of Catholic converts away from their parents. On one occasion, he sent for Oviedo and instructed him not to carry out any ministries, to which order the bishop responded he could never forbear preaching the word of God. "What I do is my office," said Oviedo, and "I shall not on any grounds fail to carry it out and teach everyone who wants to hear the holy, true and Catholic faith from me, even if it costs me my life."²⁸ Minas was infuriated by the bishop's stubborn response.

28 Páez, *Pedro Páez's History of Ethiopia*, 2:46.

He charged at him, grabbed him by his hands, tore away his garments, and, while pinning him down, struggled to reach for a sword he had accidentally dropped. Oviedo escaped only with the help of those present at the encounter. He was held prisoner for six months, after which he was banished to the drier northeastern region that came to be referred to as Fremona, so named after the ancient St. Frumentius (d.383), who is credited with the first evangelization of Ethiopia. Oviedo lived there for another six months in the company of Brother Francisco López, sometimes in caves, and often on a diet of herbs and roots.

The remaining story of this first part of the Ethiopian Jesuit mission is one of self-preservation in a hostile environment. The six Jesuits in Ethiopia strove to remain faithful to their calling, yet they gained little result to show for their effort. From Fremona, they looked to the northeastern region of Dəbarwa near the sea and lived in endless expectation of some news from India or Portugal, or for an opportunity to send news themselves. They spent most of their time ministering to the few Catholics who remained on the fringes of the empire, most of whom were either Portuguese or of Portuguese descent, or simply connected to the Portuguese by marriage or employment.

Even though the entire coast was now under Turkish control, the mission in Dəbarwa looked as if it had a chance to survive and probably grow. Isaac, the *baḥār nāgaš* who initially welcomed Oviedo and his team in 1557, remained open to Catholic missions, not least because there was a sizable Portuguese diaspora under him. Moreover, he too was opposed to Minas's highhandedness and, like the Jesuits, was supporting Tezkaro's pretense to power. By 1562, however, Tezkaro had been captured and put to death. In a strange turn of events, Christian opponents of Minas found allies among the Muslim Turks on the coast, which exacerbated the emperor's fury. The fight between Minas and the Turks developed into a full-blown battle, and the condition of the Jesuit missionaries became even more precarious. For a while, they were held captive by the Turkish side of the battle. First robbed of their possessions and then imprisoned, they had been reduced to a state of beggary when they were eventually released. "Your Reverence may guess what a miserable condition we are in," wrote Fernández to Jerónimo Nadal (1507–80), adding that the bishop was not even fit to be seen.²⁹ This was in 1562, when the mission was well into its slow process of dying.

It was during the mission's dying years that the Jesuits enjoyed the most freedom. In 1563, Minas died in battle and was succeeded by his thirteen-year-old son, Śārśä Dəngəl (Mälʿak Säggäd I [1550–97, 1.1563–97]). Too young to rule,

29 Tellez, *Travels of the Jesuits*, 143.

too busy with fighting to subdue the still defiant Oromo, and without control over the coast, Śārsā Dəngəl had little time left for religious intrigue. Just as he paid little attention to the views of the Ethiopian Orthodox clergy, he neither supported nor opposed the Jesuits, and sometimes he appeared to be actively ignoring them. The Jesuits had also given up hope on the political class and had come to identify themselves more and more with the simple Catholics who had nothing to lose by remaining faithful to them. In his letter to Laínez, Fernández would write: “[We are] forty in family, and forced to relieve, when we are able, the Portuguese widows and orphans.”³⁰ Rather than seeking to convert a whole empire through its state apparatus, the Jesuits had come to discover some potential in the simple people with whom they suffered persecution.

When news of their suffering finally reached Europe, the cardinal archbishop and future king Henrique of Portugal (1512–80, r.1578–80) persuaded Pope Pius V (1504–72, r.1566–72) to close the Jesuit mission in Ethiopia. The pope granted the permission in February 1566, and the information reached Oviedo in the following year. However, the bishop was no longer interested in leaving Ethiopia. At that time, he was looking after two stable Catholic villages of his own making, both with a population of about 230 people, which also served as sanctuaries to many more who came from far afield. With this experience, Oviedo had come to believe that many ordinary Ethiopians could become Catholics, since they were “well-meaning people” and “not highly given over to idolatry”³¹—a statement that manifests a measure of conversion on his part. In a lengthy response to the pope’s instruction to close Ethiopia in favor of Japan or China, Oviedo argued:

To abandon these people, Holy Father, would seem not to be humane, even if there were fewer of them, because if that good and most holy shepherd who gave his soul for his sheep, Christ Our Lord, saw that just one was lost, he would not abandon it, but would go and look for it and bring it back on his shoulders.³²

When, in 1572, Turkish excursions around Dəbarwa forced a Catholic community that lived there to move farther into the interior, Oviedo assigned Gonçalo Cardoso and Francisco López to move with it while he remained near the coast

30 Tellez, *Travels of the Jesuits*, 143.

31 Páez, *Pedro Páez’s History of Ethiopia*, 2:51–52; also cf. Tellez, *Travels of the Jesuits*, 146; James Brodrick, *The Progress of the Jesuits, 1556–79* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1986), 264.

32 Páez, *Pedro Páez’s History of Ethiopia*, 2:52.

in the vain hope for communication across the sea. While on the way, Cardoso was murdered by robbers. López was seriously wounded in the arm, but, persevering, he went on to settle with his community in the region of Dämbäya. The Jesuits continued to hope for Portuguese military intervention in Ethiopia, but now not so much to support the emperor against the Turks as to defend the freedom of simple Ethiopians to convert to and remain in the faith of their choice. The idea of converting masses through their kings had been turned upside down.

Were it not for their failure to communicate with India, Portugal, or Rome, the Jesuits could have stayed in Ethiopia in their current state with a measure of peace. With this failure, however, their hope for Portuguese intervention gradually waned. Their companions in Goa were anxious too. In 1560, Brother Freire, who had been in the first reconnaissance mission in 1555, was sent again to Ethiopia to find out what was going on. He reached the Ethiopian coast and left some letters there that eventually reached Oviedo. On his way back, Freire was captured by the Turks and kept as a slave in Cairo until he was ransomed two years later. In Goa, Patriarch Barreto was getting tired of waiting too. He wrote to Rome requesting that he be relieved from his burdensome dignity and responsibilities for Ethiopia. A negative response reached Goa after his death on December 20, 1562. From inside Ethiopia, an attempt to send out Guldamez, in the company of a Portuguese man named Marcos Fernández, turned fatal. The two were captured at the port of Massawa in August 1562 and were immediately executed. Jesuits on both sides of the Red Sea were made brutally aware that the Ethiopia mission would not be revitalized by a supply of new personnel or even by fresh ideas from outside.

By virtue of Barreto's death, the coadjutor bishop Oviedo became the Catholic patriarch of Ethiopia, the first to reside in his see. In his last days, he lived in a small, thatched chalet at Fremona, on a diet of teff (*Eragrostis tef*) and cabbage. Oviedo died on July 9, 1577, apparently because of kidney stones.

The remaining Jesuits kept on working as if Ethiopia were the entire world and the only one in which to labor. Manoel Fernández, the mission superior, died of exhaustion and fever on Christmas Day, 1585 (or probably January 7, 1586, the Ethiopian Christmas). Despite his old age, Antonio Fernández continued to work in Ethiopia, sometimes covering distances of up to 480 kilometers to administer the sacraments to a dying convert. He died on May 10, 1593. Francisco López was the last of the first Jesuit team to die in Ethiopia. He had entered the country as a brother, but Oviedo had ordained him to the priesthood before he died. Now, as the last priest standing amid a tried Catholic community that looked up to him as to an only shepherd, he

spent his last moments pondering on what would be appropriate last words for a dying apostle who was about to leave his flock untended. Reportedly, he settled on asking his community to stay faithful and hope for another priest who would come to them in about a year's time. López died on May 17, 1597, bringing an end to a forty-year story of faithful commitment to a cause against all odds that marked the first part of the early Jesuit mission in Ethiopia. It would be another six years before Ethiopia saw Jesuits again.

Farther south, Mozambique was experiencing the Jesuits in a remarkably different way. Whereas in Ethiopia Jesuits ventured into a country where Portugal had no political control, in Mozambique, as also in Angola, they mainly rode on the back of Portuguese trading interests and colonial adventurism. A first mission that was properly directed to the southeast African region was led from Goa by Silveira, who had traveled to the east in the company of Barreto and Oviedo. Silveira had had a full career as a missionary in India, where he served for three years as provincial superior, appointed to the position by Loyola. It was after his term as provincial that he was sent to eastern Africa, responding to an invitation from King Gamba of Tonge (variously appearing in sources as Otongue, Tongue, Tongwe, Tonga, etc.). Through trading contacts, Gamba's son had received baptism at the Church of São Paulo in Mozambique, with the Portuguese captain standing as his godfather. Returning home, he stirred up interest in Christianity at Tonge, which led Gamba to send a request for missionaries. The request was taken to the Jesuits in Goa by the Dominican bishop Jorge Temudo (d.1571) of Cochin and later archbishop of Goa, who, while on his way to occupy his see, had stopped at Mozambique.³³

Together with Silveira were Father Andrés Fernandes (d.1568) and Brother Andrés da Costa, who had also been assigned to the African mission. The three reached the island of Mozambique on February 4, 1560. They brought with them an abundance of enthusiasm, as Silveira indicated. "We found things here more hopeful than we anticipated," he wrote to the provincial in Goa, "although we brought with us very good expectations."³⁴ From there, they proceeded to the coastal port of Inhambane farther south on the Mozambican mainland. Inhambane, a Portuguese trading post since 1534, was well known to ivory traders from the mainland. From there, the Jesuits proceeded to Tonge in

33 Hubert Chadwick, *Life of the Venerable Gonçalo da Silveira of the Society of Jesus: Pioneer Missionary and Proto-Martyr of South Africa* (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1910), 49–52.

34 Silveira to provincial in Goa, February 12, 1560, in George McCall Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa: Collected in Various Libraries and Archive Departments in Europe*, 9 vols. (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1898–1903), 2:55 (Portuguese original on p. 54).

the interior, about eighty kilometers from Inhambane, and opened a mission station there.

Though short-lived, the Tonge mission was successful in more ways than one. As a missionary starting point, the Jesuits seem to have “understood that conversion depended on a thorough understanding of a particular culture—its material basis, its social relations and its religious ideas.”³⁵ As a result, they embarked on recording the African cultures, political systems, and economies they observed, producing some of the documents that the historian of southern Africa George McCall Theal (1837–1919) would later describe as “the clearest, best written, and far the most interesting documents now in existence upon the country.”³⁶ Even when somewhat skewed by the proselytizing goals of their authors, the Jesuit letters and reports provide “a deeply informative first-hand account of the local population,” which the prominent historian of Portuguese Africa Malyn Newitt has called “the first systematic attempt at an anthropology of eastern Africa.”³⁷

The Jesuits’ second achievement is more problematic, however, and does not seem to have progressed from their acclaimed understanding of culture as a basis for conversion. Within seven weeks of their stay at Tonge, King Gamba, his family, and hundreds of his subjects had been baptized, obviously with little preparation and, therefore, with a shaky foundation upon which the Christian faith was based. Silveira estimated that he had baptized up to 450 people from Tonge and its surroundings, all of whom accepted baptism without asking or receiving anything in return. One would think of this as a very good beginning indeed. The Jesuits had even started to give the Spiritual Exercises to their neophytes, probably the first time this Ignatian spiritual practice was used anywhere in Africa.

Reporting in detail about the experience of mass conversions at Tonge, Silveira judged his new Christians to be like children, not necessarily in a negative sense, but in their propensity for communal action and “as far as any intellectual impediment in receiving the faith is concerned, for none of them have any kind of idol or form of worship resembling idolatry.” This was not blind optimism, for Silveira had paid careful attention to their cultures and traditions and had identified up to five matters that he judged to

35 Malyn Newitt, ed., *East Africa* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2017), xxi.

36 George McCall Theal, *History of Africa South of the Zambesi: From the Settlement of the Portuguese at Sofala in September 1505 to the Conquest of the Cape Colony by the British in September 1795*, 3rd ed., 3 vols. (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1916), 1:442.

37 Newitt, *East Africa*, xxi.

be errors against the Christian faith. First, polygamy. Even though only a few men had multiple wives, Silveira found it objectionable that all held the practice in high esteem. Second, superstitious belief in sorcery, some traditions surrounding the dead, and the wearing of protective charms. Third, swearing by blowing into each other's faces instead of simply invoking the name of God. Fourth, when a man died without children, his brother took his wife for his own. And, fifth, the Batongas practiced circumcision, an error, according to Silveira, taught to them by a certain Muslim who visited their lands.³⁸ Silveira never considered these to be insurmountable obstacles to the faith, however. He remained optimistic that Tonge and all the lands beyond it were ready to enter the divine fold.

Though more cautious than Silveira, Fernandes shared his superior's optimism in the early days of the mission, as the letters he wrote in June 1560 indicate. He reported to the provincial in Goa, António de Quadros (1528–72), that many of the people at Tonge “like very much to hear and understand the Christian doctrine, and are easily reclaimed from their errors.” He found them “more domesticated and friendly” than one might have thought, adding the crucial caveat that “if we had sufficient people here and they persevered, there is no doubt but that an excellent republic could be formed.”³⁹ To Brother Luiz Froes (1532–97) in Goa, Fernandes said people received baptism with “great good will” and that the commandments pleased them a great deal. He could hear the new Christians of Tonge discuss Christian doctrine among themselves, giving every indication of easily abandoning their errors. On one occasion, he saw a baptized nephew of their host king stopping an unbaptized person from sitting among the baptized because he considered it improper. “I (thanks be to God) find myself very well here,” the optimistic Fernandes said to Froes in conclusion, “with more consolation and contentment than I have ever felt before.”⁴⁰ To the brothers and priests in Goa, he expressed again the enthusiasm with which his teaching was received and reported an incident where he found his Christians discussing a case where one of them had wronged “a little one,” disputing whether such a person really loved his neighbor as he loved himself. These and many other signs gave him hope that the Tonge converts would prove very good Christians. “And not only those of this kingdom wish to

38 Silveira to the fathers and brothers of the College of Goa, August 9, 1560, in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 2:292–96, here 93–94 (Portuguese original on pp. 88–92).

39 Andrés Fernandes to the provincial of India, June 24, 1560, in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 2:61–68, here 65 (Portuguese original on pp. 55–61).

40 Andrés Fernandes to Brother Luis Froes, June 25, 1560, in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 2: 73–77, passim (Portuguese original on pp. 68–73).

be Christians, but also those of the neighbouring kingdoms,” said Fernandes in conclusion, “and therefore beloved brethren prepare, and know that here is a great harvest for many labourers.”⁴¹

Fernandes’s cautious optimism called for time, patience, and more investment, especially in personnel. There was a great harvest, yes, but it called for many laborers. His letter to the provincial of India, cited above, goes to great lengths to describe the local conditions, opportunities, and needs, eventually reading like an appeal for more Jesuits to be sent to the African mission. The conclusion to his letter to the priests and brothers in Goa, also referred to above, is an obvious appeal for more laborers.

The letter Fernandes wrote to the provincial also reads like a critique of Silveira, the mission superior, whose optimism seemed to have lacked caution. To the complete surprise of his two companions, Silveira’s enthusiasm ignited in him an irresistible zeal to move on rather than to consolidate what already had the appearance of a good beginning at Tonge. And so, leaving Fernandes and Costa at the new mission station, he returned to Inhambane to embark on a fresh journey farther north in pursuit of a grander dream that he would eventually consummate, like the male honeybee, at the cost of his very life. “I cannot understand the motive of Father Dom Gonçalo,” wrote Fernandes to the provincial, “for I can never get anything from him except that a brother and myself are sufficient here, and another Father and a brother on shore, and that we should communicate with each other for feast days.” He considered that suggestion unrealistic because of the number of people involved and their readiness to receive baptism. In his opinion,

not having sufficient men for all in this kingdom who are Macarangas [Karanga], we should be employed in its vicinity until we are accustomed to the land and climate and can traverse it without danger, and can become practised in the language, and then though we may be few, we could separate, and being used to the country, could visit each other more frequently than we can now do in the beginning.

Fernandes’s ideas were sent to the provincial at least six months after Silveira’s departure, however, and a lot had happened to Silveira that Fernandes did not yet know about. As he traveled back to the coast, Silveira baptized more people along the way, and Fernandes continued to baptize several more at Tonge.⁴²

41 Andrés Fernandes to the fathers and brothers of the College of Goa, June 26, 1560, in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 2:83–88, passim (Portuguese original on pp. 77–83).

42 Andrés Fernandes to the provincial in India, Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 2:61–68, here 63–64 (Portuguese original on pp. 55–61).

With time, Fernandes's optimism started to fade away. Shortly after Silveira had left Tonge, Costa too returned to Inhambane, traveling from there to the island of Mozambique en route to Goa, having been too sickly to remain in the African mission. After he had spent over a year at the place, most of it as the only Jesuit, Fernandes could still hope, even though he was becoming more cautious than optimistic. In June 1561, he sent letters to Brothers Mario and Gaspar Italo, both of them in Portugal, in which he described himself as being "in Ethiopia instructing the blacks," who up to that time had proven "very troublesome and show but little result in the principles."⁴³ Fernandes's tone had changed significantly. The Africans who initially could be easily reclaimed from their errors were now described as people with "endless superstitions [...] from which it is very difficult to convert them." Moreover, "when you have just convinced them and induced them to confess that your teaching is truth and their practices are false, they immediately go and act precisely as before, so that they are very difficult people to deal with and require great patience."⁴⁴ Yet, as might please God, "little by little they will be drawn to see the truth of our holy faith," a process that could still transform Fernandes's toil into consolation. In fact, even as he wrote in obvious distress, he could place his hope on a few among his African converts who were—in his own words—"a great consolation to me in the Lord."⁴⁵

In all his available correspondence from Tonge, Fernandes does not give any hint of there being a response from the provincial superior to his recommendations for the mission, creating the impression of a man completely abandoned to his own means in a very challenging context. As he became increasingly dependent on his hosts for sustenance, he exposed himself as a weakened preacher of an ineffective message, an impression he had tried hard to avoid creating in the beginning because of the negative impact it would have on the mission. While he could have rode on horseback or paid Africans to carry him from Inhambane to Tonge as other Portuguese did, Fernandes had bravely walked the entire journey, even though with great difficulty, and had kept the pace that his African guides set, for, as he put it, "it was for my own honour to keep up with the Kaffirs, as otherwise they would not acknowledge my authority."⁴⁶ He seems to have understood that he was dealing with a

43 Andrés Fernandes to Brother Mario, June 3, 1561, in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 2:97–98 (Portuguese original on p. 97).

44 Andrés Fernandes to Gaspar Italo, June 3, 1561, in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 2:98–99 (Portuguese original on p. 98).

45 Andrés Fernandes to Brother Mario, June 3, 1561, in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 2:97–98 (Portuguese original on p. 97).

46 Andrés Fernandes to Brother Luis Froes, June 25, 1560, in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 2:73–77, here 73 (Portuguese original on pp. 68–73).

culture that linked authority to personal honor. He believed he had succeeded only with God's intervention, for the guides walked very fast. When he arrived, the king marveled that, despite his advanced age, he had traveled on foot and in just a few days. Physical strength in an advanced age that was purely estimated from his gray hair, coupled with his ability to interpret what was written in books, made some consider him the greatest wizard, a magician, and a sage of a rank that was higher than that held by any others among them. To guard this honor, when his beddings felt deficient, he endured the discomfort at night rather than make a request for more supplies, fearing that a display of want might set a bad example to them.⁴⁷ Now the man who so carefully preserved his honor and authority had become completely dependent on those who chose to be charitable to him. Describing his misery after he had left the mission, Fernandes said, "I almost died of hunger, for though other hardships were felt, hunger was the worst." At one point, he relied on milk and eggs that some friendly neighbors—"the best men in the country"—allowed him to have on credit until a visiting friend came to clear his debt. In a span of two years, he had become so weakened that he could no longer walk farther than half a league (about 2.4 kilometers), whereas in the past he covered up to seven, eight, or more leagues (about 33.8 or 38.6 or more kilometers).⁴⁸ Fernandes had no more honor to hang on to and, it would appear, had lost the authority with which to keep the mission going.

The details of Fernandes's miseries during his last days at Tonge are found in an account he prepared for his companions in Portugal after he had left the mission. In this, he reveals that even the little optimism he had tried to hold on to had vanished. He had come to observe how little change there was in the real lives of his African converts as a result of the faith they had accepted in baptism, and effort on his part to threaten them to observance almost led to his own death. Even Gamba the king warned the missionary under pain of death never again to threaten him with eternal flames in hell. And if Fernandes was inclined to ignore warnings—as he frequently did—his African hosts forced him to oblige by forbidding him to preach, or by denying him supplies of food, or even by more physical types of threats. In his own words:

47 Andrés Fernandes to the fathers and brothers of the College of Goa, June 26, 1560, in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 2:83–88, here 87 (Portuguese original on pp. 77–83).

48 Andrés Fernandes to brothers and fathers of the Society in Portugal, December 5, 1562, in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 2:140–52, here 150–51 (Portuguese original on pp. 129–40).

Another time they surrounded me with their arms, which they put near to my eyes, but no farther; others cried aloud, "Kill him with arrows, or let us burn him in his house," and all this with great fury, but it seems that I was not then to share the fate of Father Dom Gonçalo, who is in glory. Nevertheless I do not think I was ever overcome with terror by their threats, so as to desist from boldly reprehending them for their superstitions, and even the king himself, in such a manner that his people were alarmed at what I said, and feared to be present at the time.⁴⁹

Fernandes's life was spared partly because he appeared to be of an advanced age and partly because Gamba thought he might still be able to use him in some other way, probably as a bargaining chip for Portuguese support.

It is also the case that in all his correspondence from Tonge, Fernandes gives the impression that he did not know where Silveira had headed to or what had happened to him beyond his journey back to Inhambane. This is all the more surprising because Silveira was writing to the provincial in India about his dream destination even before they founded the mission station at Tonge.⁵⁰ It also suggests that there was little or no communication at all from Goa to Tonge, hardly explainable given the frequency of Portuguese trading activities in the area and, especially, on the island of Mozambique. We know from his report to companions in Portugal, however, that, after two years and some months at Tonge, Fernandes received "letters of obedience" directing him to return to Goa. He made his way to Inhambane and to the Mozambique island, departing from there sometime after August 1562.

If the idea of converting masses through their kings had been proven ineffective in Ethiopia and, to some extent, in Tonge after Silveira's departure, it was still a dazzling prospect for the mission superior. It was his fixation with converting the Monomotapa empire that made Silveira leave Fernandes languishing in terror and privation at the much smaller kingdom of Tonge and start off to what was still a mystery to him. Exactly what Silveira knew about the Monomotapa empire and its ruler who bore the same title is not directly available to us, but what his first biographer Nicolau Godinho (1561–1616) wrote in 1612 is close to what one finds in other sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature. "Of the many various princes in this country," that is, south-eastern Africa, says Godinho, "the one who excels in property and forces is

49 Andrés Fernandes to brothers and fathers of the Society in Portugal, December 5, 1562, in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 2:148.

50 Silveira to provincial in Goa, February 12, 1560, in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 2: 55 (Portuguese original on p. 54).

the king of Monomotapa, who accordingly holds the position of emperor.”⁵¹ The Monomotapa probably formed an important center of a vast trading network rather than a politically hierarchized empire. The Monomotapa that Silveira would have born in his mind as he traveled to eastern Africa was an object of European fables, not too different from previous notions of Prester John: “Golden in every sense, and governed by a highly civilized ruler of great power and wisdom, whose conversion would bring Christianity through the heart of this unknown continent.”⁵² Not without reason, imaginations of the Monomotapa were fertilized by the more ancient monuments known today as the Great Zimbabwe, which were then thought to be “nothing less than the site of one of the ancient Ophirs”⁵³ and the location from where “the queen of Sheba had loaded her camels with gold.”⁵⁴ Writing in 1631, and presumably after having consulted all the sources available to him at the time, Bishop Lorenzo Tramalli (1577–1649) of Gerace, Italy, and apostolic collector to Portugal, said:

The kingdom of Monomotapa is very large and full of people, nearly all Pagans, and without knowledge of religion. It is rich in gold mines, ebony, and ivory. And in the opinion of many it is the ancient Ophir, where Solomon sent his ships, which sailed through the Red Sea to the Coast of Africa. A very easy navigation and full of ports. The extent of the kingdom is not known, but it is believed to be bounded on one side by the kingdom of Angola, and on the other by that of Prester John.⁵⁵

Now, to convert the Monomotapa was Silveira’s singular focus, so much so that, as he neared the place, he refused to baptize Mingoxale, king of the smaller kingdom of Guilôa, who requested baptism of his own volition. “Let the Monomotapa himself be converted,” Silveira said, “and all these less important chiefs would follow him.” In his opinion, “if one of them became a Christian without the

51 Cf. Nicolau Godinho, *Vita Patris Gonzali Sylveriae, Societatis Iesu Sacerdotis, in urbe Monomotapa martyrium Passi* (Lyon: Sumptibus Horatij Cardon, 1612), 66. The title *monomotapa* or *munhumutapa* referred both to the monarch (in this case the emperor) and to the empire over which he reigned.

52 W. F. [William Francis] Rea, *Gonçalo Silveira: Protomartyr of Southern Africa* (Salisbury: Rhodesiana Society, 1960), 24.

53 H. Rider Haggard, “Preface” to Alexander Wilmot, *Monomotapa (Rhodesia): Its Monuments, and Its History from the Most Ancient Times to the Present Century* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1896), xii–xxiv, here xiv.

54 Godinho, *Vita Patris Gonzali Sylveriae*, 119–20; cf. Rea, *Gonçalo Silveira*, 23.

55 “Appendix B” in Wilmot, *Monomotapa*, 253–38, here 254.

Monomotapa being consulted, the great emperor might feel affronted, and the conversion of his own vast dominions might be jeopardised.”⁵⁶

Silveira had reached the mouth of the great Zambezi River on which he was to travel upstream toward the Monomotapa country. As he embarked on this crucial part of his missionary journey, he begged his company of strangers not to disturb him as he quietly made a spiritual retreat for eight days. By the time the retreat was over, it was time to disembark at Sena, where he had to remain for two months waiting for permission to enter the grounds of the Monomotapa. Being so near to his final destination, Silveira sensed that he was already entering holy ground, for which reason he reportedly asked those with him to “kneel down and say a *Pater Noster* and an *Ave Maria* to our Lady of Grace, for the conversion of the king of Monomotapa.”⁵⁷ He made the most of his time there. He learned a local Karanga dialect, having earlier picked up another language spoken at Inhambane. His hosts at Sena formed a familiar but lapsed company of Portuguese and Indian Christians who kept numerous concubines. To these, he preached repentance and administered the sacraments, then went on to baptize about four hundred of their African dependents. This he did even as he still refused to baptize another local king of a place called Inhamior, near Sena, for the same argument that the Monomotapa should enjoy the privilege of going first.

As the waiting at Sena got longer, Silveira secured the services of a Portuguese man named Gomes Coelho as his guide and translator. Coelho lived at Tete to the northwest of Sena. He was a person of interest to Silveira because, besides knowing the local language, he was a friend of the reigning Monomotapa, who was a young man named Chisamharu Negomo Mupunzagutu (c.1543–c.1589, r. c.1560–89). However, as Silveira was cleared to proceed, Coelho accompanied him only as far as his hometown of Tete. On Christmas Eve, 1560, Silveira was within the precincts of the imperial court. Here, he celebrated all the customary Masses of the day. He was met here by another friendly Portuguese resident

56 Rea, *Gonçalo Silveira*, 25; cf. Luis Froes, “Voyage of the Father Dom Gonçalo to the Kingdom of Monomotapa and of His Happy Passing Away,” written from Goa and dated December 15, 1561, in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 2:116–28, here 118–19 (Portuguese original on pp. 104–15).

57 Froes, “Voyage of the Father Dom Gonçalo,” 104. The reader may want to know that in other writings of a more hagiographic nature, Silveira’s devotion to the Blessed Mother is presented as extraordinary. See, for example, Chadwick, *Life of the Venerable Gonçalo da Silveira*, 29. Given the significant role of the Blessed Lady in the dramatic events at the Monomotapa mission, it is quite possible that the devotion was read back into the life of Silveira.

named Antonio Caiado, who also spoke the local language, was well known to the Monomotapa, and was familiar with other personalities at court, including the Monomotapa's mother, who, like Säblä-Wängel in the court of Claudius in Ethiopia, also wielded enormous political influence. Caiado became central to the unfolding events of Silveira's mission, and it is thanks to him that we know so much about the mission's last days.

Silveira expected a lot from his royal host. Monomotapa Negomo Mupunzagutu also expected a lot from Silveira. Like most African rulers of his time, the Monomotapa is likely to have expected Portuguese military support against his enemies or backing for expansionist campaigns.⁵⁸ To impress his incoming Portuguese guest, most likely with the hope of gaining the most out of him, the Monomotapa sent envoys to meet Silveira with an abundance of gifts of gold, cattle, and slaves. These, it would appear, were the kinds of things that Portuguese traders who wandered into the area looked for. Yet, Silveira was after something significantly different, and as he politely turned down the offer, he sent his first disturbing signal to the emperor. Never had he had to deal with a Portuguese man who wanted neither gold, nor other trading goods, nor slaves. On December 26, 1560, Silveira reached the court of the Monomotapa. He was assigned his own hut to stay in, and, in the evening, he had an audience with the emperor. The emperor repeated his offer of wives, gold, land, or oxen should Silveira desire them, but the missionary rebuffed these yet again. The emperor was so astonished by this behavior that for a moment he thought Silveira could have had his origins in herbs rather than in human parents.⁵⁹

One can hardly miss the power game that was at play in these encounters. Whereas acceptance of the Monomotapa's offer might have placed the host and his guest on a par, and whereas a hugely exaggerated amount of gifts might have given the emperor an upper hand in the negotiations that followed, Silveira's indifference to material things completely disarmed the emperor and left him powerless. Gift-giving allowed one the chance "to claim parity of status"—to use Renaissance historian Kate Lowe's apt coinage.⁶⁰ Before Silveira, the emperor had no bargaining chip. Like the biblical Herod's offer of even half of his kingdom to his dancing daughter, the Monomotapa ended

58 S. I. G. [Stanislaus Isaak Goreraivo] Mudenge, *A Political History of Munhumutapa: c.1400–1702* (Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House, 1988), 63.

59 Froes, "Voyage of the Father Dom Gonçalo," 120.

60 Kate Lowe, "'Representing' Africa: Ambassadors and Princes from Christian Africa to Renaissance Italy and Portugal, 1402–1608," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 17 (2007): 101–28, here 124.

the first evening's negotiations with a desperate offer of anything that Silveira might want. For his part, Silveira retired to his hut with a smile on his face, knowing that the conversion of the emperor and his people was exactly the thing—indeed the everything—that he wanted.

The negotiations between the Monomotapa and Silveira continued in the following days. Interactions with other people also took place early on during Silveira's stay at the Monomotapa's residence. It was these interactions that would lead to the emperor asking for baptism of his own volition, however poorly he understood it at the time. Some people, having seen an image of the Virgin Mary in Silveira's hut, spoke to the emperor about it. The emperor asked to see the image, and Silveira promptly took it to him, explaining that it was the image of the Blessed Mother of God to whom every king and commoner on earth was subject. At the emperor's request, Silveira made a shrine for the image in the emperor's hut and left it with him. After some days, the emperor claimed to have had something akin to the calling of Samuel in the scriptures. He confessed to have seen the lady in the image smiling at him and heard her speaking to him in a language that he, unfortunately, could not understand. The emperor himself narrated the matter to Silveira, admitting that it worried him. Seeing a clear opportunity, and, as it were, playing the part of the biblical priest Eli, Silveira told the emperor that when he became a Christian he would understand well what was being said to him in a divine and celestial language. A few days later, the emperor sent Caiado to inform Silveira that he and his mother were ready to receive baptism.⁶¹

There followed about sixteen to eighteen days of preparations leading to the baptism of the Monomotapa and his mother, the former taking the name Sebastião after the reigning king in Portugal, and the latter, Donna Maria, probably after the previously presented Blessed Mother. A hundred cows given to Silveira at the occasion were all slaughtered after his command, and the meat was dried and freely distributed to those who needed meat to eat. This generosity turned Silveira into a missionary celebrity around the royal capital, and his Christian message gained an instant appeal. Up to three hundred nobles were lining up for baptism, without counting commoners, keeping the missionary busy until sometime in the first week of March 1561. It appeared as if Silveira, still baptizing, had gained everything for nothing while his host was still wondering what was in it for himself. Silveira's gains were tenuous, and the scales could still be tipped either way.

61 Froes, "Voyage of the Father Dom Gonçalo," 121.

In fact, the scales were tipped against Silveira's apparent success. Not everyone was pleased with Silveira's presence at the court of the Monomotapa, much less with the instantaneous fame that he came to enjoy. Muslim traders from the coast who enjoyed business access to the emperor felt threatened, probably more for economic than religious reasons, and hatched a conspiracy to eliminate the missionary. By Friday, March 14, 1561, Silveira had been sentenced to death by the emperor himself. Caiado described the men behind the conspiracy as "*Moorish engangas*, who were the principal wizards of the country, four of whom draw lots with four sticks."⁶² Relying mainly on Caiado's account of the events, Froes described the chief among the conspirators as "a *Moor*, a native of Mozambique, who is the same Mafamede that is called Mingane, the *cacique* of the *Moors*."⁶³ These descriptions and the terms used in them provide a key to understanding at least to some degree what was actually happening at that time and thus place the sentence in some appropriate context. The use of "Moor" and the adjective "Moorish" is a simple reference to Muslims found in the region, which is common in most of the sources contemporary to this story. Although some authors have called them "Arabs"⁶⁴—and there could have been some Arabs—these could simply be Swahili traders from the coast. According to Caiado, these Moors were also *engangas*. Scholars are unanimous that this is a reference to *ngangas* as understood among the Shona people of Zimbabwe, meaning human spirit mediums with powers of divination and healing.⁶⁵ They would certainly be based at the Monomotapa's court because of the crucial services they offered, but it is unlikely that they would have been Muslims. While the account gives a strong suggestion of there being Muslim traders and African *ngangas* at the Monomotapa's residence at the same time, it is most likely mistaken in conflating them.⁶⁶ *Cacique* is most likely the Arabic *qasís*,⁶⁷ suggesting

62 Antonio Caiado, "Letter Written by Antonio Caiado from Monomotapa to One of His Friends in Another Part of the Same Country," in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 2: 101–4, here 102 (italics added) (Portuguese original on pp. 99–101).

63 Froes, "Voyage of the Father Dom Gonçalo," 123 (italics added).

64 See, for example, W. G. L. [William Graham Lister] Randles, *The Empire of Monomotapa: From the Fifteenth to the Nineteenth Century*, trans. R. S. Roberts (Gwelo: Mambo Press, 1981), 28.

65 M. Gelfand, "The Shona Religion," *Zambezia* 1, no. 1 (1969): 37–45, here 39.

66 Newitt, *East Africa*, 65n16.

67 The word is used on several occasions by Francis Xavier in his letter of September 20, 1542 to his companions in Rome, in one instance referring to "a very learned Moor of the sect of Mohammed, a *caciz*, that is, a teacher" whom he interacted with in Malindi. Translating Xavier's letter, M. Joseph Costelloe (1914–2000) offers the following explanation: "The Arabic word *qasís* was used by the Portuguese to indicate any Moslem teacher or servant

a Muslim cleric or teacher who was prominent among a trading party from the Mozambique island. The reason that Caiado provides for Silveira's death, that is, "the malicious persuasion of the Moors, who said so many different things to the king that he commanded him to be put to death that day,"⁶⁸ can thus be interpreted against the backdrop of these details.

A case against Silveira was put together by those who, for whatever reason, wished to see him eliminated, and it was then presented to the Monomotapa. Their accusations, as recorded by Caiado, can be consolidated into four points: first, that Silveira was an agent of the Portuguese governor of India and the captain of Sofala, sent to spy on the country in preparation for a Portuguese takeover. Second, that Silveira was also an agent of Chepute, a rival African king, who wished to stir up the *morefos* (elsewhere described as lords) against the Monomotapa. Indeed, it was argued, Silveira had stopped by Chepute's kingdom and had left his company there so that, coming alone, he might give the impression of someone who was genuinely interested in seeing the Monomotapa. Third, that Silveira came with the intention of killing the Monomotapa and all his people. The very acts of turning them into Christians by pouring water on them and pronouncing the words of the "Langarios" (a local word for the Portuguese) over them were meant to break their power to resist. The baptismal ritual was also explained as the means by which Silveira was taking over the land. A similar procedure had been employed in the conquest of Sofala, it was further argued, and so the Monomotapa had better be careful. Fourth, that Silveira was in fact a wizard who brought heat and hunger to the country. Evidence for this accusation was said to be the fact that Silveira carried a human bone (most likely a relic; he certainly carried an altar stone) and other medicines for purposes of killing the emperor and taking the land. After Silveira's death, the accusation of witchcraft was further trumped up by rumors that he had been seen walking half naked in front of the entrance to the emperor's residence, from which he picked barks of wood and tied them to his shirt; and that, following this action, a thunderbolt had broken a pole at the entrance. The conspirators are said to have left the emperor with little choice, for they also presented to him the disturbing scenario that would follow if he did not act swiftly, namely another man, also a wizard, accompanied by a woman, would come to the kingdom (probably implying total Portuguese occupation of the land), and that if not killed Silveira would escape in secret,

of Islam, whether *imâm* or *faqîb*. It is still used in the East to indicate a Christian priest." Costelloe, *Letters and Instructions*, 48n14.

68 Caiado, "Letter Written by Antonio Caiado from Monomotapa," 102.

throwing the entire country into a crisis that would make people kill each other without knowing who was to blame.⁶⁹

According to Caiado, therefore, it was on the basis of these allegations and under such pressure that the Monomotapa had passed sentence and ordered Silveira to be killed. Caiado learned of the decision on Friday, March 14. That same day, he informed Silveira about it in writing and then went to persuade the emperor to change his mind. The emperor promised to look into the matter, saying the most he could do was to allow Silveira to leave. Indeed, the following day, Saturday, he convened his council and asked his mother to attend. Caiado talked to the Monomotapa's mother on that Saturday after the meeting, who also said that Silveira would be allowed to leave. However, this was not to happen.

For his part, Silveira treated the news with a martyr's defiance. On hearing about the conspiracy against his life, he reportedly said that he was far more ready to die than his killers were ready to take his life. He celebrated Mass, and, on that fateful Saturday, he heard confessions and baptized fifty more people. He distributed some of his belongings and entrusted others, particularly those for celebrating Mass, to Caiado. In the evening, he dressed himself up in a cassock and a surplice, held on to his crucifix, and then walked up and down near his hut as he kept a vigil. As midnight approached, he retired to his hut, lighting two candles next to his crucifix. Caiado had sent two of his servants to spend the night with Silveira. These, we are told, were the eyewitnesses on whose account we have come to possess the most graphic details about the death of Christianity's first-documented martyr in sub-Saharan Africa outside of Ethiopia.

It was while Silveira was resting that Saturday night, March 15, 1561, that about seven or eight men entered his hut, led by someone who was recognized as Mocurume.⁷⁰ The leader laid Silveira on his chest; two others raised him from the ground by lifting up his hands and legs, thus extending his body; and two others tied a rope around his neck and then each one pulled either end. Blood came out of Silveira's nose and mouth as he died of strangulation. After he expired, most likely after midnight and therefore on Sunday, March 16, 1561, his body was dragged and thrown into a nearby river, named in the earliest

69 Caiado, "Letter Written by Antonio Caiado from Monomotapa," 102–4; also cf. Froes, "Voyage of the Father Dom Gonçalo," 123.

70 Although Froes recorded this as a personal name, Mocurume (or Mucurume) was in fact the title of a high-ranking official at the court of the Monomotapa. Gai Roufe, "The Reasons for a Murder: Local Cultural Conceptualizations of the Martyrdom of Gonçalo da Silveira in 1561," *Cahiers d'études africaines* 55, no. 219 (2015): 467–87, here 469.

sources as the Monsengense or its variant spellings.⁷¹ In this manner, the first Jesuit mission to southern-eastern Africa had come to a halt.

The Zimbabwean historian and politician Stanislaus Isaak Goreraivo Mudenge (1941–2012), who describes Silveira as “more or less a one-man army of invasion on behalf of Portugal and Rome,” further proses that the slain Jesuit “had more influence in the Mutapa state after his death than during his lifetime.”⁷² Indeed, Silveira’s martyrdom had long-term implications for Portugal’s imperial politics and for the fortunes of Christianity in the southern Africa region, some of which would have surprised the martyred man himself. With the young king Sebastião I (1554–78, r.1557–78) on the throne in Portugal, Portuguese imperial policy shifted steadily from merely maintaining trading posts on the African coast to conquering colonies with the hope of acquiring mineral wealth equivalent to what the Spaniards had acquired in the Americas. At this point, Portugal also sought tropical land for the establishment of settler plantations. Moreover, after they had failed to make headway first in Kongo and then in Mozambique, Jesuits also considered colonial conquest to be the best way to prepare the African ground for the sowing of the evangelical seed they were carrying. Jesuit opinion on what action Portugal might take in Africa carried significant weight.⁷³ And, in addition, an image of “Moors” held in southern Europe and now transplanted in southeastern Africa was just the last ingredient in a perfect recipe for war.

Thus, despite the obvious economic motives of those who, fearing they might lose influence and trading connections, conspired to have Silveira killed, early Christian authors were quick to construct a narrative with an obvious religious intent. The hatchers of the plot were no longer simply coastal traders who happened to be Muslims, but, by virtue of their religious affiliation, avowed enemies of the Christian faith. A later record of Silveira’s martyrdom, believed to have been composed in 1699 or 1700 and obtained from the Vatican archives, speaks of how “the wicked enemy of human kind, playing upon their envy, actively stirred up certain Mahometans, ready for this crime, to destroy

71 Caiado, “Letter Written by Antonio Caiado from Monomotapa,” 2:104; Froes, “Voyage of the Father Dom Gonçalo,” 2:126. However, sources going as far back as 1611 propose Motete, probably a lake, rather than Monsengense. Cf. Roufe, “Reasons for a Murder,” 474–76.

72 Mudenge, *Political History of Munhumutapa*, 63, 69.

73 D. [David] B. Birmingham, “The Mbundu and Neighbouring Peoples of Central Angola under the Influence of Portuguese Trade and Conquest, 1483–1790,” *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 38, no. 98 (1965): 224–27, here 225.

the faith of the King [of Portugal].”⁷⁴ This religious interpretation of the events blended with a general indignation that was aroused in Portugal at the manner in which Silveira was killed as well as the unrealistic hope for quantities of gold to service a struggling imperial project in India. Other grievances related to detention of Portuguese traders and obstruction of trade were heaped on the Silveira affair to create a strong-enough excuse for a sitting of the Mesa da Consciência e Ordens (Board of Conscience and Orders) in January 1569 to work out arguments for and determine parameters within which a just war could be waged against the Monomotapa.⁷⁵

In the board’s judgment, the Monomotapa and his close associates had “apostatized, leaving the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ which they professed” and had returned “to their heathen rites.” In the death of Silveira, “they kept no natural order or show of justice.” They

shelter[ed] in their territory many Moors, enemies of the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, who were the authors of many of the said offences and injuries and who will be the same in the future, without it being proved that there was any fault or disorder on the part of the Portuguese.

The board also viewed the entire matter within the context of the earlier-mentioned *Padroado Real*, here described as

the Apostolic Bulls by which is conceded to our lord the king alone (excluding all and each of the other Christian princes, under pain of grave censure) the commerce of all the kingdoms, islands, and provinces lying between the capes Não and Badjador and India, upon condition that the said king our Lord should cause the gospel to be preached in the said kingdoms and provinces, churches and temples to be built, and the necessary competent ministers to be provided.⁷⁶

The board’s carefully drafted decisions marked a significant turning point in the Portuguese imperial relationship with southeastern Africa:

74 “Appendix C” in Wilmot, *Monomotapa*, 241–52, here 243.

75 John Chesworth, “Determinação de letrados,” in *Christian-Muslim Relations 1500–1900*, ed. David Thomas, available at http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2451-9537_cmrii_COM_26493 (accessed September 15, 2021).

76 Duarte Carno Rangel et al., “Decision of the Lawyers: With the Conditions on Which War May Be Made upon Kings of the Conquest of Portugal, Especially upon the Monomotapa,” January 23, 1569, in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 3:153–56, here 154 (Portuguese original on pp. 150–53).

That our lord the king may and ought to command the preaching of the holy gospel in the kingdoms and dominions of Monomotapa, and in any others of his conquest, doing so with such caution and moderation as not to prevent the preaching of bearing fruit, and giving no cause for scandals; and to this end and for the safety of the ministers, if there should be fear of probable treachery or any other disturbances such as occur in the said kingdoms and dominions of Monomotapa, fortresses may be built and soldiers sent there; and in case the Kaffirs or any other people of the conquest refuse to admit the said ministers, or to allow them to preach the gospel with the said caution, or obstruct with violence the hospitality and commerce which are the common right of nations, if everything has been proposed and executed with due moderation, the captains and subjects of his Majesty may justly stand upon the defensive; and should it be necessary for the safety of their persons and property, they may make war, laying waste, making prisoners, taking places, and proceeding in all things according to the rights of lawful warfare, and they may also take all other means to assure their security. Our lord the king may also, in conformity with justice, especially in the said kingdoms and dominions of his conquest, prevent tyrannical laws and nefarious and unnatural rites, especially the putting to death of innocent persons, and when reasoning and gentle means cannot remedy this, he may justly make war and depose the kings and lords who obstruct him, and set up others, exercising all other rights of lawful warfare until the said practices and unjust deaths have effectually ceased.⁷⁷

The board further proposed that the Monomotapa could avoid war if he expelled all “Moors” from his territories as “the principal means of commencing and carrying out the enterprise of conversion with hope of fruit,” delivering the most guilty among them to the Portuguese. He would then have to allow missionary work in his country. Finally, he would also have to pay reparations through quantities of gold or by ceding lands and gold mines to Portugal. If the Monomotapa failed to do these things, then war for purposes of deposing him, confiscating his gold mines, and annexing his territories would be considered just.

Within weeks of the board’s decision, a thousand-man expedition under the command of Governor Francisco Barreto (1520–73) left Lisbon, with four Jesuit chaplains. The Jesuits Estevão Lopes and Francisco de Monclaro (1531–95) reached southeastern Africa, where the latter had a large say on the route the expedition took as he insisted on retracing Silveira’s journey. He is

77 Rangel et al., “Decision of the Lawyers,” 154.

also the author of a long report on the expedition, which bears much detail on places, peoples, and activities in southeastern Africa at that time.⁷⁸ From him, we know that, after several delays on the way, and having been diminished to seven hundred men, the expedition started its way up the Zambezi in 1572. Further tormented by malaria, sleeping sickness, and an acute lack of provisions, the expedition stopped at Sena, from where minor campaigns were carried out in the region. These sufficiently alarmed the Monomotapa so that he acceded to the Portuguese terms for peace.

Monclaro's mission to southeastern Africa had no direct missionary intent, and his reporting was more concerned with how the country could be made to yield profit for the king of Portugal than with the Christianization of its inhabitants. In fact, unlike Silveira and Fernandes, who had hope for the conversion of Africans, Monclaro saw no hope at all. The people who were, as he described them, "so wrapped up in their own customs and the pleasures of the flesh," saw no connection between Christianity and the next life, and, instead, thought that to be a Christian was simply a means to be friends with the Portuguese. The Africans not only held polygamy in high esteem but were "thieves, with neither faith nor truth, and if anything is given to them they think it is from fear, or because it is their fate and must necessarily come to them." His final verdict about the matter was that southeastern Africa was simply "a sepulchre for the Portuguese."⁷⁹

Nevertheless, as a result of the Portuguese expedition to southeastern Africa, a Jesuit presence was maintained in the region for the remaining part of the sixteenth century, if mainly to minister to Portuguese traders and colonists. There are hazy references to a Jesuit presence in Mozambique, Quelimane, Sena, and Tete as late as 1590.⁸⁰ There may have been some intermittent activities that lasted until 1607.⁸¹

A remaining theater of significant Jesuit activity in sixteenth-century Africa is to be found in the southwest, the region south of the Kongo Kingdom, in today's Angola. Angola, derived from the title *ngola* for a ruler in that region, is indeed the name that Portuguese and Jesuit sources use for this mission. Its center was the Ndongo Kingdom, historically a breakaway from Kongo and, in many ways, a rival to Kongo's prestige. In their search for influence

78 [Francisco de] Monclaro, "Journey Made by Fathers of the Company of Jesus with Francisco Barreto in the Conquest of Monomotapa in the Year 1569," in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 3:202–53 (Portuguese original on pp. 157–201).

79 Monclaro, "Journey Made by Fathers of the Company," 225.

80 Chadwick, *Life of the Venerable Gonçalo da Silveira*, 104.

81 Rea, *Gonçalo Silveira*, 37.

over their former overlords, the kings of Ndongo had been sending emissaries requesting missionaries to Lisbon since 1518. As Kongo repelled colonial encroachment, the Portuguese directed their attention to the southern region and responded to the long-standing invitations from Ndongo. They first established themselves at the port of Luanda and, from there, gradually sought to control the African interior. More than anywhere else, southwest Africa epitomized the link between Jesuit missions and Portugal's imperial adventures in Africa, which link entailed mixed fortunes for the evangelization of Africans.

The first Portuguese mission reached Angola in 1560 under the leadership of Captain Paulo Dias de Novais (c.1510–89). The mission included four Jesuits: Fathers Francisco de Gouveia (d.1575), who was their superior, and Agostinho de Lacerda; and Brothers António Mendes and Manuel Pinto. First welcomed by Ndambi a Ngola (r.1556–61), who ruled Ndongo at that time, they were allowed to stay, make converts, and even build a school. However, their fortunes were overturned in the following year when Ndambi a Ngola died and was succeeded by his more suspicious son, Kiluanje kia Ndambi (r.1561–75). Probably accurately, Kiluanje kia Ndambi doubted the motives of the foreigners in his territories. He swiftly expelled most of the Portuguese and held others hostage. Among the hostages were Captain Novais and two Jesuits—Gouveia and Mendes. Mendes was released in 1562 and Novais in 1565. Gouveia remained in captivity until his death at Kabasa, the capital of Ndongo, on June 19, 1575.⁸²

In the early stages of the mission, Jesuits did not have a common and comprehensive plan for Angola. At best, they were ambivalent about the extent to which they should involve themselves in an outright Portuguese conquest—technically a *conquista*—of peoples and territories in that part of Africa. To sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Portuguese, a *conquista* meant what the British historian Paul Edward Hedley Hair (1926–2001) describes as “a process of formal extension of Portuguese influence over non-Christian peoples, the aims being economic and moral, but the process being incomplete if traders and missionaries were not backed up by political domain.” Hair further explains: “More often than not *conquista* therefore involved military force and was indeed ‘conquest’; but since the concept involved, and indeed laid great

82 Pero Rodrigues, “História da residência dos padres da Companhia de Jesus em Angola, e cousas tocantes ao reino, e conquista (1-5-1594),” in *Monumenta missionaria africana*, ed. António Brásio, 1st series, 15 vols. (Lisbon: Agência Geral do Ultramar, 1952–88), 4:546–81, here 551–53 [reference to this collection will hereafter appear as *MMA*¹ followed by volume number and pages]; also Linda M. Heywood, *Njinga of Angola: Africa's Warrior Queen* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017), 22–23.

emphasis on 'spiritual conquest,' frankly so denoted, it was not necessary to assume that force was always requisite."⁸³

In Angola, as in Brazil, the Portuguese *conquista* involved military force. While some Jesuits opposed any involvement in such a *conquista*, others in Portugal had been pushing for a war-like campaign to take over Angola, arguing that it was necessary for rescuing Gouveia and for preparing the southwest African terrain for evangelization. From his captivity, Gouveia himself oscillated between these two positions, writing in 1563 to advocate for a military *conquista* and in 1565 to express hope for peaceful evangelization.⁸⁴ When Portuguese king Sebastião I finally agreed to send an expedition to Angola in late 1574, he entrusted the task to Novais again, who returned to Angola in 1575. The king also demanded that four Jesuits join Novais's second tour of duty in Africa. The four who joined him were Fathers Garcia Simões, who was appointed superior of the group; Baltasar Afonço (d.1603); and Brothers Cosme Gómez and Constantino Rodrigues.

The whole enterprise started with a bang. Backed by a significant force of Portuguese and African fighters that first camped in Luanda, and bearing the illustrious title of "captain-general of the conquered kingdom of Angola" even before he started fighting, Novais well anticipated the results of his mission to subdue Ndongo. The mission's entry was marked by religious pomp and pageantry, over which the Jesuits presided. Simões carried reliquaries believed to be those of the eleven thousand virgins of Saint Ursula (d.383) and walked under an ornamented canopy while others sung hymns accompanied by the sound of trumpets.⁸⁵ Thus did the Jesuits enter a busy schedule, accomplishing much religious work among the Portuguese residents of Luanda and its immediate hinterland. They were already counting as many as two hundred African converts in 1578. They had learned the local language and were gradually moving into the interior of Angola at the invitation of local African rulers. Even under the challenging circumstances of the following decade, "the number of Mbundus who were baptized grew steadily, increasing from a little more than one thousand in 1584 to twenty thousand by 1590."⁸⁶

83 P. E. H. [Paul Edward Hedley] Hair, "The Abortive Portuguese Settlement of Sierra Leone 1570–1625," in *Vice-Almirante A. Teixeira da Mota in Memoriam* (Lisbon: Academia de Marinha and Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, 1987), 171–208, here 179.

84 Joseph Kenny, *The Catholic Church in Tropical Africa 1445–1850* (Ibadan and Lagos: Ibadan University Press and Dominican Publications, 1983), 19.

85 Rodrigues, "História da residência dos padres da Companhia de Jesus em Angola," 554; cf. Heywood, *Njinga of Angola*, 30.

86 Heywood, *Njinga of Angola*, 32.

The mission's beginning belies the longer story of subsequent events, however. To the extent that Jesuits relied on the Portuguese overcoming African resistance in order to create a peaceful environment for evangelization, their missionary fortunes lay well into another century. For over seventy years, the Portuguese conquest of Angola was vigorously resisted; indeed, it was only in 1650 that the governor of Angola, Salvador Correia de Sá e Benevides (1594–1688, in office 1648–51), declared the *conquista* in the southwest African region to have been accomplished.⁸⁷ In its weakest moments during the initial stages, the *conquista* became heavily dependent on the Jesuits for strategic advice and for soliciting support from outside. Yet, the Jesuits were not faring any better in the early days of their mission. Simões, who was the first superior, and Gomez died in 1578, leaving only two Jesuits in Angola at that time. Around the same period, the Portuguese troops suffered repeated defeats, were undersupplied, and were completely demoralized. Novais retreated to a fortress at Nzele, about fifty kilometers from Luanda, clearly signaling that things were not going well.

The course of the *conquista* was completely altered by the arrival of one indefatigable Jesuit, Baltasar Barreira (1531–1612), the mission's new superior, who reached Angola on February 23, 1580. Described by Hair as a man "of great mental as well as physical capacity, [who] had a well-deserved reputation for determination and action,"⁸⁸ Barreira initially acted more like a military commander than a chaplain. Even his provincial superior in Lisbon, Father (later Bishop) Sebastião de Morais (1536–88), complained about Barreira's over-involvement in secular matters, especially those of war.⁸⁹ So central was his role in the Angolan *conquista* that a later commentator on the events said: "Father Barreira led as Moses and Paulo Dias Novais commanded as Joshua."⁹⁰

Immediately after his arrival in Angola, Barreira persuaded the governor to accept help from outside, encouraged the dispirited Portuguese soldiers to fight on, and saw to the recruitment of Africans, most of them baptized Christians, to fight on the Portuguese side. He persuaded the Portuguese king to direct more resources to the *conquista* at a time when the king had literally abandoned Novais to his own means. Before extra help could arrive from

87 Estevam Thomson, "Angola, Portuguese Conquest of (c.1575–1648)," in *Encyclopedia of African Colonial Conflicts*, ed. Timothy J. Stapleton, 2 vols. (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2017), 2:51–59, here 58.

88 Hair, "Abortive Portuguese Settlement," 178n19.

89 José Augusto Duarte Leitão, "La missão do P.e Baltasar Barreira no reino de Angola (1580–1592)," *Lusitania sacra*, 2nd series, 5 (1993): 43–91, here 65–66.

90 Luiz Felipe de Alencastro, *The Trade in the Living: The Formation of Brazil in the South Atlantic, Sixteenth to Seventeenth Centuries* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2018), 167.

Portugal, Barreira secured support from Kongo. Following these measures, the Portuguese won significant battles in 1583, capturing some salt mines and a huge number of Africans, who were then enslaved. Now emboldened by these victories, the Portuguese developed an appetite for a lot more than could peacefully be offered. In the following year, the *ngola* offered to accept baptism and to give up half his kingdom, but Novais had his eyes fixed on silver mines that were supposed to be at Cambambe, farther in the interior, and would accept nothing less than the whole of Angola. In 1585, the *ngola* was forced to abandon his capital at Kabasa and move farther inland.

Even as conquest placed more territory and population under Portuguese control, the situation in Angola remained precarious. The mineral fortunes that were expected in the interior never really existed in the quantities that had been imagined. As Portuguese prospectors and settlers who had hoped to make wealth from the land reconsidered their options, they sometimes found it more profitable to side with resisting Africans than to pay tax to the *conquista*. War itself generated slaves for sale, and the Portuguese turned slave-trading into the most profitable activity in the region, gradually transforming Angola into what later historians have described as a “slave-hunting ground”⁹¹ and “the largest slave port in Africa.”⁹² Slaves became a form of currency so that tribute was collected in humans, and other commercial transactions were paid for in the same manner. English historian Hugh Thomas (1931–2017), who also describes Luanda as “the largest European settlement in Africa, and the main source of Brazil’s slave labor,” estimates that between forty and fifty thousand enslaved Africans, nearly all from Kongo and Angola, may have already reached Brazil between 1576 and 1591, exactly the period during which the Portuguese were establishing themselves in Angola and the Jesuits establishing a Catholic mission there. So many in the Americas were slaves originating from this region that, in 1615, Jesuit Diego de Torres “ordered a grammar in Angolese for the benefit of those from that territory who were working in the mines of Potosí.”⁹³ Studying the situation from the point of view of the

91 John Baur, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa: An African Church History*, 2nd ed. (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2009), 73.

92 James Duffy, *Portugal in Africa* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962), 59.

93 Hugh Thomas, *The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1440–1870* (London: Picador, 1997), 137, 147–48, 364, 449. A text that was published much later is that of Father Pedro Dias (c.1621/22–1700), produced under the title *Arte da lingua de Angola, oeferecida [sic] a Virgem Senhora Nossa do Rosario, Mãe, e Senhora dos mesmos pretos* (Lisbon, 1697). This is considered the first known Kimbundu grammar book. Gonçalo Fernandes, “The First Known Grammar of (Kahenda-Mbaka) Kimbundu (Lisbon 1697) and Álvares’ *Ars minor* (Lisbon 1573),” *Africa linguistica* 21 (2015): 213–32.

southwest African region, Belgian historian and anthropologist Jan Vansina (1929–2017) concludes that “the conquest of Angola had brought almost nothing but human misery—misery in war and misery in the frantic slave trade.” The warring situation was maintained well into the nineteenth century essentially to breed slaves for the Luanda market. “From the point of view of the African subject,” Vansina continues, “Angola was sheer terror.”⁹⁴

The slave-trading environment created by the Portuguese *conquista* in Angola could hardly have been the favorable context for evangelization the Jesuits had hoped for. Moreover, their links with the *conquista* and with the slave-based economy it survived on became the Jesuits’ Achilles’ heel for centuries, unmasking a divergence of views over the matter and considerable discord within an order whose members were expected to adhere to policies set in Rome. The Jesuits in Angola awkwardly succumbed to the use of slaves as a means of exchange and formulated arguments to justify the practice. As articulated by Barreira—by no means the only one who held such views—those Jesuits who upheld the acceptability of the trade in humans argued that it was justified for two reasons: first, those justly held in bondage could be sold, and it was not upon the buyer to establish how persons on sale were initially obtained by their seller. Second, enslaved African Christians were better off than hordes of free African pagans that were headed to hell.⁹⁵

By the Jesuits’ own admission, however, the instability caused by slave-making wars and the draining of the region’s population stunted their work of evangelization. Even as he remained convinced that conquest was a necessary first step in preparation for evangelization, Barreira also complained that continuous fighting had an immediate adverse impact on the number of conversions.⁹⁶ Seeking to explain the strange disappearance of Christianity in the lands that the Jesuits had evangelized earlier in southwest Africa, the nineteenth-century missionary and explorer David Livingstone (1813–73) would later say that “any Missionary, who winked at the gigantic evils involved in the slave-trade, would certainly fail to produce any good impression on the

94 Jan Vansina, *The Kingdoms of the Savanna* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966), 124–25, 147.

95 For a discussion of “The Jesuit Theory of the Slave Trade” and Baltasar Barreira’s views, see Alencastro, *Trade in the Living*, 166–84. Also Dauril Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise: The Society of Jesus in Portugal, Its Empire, and Beyond, 1540–1750* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), 526.

96 “Carta do Padre Baltasar Barreira” (May 14, 1588), *MMA*¹, 3:328–31, and “Estado religioso e político de Angola” (1588), *MMA*¹, 3:375–82; also Kenny, *Catholic Church in Tropical Africa*, 21; Leitão, “La missão do P.e Baltasar Barreira,” 50–57.

native mind.”⁹⁷ It would appear to be the case that, in Angola, the Jesuits did a lot more than wink at the slave trade.

Yet, unlike in Mozambique where lack of Jesuit manpower was identified as an impediment to success, the Jesuits directed significant resources to Angola with the intention of turning it into a vibrant mission. In 1594, the Jesuit visitor Pedro Rodrigues reported that, between 1560 and 1593, twenty-six Jesuits had been sent to Angola by the province of Portugal. Of these, eleven had died, three had returned home, and twelve were present in Angola at the time, working mainly in São Paulo (today’s Luanda) and Masangano and carrying out ministries that ranged from administering the sacraments to Portuguese residents and soldiers and to Africans; preaching, especially on Sundays; and attending to sailors at the port of Luanda.⁹⁸ Luanda alone is said to have had up to eight thousand Christians in 1593.⁹⁹

Moreover, despite its overwhelmingly negative repercussions for evangelization, Jesuit association with the *conquista* had an appearance of success in the early part of the mission. In 1581, excited about the victories he had secured with Jesuit backing, Novais, now governor of Angola, rewarded the Jesuits with substantial donations of land in Luanda, along the seacoast, in the interior of Angola, and on the southern banks of the Cuanza River. He also granted the Jesuits nine *sobas*, or chiefs, over whom they became patrons in some form of feudal arrangement and from whom they collected tribute, often in humans. For the governor, these donations were “a gesture of recognition and encouragement for Fr. Barreira to continue running the Society in close alliance with the conquest.”¹⁰⁰ Writing to the king of Portugal in 1584, Novais described the Jesuits’ presence in Angola, especially that of Barreira, as a great act of God’s mercy.¹⁰¹ For his part, Barreira envisaged a situation where up to three colleges

97 David Livingstone and Charles Livingstone, *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi and Its Tributaries: And of the Discovery of the Lakes Shirwa and Nyassa, 1858–1864* (London: John Murray, 1865), 206; Festo Mkenda, “A Protestant Verdict on the Jesuit Missionary Approach in Africa: David Livingstone and Memories of the Early Jesuit Presence in South Central Africa,” in *Encounters between Jesuits and Protestants in Africa*, ed. Robert Aleksander Maryks and Festo Mkenda (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 59–79, here 72–74.

98 Rodrigues, “História da residência dos padres da Companhia,” 577–78; Alden, *Making of an Enterprise*, 76.

99 J. [José] Vaz de Carvalho, “Angola,” in *Diccionario histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*, ed. Charles E. O’Neill and Joacquin M.^a Domínguez, 4 vols. (Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I., 2001), 1:171–75, here 171 (hereafter abbreviated as *DHCJ*).

100 Leitão, “La missão do P.e Baltasar Barreira,” 57, 66–67.

101 Leitão, “La missão do P.e Baltasar Barreira,” 66; cf. “Carta de Paulo Dias de Novais,” *MMA*¹ (January 1, 1584), 4:416–24, here 423.

would be established in Angola and sustained entirely by proceeds from the lands and the *sobas* that he had accepted in the name of the Society.

The favor shown to the Jesuits by the *conquista* vanished shortly after Novais's death in Masangano on May 9, 1589. His immediate successor, Luís Serrão, agreed on little with Barreira. As if to establish his independent credentials, in 1590 the new governor attempted an ill-advised attack on Ndongo. His army was defeated by a combination of Ndongo and Matamba fighters in what came to be known as the Battle of Matamba and was forced to retreat to Masangano, smaller and poorer because of considerable human and material loss. Some interpreters of the events were quick to see God's hand in the governor's loss, reasoning that, by alienating Barreira, the governor had acted the way the biblical king Ahaz acted toward Prophet Isaiah (see Isaiah 7).¹⁰² A humiliated Serrão was replaced in 1591 by André Ferreira Pereira, who also lasted but a year. The response of the Iberian crown that presided over a precarious union between Spain and Portugal (1580–1640) was to overhaul Angola's administration with a view to having greater control over the proceeds from the slave trade. The private charter initially granted to Novais was revoked, and the *conquista* was placed under the leadership of an appointed governor. Francisco de Almeida was sent to Angola in 1591 as the new governor, mandated to implement the new policies.

Clearly anticipating trouble, Almeida arrived armed to the teeth, accompanied by fifteen cargo ships, a thousand soldiers, fifty horses, and a huge supply of arms.¹⁰³ He was also accompanied by six more Jesuits destined for Angola, including Rodrigues, who went as a visitor of the mission and then stayed on as its superior. Almeida wasted no time in announcing sweeping changes that threatened to dispossess the Jesuits—as indeed other Europeans with feudal privileges—of their lands and, especially, their *sobas*. These were to be placed directly under the crown, and the *sobas* were to pay tribute directly to the *conquista* without going through feudal intermediaries.¹⁰⁴

The changes Almeida introduced threatened the very survival of the Jesuit mission in Angola. Although Jesuits in the mission were entitled to a subsidy from the Portuguese crown, this rarely arrived, and when it did, it was often too late to be useful. Thus deprived, the mission depended heavily on proceeds from the lands and *sobas* that had been placed under the Society's care. In fact, even with such proceeds, the mission was struggling economically, and

102 Leitão, "La missão do P.e Baltasar Barreira," 75.

103 Leitão, "La missão do P.e Baltasar Barreira," 80.

104 Thomson, "Angola, Portuguese Conquest," 56; Leitão, "La missão do P.e Baltasar Barreira," 80.

the Jesuits were barely managing to feed themselves.¹⁰⁵ Therefore, no matter what Jesuits in other places thought about their performance, the Jesuits in Angola viewed the defense of their patrimony in lands and *sobas* as the only way to ensure the survival and, ultimately, progress of their intended mission of evangelization.¹⁰⁶ It was in this sense that the measures announced by the new governor came to be viewed as detrimental to evangelization and, for the first time, pitted the Jesuits against the *conquista*.

Barreira's remaining time in Angola was spent fighting, now not for but against the Portuguese administration. He argued that, once lands and *sobas* had been granted to the Society, they became church property, which the governor could not legally expropriate. He even threatened the governor with excommunication if he went ahead with his policy of expropriation. Barreira appealed to the governor not to take further action until judgment by an appropriate higher authority in Lisbon had been communicated. The governor went ahead with the implementation of the policies anyway, and Barreira wrote him a letter of excommunication.¹⁰⁷

The accusations and counteraccusations that characterized the Jesuit-*conquista* relations in Angola at this time make it hard to understand who was to blame for what. Governor Almeida did not take Barreira's challenges lying down. He expressed surprise that the Jesuit superior had taken a stance against the Portuguese crown instead of preaching everyone's obligation to obey its decrees. Moreover, the governor argued that the *sobas* themselves complained of mistreatment by their supposed protectors. He stopped attending services in Jesuit churches and prohibited soldiers from accessing any services from Jesuits, not just religious services.¹⁰⁸ For their part, Jesuits claimed that the *sobas* preferred to remain under their protection for fear of mistreatment by any other guardian. Indeed, as early as 1587 the Jesuits had resolved to renounce their patronage over the *sobas* that had been assigned to them by Novais, but the *sobas* themselves, backed by other Portuguese members of the *conquista*, petitioned them to rescind their decision, threatening revolt if they refused to do so. Similarly, in the context of this turmoil, all kinds of malcontents aligned themselves with the Jesuits in disapproving of Almeida's performance as governor. Rebels found hospitality in Jesuit houses, soldiers deserted the *conquista*, and the governor's authority was irreparably undermined. In 1592, the governor himself was expelled from Angola by his own army and was

105 Rodrigues, "História da residência dos padres da Companhia," 579–80.

106 Leitão, "La missão do P.e Baltasar Barreira," 82.

107 Leitão, "La missão do P.e Baltasar Barreira," 80–81, 84.

108 Leitão, "La missão do P.e Baltasar Barreira," 81–82.

briefly replaced by his brother, Jerónimo de Almeida, before the arrival in 1593 of João Furtado de Mendonça, who was sent from Lisbon to restore order.

Barreira was not entirely unscathed, even though in the end he came out victorious. Before he left Angola, Francisco de Almeida had communicated to Lisbon that the Jesuit superior and his companions in Angola were behind the rebellion. King Philip II (1527–98, in Spain 1556–98; in Portugal as Philip I, 1580–98) even considered replacing the Jesuits with another religious order, but Cardinal Alberto VII (1559–1621, viceroy of Portugal 1583–93) prevailed over him to change his mind. To repair the damage, Barreira was recalled to Europe to defend himself before Jesuit and civil authorities. Leaving Angola in December 1592, he reached Portugal in May 1593 and was given hearings in Lisbon and Madrid. It appears that he persuasively argued his case, for the king considered the possibility of returning him to Kongo as a bishop, and the Society appointed him master of novices, a ministry he carried out until 1604 when he returned to Africa to open a new Jesuit chapter in the seventeenth century.

2 **Seventeenth Century: West Africa, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Angola, and Kongo**

There have been suggestions that, on his way to Asia, Xavier made a stop at the then Portuguese-controlled Elmina Castle on the coast of today's Ghana. Currently available knowledge about the route followed by Xavier leaves no room for this kind of speculation.¹⁰⁹ However, a desire to have Jesuits sent to that west African Portuguese enclave existed from the very early years of the Society. A text appended to a 1554 letter of Diego Mirón (d.1590), at that time provincial of Portugal, to Juan Alfonso de Polanco (1517–76), secretary to Loyola in Rome, says:

The queen told me that the king has decided to send two fathers of the Society to a part of Africa very near Guinea called Mina, a place where gold comes from. The territory has the unhealthiest climate of all territories in Portuguese possession. It has only one port and one administrative district. The people of that country are black. The king has come to this decision because of the bad reports he has received concerning the

109 See book 1, "The India Voyage from Lisbon to Goa (1541–1542)," in Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier*, 2:1–132.

clergy there who absolve from everything, etc. He would like to have two fathers of the Society there, and no one else.¹¹⁰

We might never know what response was given to the king's desire by Jesuit officials in Rome, and Ghana had to wait over four centuries before it received its first resident Jesuit missionary.

The broader west African region did not have to wait that long, however. There had been persons, activities, and events that inclined the Jesuits toward this area, but active presence took time to come by. For some time, missionary activities in West Africa were coordinated from the diocese of São Tomé, established in 1534 and headquartered at the island of that name and now part of the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe, off the coast of Equatorial Guinea and Gabon.¹¹¹ The main missionary actors in the diocese were Franciscans, Augustinians, and Dominicans. A lone Jesuit chaplain was stationed at São Tomé in 1570, but little else is known about his identity and ministry. João Pinto, a Wolof priest who had been educated by the Jesuits in Portugal, was made a canon for São Tomé and, in 1585, petitioned his former educators to go to his native country of Sierra Leone, but his petition did not elicit an immediate favorable response.¹¹² In the same year, the Jesuit Fernão Rebelo drew up a report on the Cape Verde islands and missionary needs on the immediate west African hinterland, having stopped there in 1584 while on his way to Brazil. Submitting the report to Superior General Claudio Acquaviva

110 MHSI/E.Mix., 4, 346–49, here 348; also Ralph M. Wiltgen, *Gold Coast Mission History 1471–1880* (Techy, IL: Divine Word Publications, 1956), 18.

111 Joseph Abraham Levi, “Portuguese and Other European Missionaries in Africa: A Look at their Linguistic Production and Attitudes (1415–1885),” *Historiographia linguistica* 36, nos. 2–3 (2008): 363–92, here 372.

112 “Carta do Padre Sebastião Morais ao Padre Geral da Companhia” (April 18, 1587), in *Monumenta missionaria africana*, ed. António Brásio, 2nd series, 7 vols. (Lisbon: [vols. 1–4] Agência Geral do Ultramar, 1958–68/[vols. 5–7] Academia Portuguesa da História, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, and Centro de Estudos Africanos da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa, 1979–2004), 3:142–44, here 143 (references to this collection will hereafter appear as *MMA*² followed by volume number and pages). Avelino Teixeira da Mota, “Jesuit Documents on the Guinea of Cape Verde and the Cape Verde Islands, 1585–1617,” trans. P. E. H. Hair (in manuscript form, issued for the use of scholars by the Department of History, University of Liverpool, January 1989), 33–34. All segments of this manuscript, which form a combined volume with 692 pages, can be accessed from the University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries at <https://search.library.wisc.edu/digital/AH3HROIQO5JVL86> (accessed September 15, 2021). Page references in this text are to individual leaves in the sequentially arranged parts of the entire manuscript rather than to numbers appearing on individual parts. Also see Kenny, *Catholic Church in Tropical Africa*, 62.

(1543–1615, in office 1581–1615), he passionately appealed for Jesuits to be sent for missionary work in the Guinea of Cape Verde, as the west African coast from Cape Verde to Sierra Leone was then known. They were to involve themselves in the training of Africans for the priesthood, he suggested, warning that the alternative would be to cede the region to Muslims.¹¹³ This, too, never attracted immediate action. The proposal carried more weight in 1596 when King Philip II repeated it, inviting the Jesuits to run a school at the island of Santiago in Cape Verde and, from there, evangelize the mainland.¹¹⁴ Even though the Jesuits took up the mission, it was not without significant foot-dragging, apparently because Father Francisco de Gouveia, then provincial of Portugal, opposed the project because of what he considered to be the island's bad climate as well as the poor example that Portuguese slave traders would give to the native islanders.¹¹⁵

The Jesuit mission to West Africa eventually started when one brother and three priests reached Santiago on July 5, 1604. The superior of the group was Barreira, the veteran of Angola who now left his assignment as master of novices after two years to have a second go at an African mission. His companions were Brother Pedro Fernandes (d. after 1607) and Fathers Manuel de Barros (1564–1605) and Manuel Fernandes (d.1604).¹¹⁶ Immediately after arrival, the Jesuits busied themselves with giving religious instructions and celebrating the sacraments. They decried poor preparations that persons from the African mainland received before they were baptized and then transported to enslavement in Brazil. Even though they did not object to slavery and the slave trade at that time, they were horrified by the unjust ways persons were condemned to enslavement and eventually sold, which included frivolous convictions, kidnapping, and raiding. In their early days at Santiago, the Jesuits did what they could to liberate those who were thus unjustly enslaved and ameliorate the lot of those who remained enslaved. In April 1605, Barros was already reporting some progress in educating slaveholders in Santiago about the responsibility

113 "Carta do Padre Fernão Rebelo ao Padre Geral da Companhia" (September 13, 1585), in *MMA*² 3:128–30; also see Kenny, *Catholic Church in Tropical Africa*, 62.

114 "Carta régia sobre o colégio de Cabo Verde" (May 16, 1596), in *MMA*² 3:385–86; also Kenny, *Catholic Church in Tropical Africa*, 62.

115 See "Carta do Padre Francisco de Gouveia ao Padre-Geral da Companhia" (October 20, 1596); "Carta do Padre Francisco de Gouveia ao Padre-Geral da Companhia" (December 7, 1596); "Carta do Padre Francisco de Gouveia ao Padre-Geral da Companhia" (December 18, 1596); and "Carta do Padre Francisco de Gouveia ao governador de Portugal" (December 18, 1596); all in *MMA*² 3:395–96, 398–99, 400–3, and 404–6. Also Kenny, *Catholic Church in Tropical Africa*, 62; Hair, "Abortive Portuguese Settlement of Sierra Leone," 174–75.

116 Nuno da Silva Gonçalves, *Os jesuítas e a missão de Cabo Verde (1604–1642)* (Lisbon: Brotéria, 1996), 115.

they bore toward the persons they were enslaving. This intervention led to an adjustment that gained an extra free day for the enslaved persons.¹¹⁷

Beyond these impromptu ministries, initial plans were that the Jesuits would assume responsibility for a seminary that Bishop Bartolomeu Leitão (d.1587) had constructed at Santiago of Cape Verde, operate a school there, and work for the evangelization of the coast of Guinea. The school property would be entrusted to the Jesuits in 1605, but, before then, a lot had happened that forced the project's evolution to follow a different and long trajectory.

To begin with, Father Fernandes succumbed to fever within the first week of their arrival in Santiago, leaving only three missionaries available for the arduous task ahead. Fernandes's death was, in a way, a sign of things to come, for the entire mission would be marked by its high human toll. Then, Barreira's attention shifted to the mainland. Accompanied by Brother Fernandes, Barreira left for the Bissau region sometime in December 1604, leaving Barros alone in Santiago. Barros also died in November 1605, at which point this initial Jesuit effort in West Africa was reduced to what has been described as "in essence a two-man mission to Sierra Leone."¹¹⁸ The school in Santiago remained unattended by Jesuits at this time. When this news reached Barreira, Brother Fernandes was ordered back to Santiago, where he probably died sometime in or after 1607.

On the mainland, Barreira started his mission on the northern part of Guinea of Cape Verde, around Biguba, where he spent the earlier part of 1605. During his early days in this place, Barreira experienced some success, which made him alter his missionary philosophy. Initially, as before in Angola, he had continued with the argument for a Portuguese military *conquista* over local communities and territories to prepare the field for evangelization.¹¹⁹ However, after he had baptized a few local kings and chiefs in the region, Barreira abandoned all references to the need for conquest and, instead, painted a picture of a rich African harvest that simply awaited laborers. He was now concerned that, without serious Christian campaigns in the area, the west African coast would be lost to Muslim competitors from farther north in the interior. Henceforward, the *conquista* he worked for was more political, and if it ever had to be militarized, it would be to protect the people he intended to Christianize from the all-too-frequent raids that were sometimes motivated by the slave trade, and to protect the whole region from Dutch and English

117 Mota, "Jesuit Documents," 57, 64, 81, 83–84, 86–87.

118 Mota, "Jesuit Documents," 11.

119 "Carta do Padre Baltasar Barreira ao Conde Meirinho-Mor" (May 13, 1605), in *MMA*² 4: 67–69; Kenny, *Catholic Church in Tropical Africa*, 63; Mota, "Jesuit Documents," 11, 105–6.

competitors. Barreira was particularly concerned about the raids organized by the inhabitants of the Bijagós (also known as Bissagos) Islands, off the coast of today's Guinea-Bissau. Even though he called for a Portuguese *conquista* over the Bijagós, the proposal was never acted upon.¹²⁰

The end of 1605 marked a high point for Barreira's missionary career in West Africa. He had now moved farther south to Sierra Leone, where he arrived in the month of September, "with the intention of seeing how the kings of this region were disposed towards receiving our holy faith."¹²¹ On September 29, he celebrated his first Mass there, and around Christmas, he baptized a prominent king together with a wife of his choice, the chief having adhered to the Catholic requirement to separate himself from any other wives who were in prior polygamous union with him. Barreira christened the king Philip after the reigning monarch in Portugal, Philip II/Philip III of Spain (1578–1621, r.1598–21). Since the general political organization in these parts of West Africa tended to entail a king or paramount with several subordinate chiefs under him,¹²² the baptism of King Philip of Sierra Leone encouraged many other local kings, chiefs, and prominent individuals to embrace the new faith. Among them were Bai Farma II, king of the Temnes, and Torra and Sesse, kings of the Sherbro. In early 1607, another king was christened "Pedro" after the Portuguese Pedro Álvares Pereira (d.1621), who had been granted the captaincy of Sierra Leone in 1606.

In anticipation of the arrival of Captain Pereira, Barreira virtually acted as the governor of the hoped-for *conquista*, even to the point of appointing a lieutenant, a judge, a notary, and other officials.¹²³ He held extensive discussions with local kings and notables regarding possible Portuguese settlements and the location of a fort. Now his hopes for a Christian Sierra Leone lay in the consummation of this paternalistic political *conquista*—"a civil power and strong force capable not only of defending the Christians from whoever might wish to disturb them, but also of obliging them to live in conformity with our religion."¹²⁴

As a sign of good progress, during Easter of 1607 Barreira ventured into the interior and reached as far as the then Susu polity of Bena, about forty kilometers away from his coastal location. This was in response to a call from an interested local king of the area. However, this months-long adventure was

120 Kenny, *Catholic Church in Tropical Africa*, 63; Hair, "Abortive Portuguese Settlement," 180–81.

121 Hair, "Abortive Portuguese Settlement," 183; Mota, "Jesuit Documents," 103.

122 Walter Anthony Rodney, "A History of the Upper Guinea Coast, 1545–1800" (PhD diss., University of London, 1966), 64; also Mota, "Jesuit Documents," 63–65.

123 Hair, "Abortive Portuguese Settlement," 195.

124 Hair, "Abortive Portuguese Settlement," 192.

unsuccessful largely because of entrenched Muslim interests and opposition.¹²⁵ Around August of that year, Barreira returned to his familiar territory. Now fully committed in Sierra Leone, with vivid prospects for success, and pursuing some form of ecclesiastical independence from the Cape Verde islands, Barreira expressed his inability to travel back to Santiago, which was still the focal point of a mission of which he was the superior.¹²⁶ At this point, the harvest was growing even richer while the laborers remained few. For some relief, three Jesuits had arrived in Santiago in February 1607 to join the west African mission: Manoel de Almeida, Pedro Neto Álvarez, and Manuel Álvares (c.1580–c.1617). Like before, two of the new missionaries died shortly after their arrival. The third, Álvares, briefly worked in the Bissau area, where he was instrumental in persuading the Portuguese to build a fort at Cacheu, at that time a notorious slave port. From Bissau, Álvares proceeded to join Barreira in Sierra Leone, arriving there at the beginning of 1608.

Álvares's arrival allowed the busy superior to be mobile again. Moreover, now Barreira had more than one reason to move. First, his optimism for an effective Portuguese *conquista* in Sierra Leone had waned, rendering him more flexible to venture into other areas. Second, news had reached him that the residents of Cape Verde wanted him for their bishop, and, as a Jesuit committed to avoiding ecclesiastical dignity, Barreira thought he might go there and dissuade them from pursuing this idea. This measure turned out to be unnecessary, for, unbeknown to him, a new bishop had already been appointed in Madrid. Third, at this point Barreira had also considered it useful for him to be stationed in Santiago to moderate the zeal of new Jesuit arrivals, trusting that this action would help prolong their lifespan in the mission.¹²⁷ Thus, leaving Álvares in Sierra Leone, Barreira retraced his way back to Santiago, stopping at Joal and at Porto d'Ale in present-day Senegal, where some Muslims were impressed by his preaching and sought baptism.¹²⁸

On reaching Santiago, Barreira was greeted with a happy surprise—the arrival of a third group of five Jesuits who had been sent to the west African mission: Brother João Fernandes and Fathers João Delgado (d.1609), António Dias (d.1652), João de Nigris (Çelio?) (b.1575), and Sebastião Gomes (1570–1642). They were immediately sent to the mainland: three to Cacheu in today's

125 Stephan Bühnen, "In Quest of Susu," *History in Africa* 21 (1994): 1–47, here 31–32.

126 "Carta do Padre Baltasar Barreira ao provincial de Portugal" (March 5, 1607), in *MMA*² 4: 223–28, here 227. On possible ecclesiastical independence, see Hair, "Abortive Portuguese Settlement," 186, 194.

127 Mota, "Jesuit Documents," 20.

128 "Carta ânua do Padre Baltasar Barreira ao provincial de Portugal" (January 1, 1610), in *MMA*² 4:363–98, here 363f.; Kenny, *Catholic Church in Tropical Africa*, 63.

Guinea-Bissau and two to join Álvares in Sierra Leone. Delgado and Fernandes died shortly after reaching Cacheu. Dias continued to work there alone but was forced by sickness to return to Santiago in 1611. Nigris never reached Sierra Leone but instead returned to Santiago and, eventually, back to Portugal. Gomes reached Sierra Leone sometime in 1609, and for a moment became the only companion Álvares would have in this important mission after Barreira's departure. The two Jesuits worked together and, on the feast of the ascension in 1609, celebrated baptisms. For reasons that are not clear, Gomes started his journey back to Santiago shortly afterward and re-joined Barreira at the mission's headquarters in early 1610.

The last four years of Barreira's life in Santiago were relatively uneventful, if mired by disappointment at the failure of the Sierra Leonean *conquista* on which, in his view, the Jesuit mission was to depend. Later writers have portrayed him as spending his last years in Santiago unprofitably "trying to organize the establishment of a seminary college and quarrelling with the governor."¹²⁹ Barreira died in Santiago, Cape Verde, on June 24, 1612, at which point Sebastião Gomes became the superior of the mission.

Barreira's life and achievements tend to obscure what other Jesuits did and achieved in the first west African mission of the Society. For example, for the most part alone in Sierra Leone, and at a time that was more turbulent because of frequent attacks from the English and the Dutch and religious competition from the Augustinians, Álvares kept the mission in Sierra Leone going for another ten years after Barreira's departure from the region, a period much longer than that which the superior had spent there. And, just like Barreira had done, Álvares worked among the Portuguese residents of the area and among the high-ranking Africans in that society.¹³⁰ He frequently baptized members of different African royal families, often doing so in the presence of Portuguese and African dignitaries for diplomatic purposes. Such, for example, were the baptisms of the son and heir to King Pedro, who had himself been baptized by Barreira; the heir to a local ruler at Fatema; and the son of another ruler at Farma. In April 1616, Álvares baptized an important chief in the district of Scarcies, the ceremony taking place in the presence of King Philip of Sierra Leone. Besides a few of his letters and annual reports that shed light on his lonesome ministry in West Africa, Álvares authored a long manuscript entitled *Ethiopia menor e descripção geográfica da provincia da Serra Leoa* (Ethiopia Minor and a geographical account of the province of Sierra Leone [c.1615]), which, as believed by its translator, makes the author "more valuable

129 Mota, "Jesuit Documents," 11.

130 Gonçalves, *Os jesuítas e a missão de Cabo Verde*, 267.

as a source than the colleague who overshadowed him in his life."¹³¹ The Jesuit presence in Sierra Leone during this period ended with Álvares's death sometime in 1616 or 1617.

With Álvares's death, the west African Jesuit mission remained only in Santiago, where it had started. At this point, there was little interest in reopening the interior, as the new superior Gomes indicated, due to the high mortality rate among missionaries who were sent there, the extortionate demands of the Africans, and the Portuguese authorities in the area that had come to distrust Jesuits and favor Augustinians.¹³² In 1628, a final attempt was made to get onto the mainland when two of five Jesuits who had arrived in Santiago were missioned there, but there are no records about their activities or whereabouts in Sierra Leone or elsewhere in West Africa.

From a letter he wrote to Superior General Muzio Vitelleschi (1563–1645, in office 1615–45) in June 1617,¹³³ it becomes clear that Gomes did not have much optimism for the mission he presided over as superior. The mission struggled financially, lacked the support of local authorities, and suffered from an inhospitable climate that shortened the missionaries' lifespan or demanded a long and unproductive period of acclimatization for each new arrival. However, Gomes was not calling for the closure of the enterprise but was asking for the minimum that it would take to maintain a presence in Santiago—a better arrangement for allowances, an experienced preacher, and a brother capable of looking after domestic administration and dealing with governors, bishops, and other figures outside the Jesuit community. A post at Cacheu in Guinea-Bissau could be maintained and visited once a year between November and the Easter season of the following year, he recommended, but the Jesuit who went there would have to return to Santiago before the rains, which usually began in August. Later in 1627, Gomes wrote again discouraging the continuance of the mission in West Africa, adding to his previous arguments the ease with which African converts returned to their traditional religious beliefs and practices.¹³⁴ Despite all these misgivings, Gomes remained in Santiago and, together with a few others, maintained a Jesuit presence and ministry on the island and in Cacheu until 1642, when the entire mission was permanently closed, thirty-eight years after it began in 1604.

131 Mota, "Jesuit Documents," 12. Parts of a preliminary English translation of Álvares's manuscript, done by P. E. H. Hair under the title "Ethiopia Minor and a Geographical Account of the Province of Sierra Leone (c.1615)," <https://search.library.wisc.edu/digital/AJ7WGQHU5WJOJZ8N> (accessed September 15, 2021).

132 Mota, "Jesuit Documents," 5–6.

133 Mota, "Jesuit Documents," 683–90.

134 Mota, "Jesuit Documents," 22.

Another Jesuit front had opened in Ethiopia around the same time as the west African mission, carrying forward the earlier story that ended with the death of Father Francisco López in 1595. Jesuits never completely abandoned their focus on Ethiopia. In fact, as that first phase of their Ethiopian mission was dying out, a second phase was being prepared in Rome and Goa. Early in 1589, Fathers Antonio de Monserrate (1536–1600) and Pedro Páez (1564–1622) left Goa hoping to enter the eastern African territory. Their first attempt was a fiasco. The two Jesuits were taken captive and, in seven years, were moved from one place to another in the Hadhramaut desert until they were eventually ransomed and sent back to Goa in November 1596.¹³⁵

Undaunted, Páez started to plan his next journey almost immediately, although he had to wait until January 1601 to make another move. Now fluent in Arabic, and disguising himself as an Armenian, Páez reached Massawa in April 1603 and successfully entered Ethiopia, starting a second phase of the early Jesuit mission in the fabled empire of Prester John. When news of Páez's arrival reached the interior, a group of Catholics was dispatched to meet him on the way. The group met him at Dəbarwa, from where the new missionary traveled in safe company and was led to Patriarch Oviedo's last residence at Fremona, reaching there on May 15, 1603. Páez's reception at Fremona was marked by "extraordinary joy by the Portuguese and other Catholics," claimed later reports, and all proceeded to the church to give thanks to God.¹³⁶

While still alone, Páez started work in Fremona, first opening a school for little children of the area. Then he had the *Catechism* of Marcos Jorge (1524–1608)¹³⁷ translated into Gə'əz, the ancient liturgical language of Ethiopia, and had the children memorize parts of it. News of the school's success reached the imperial court even before Páez himself could meet the emperor. When he finally met Zä-Dəngəl (throne name Aṣnāf Säggäd II [1577–1605, r.1603–4]) at the emperor's own invitation, Páez sought to charm his host with diplomacy and skill. Páez brought to the court some children from his school, who further impressed the emperor with their debating skills. In a response that Páez considered too rushed to be meaningful, Zä-Dəngəl issued orders to ban worshiping on Saturdays and immediately wrote to Rome and Lisbon promising to embrace Catholicism and asking for more learned missionaries, soldiers, and

135 C. F. [Charles Fraser] Beckingham and R. B. [Robert Bertram] Serjeant, "A Journey by Two Jesuits from Dhurfār to Sa'nā in 1590," *Geographical Journal* 115, nos. 4–6 (1950): 194–207.

136 Páez, *Pedro Páez's History of Ethiopia*, 2:156; Tellez, *Travels of the Jesuits*, 162.

137 *Doctrina Christã Ordenada a maneira de dialogo para ensinarosmeninos, pelo Padre Marcos Jorge* [...] (Lisbon, 1556).

craftsmen.¹³⁸ With these acts, the emperor attracted serious opposition to his rule, and all his enthusiasm ended rather abruptly when he was killed in a battle shortly after his encounter with Páez.

Before the political crisis was resolved, Páez was joined by four other Jesuits who capitalized on the valuable connections in Diu, Suaqin, and Massawa that their forerunner had established in order to make a successful journey into Ethiopia. First were Fathers Francisco Antonio de Angelis, a native of Sorrento, Italy, and António Fernandes from Lisbon—not to be confused with another Jesuit previously mentioned by the same name in the early phase of the Ethiopian mission. Fernandes, like de Angelis, arrived in Goa in 1602 en route to Ethiopia, but unlike his companion, he would live to see the tail end of the mission in Ethiopia. The two reached Fremona on July 13, 1604 and were received “with singular joy and affection.”¹³⁹ That joy was multiplied a year later when Fathers Lorenzo Mangonio (also referred to as Romano [1569–1621]) and Luis de Azevedo joined the team. The two were also relying on the same trail of connections Páez had established along the way. Unfortunately for them, a friendly Turkish official who had become a key link at Suaqin died just before they reached there. His place was filled by a man who appeared bent on getting whatever amounts he could from his victims. Even after they had used all their valuable effects to mollify the man, they still considered it luck that they made it to Fremona alive. Reaching there on July 6, 1605, they are also said to have been received “with great joy and contentment.”¹⁴⁰

As before, local political realities in Ethiopia dictated the pace of the mission. The five Jesuits in the country would achieve much at the beginning of this phase, but, before that happened, they watched the bloody battle through which Zä-Salase was to lose his hold on power. Zä-Salase had played a major role in the death of Emperor Zä-Dəngəl and had remained as the de facto ruler. The two years following the emperor’s death were completely taken up by fighting among imperial pretenders. The man who eventually won the succession battle turned out to be the best ally the Jesuits would have in the entire history of their Ethiopian mission. Judging from the length of his reign rather than an absence of conflict, Emperor Səltan Säggäd I (also Mäläk Säggäd III but better known as Susənyos [1572–1632, r.1607–32]) ushered in a period of political stability during which the Jesuit mission prospered. Susənyos grew up among

138 Tellez, *Travels of the Jesuits*, 168–69; J. B. [Jean-Baptiste] Coulbeaux, *Histoire politique et religieuse de l’Abyssinie depuis le temps les plus reculés jusqu’à l’avènement de Ménélik II*, 3 vols. (Paris: GEUTHNER, c.1928), 2:165, 176–77.

139 Páez, *Pedro Páez’s History of Ethiopia*, 2:187; Tellez, *Travels of the Jesuits*, 173.

140 Páez, *Pedro Páez’s History of Ethiopia*, 2:192.

the Oromo, most of whom were not Christians and were actively opposed to the Christian kingdom of Ethiopia. This appears to have given Susənyos a measure of freedom from court politics and ecclesiastical control. However, it may also have forced him to depend on foreign support, since he did not enjoy as much backing from traditional internal power wielders as would have been expected. He admired Páez's personality and talents and openly sought to relate with Rome and Lisbon. He is reported to have accepted Catholicism privately early during his imperial career. Most importantly, he supported the Jesuits with lands and other donations and allowed Catholics to operate in the country with relative freedom. Some of his court officials and relatives openly confessed the new faith and became its zealous defenders, as was the case with his own brother, Ras Śə'ələ Krəstos (c.1570–1636), even as significant others opposed the move vehemently.

Away from court politics, the Jesuits were consolidating their mission. Four other Jesuits entered Ethiopia during this period, bringing their total number in the country to nine. Responding to the Ethiopian reverence for the written word, they translated theological material into local languages. Historians have attributed to the Jesuits of this period the first appearance of written works in Amharic, currently one of the national languages of Ethiopia.¹⁴¹ In their theological writings, the Jesuits put an accent on what Ethiopia was believed to have had in common with Rome until the time of Patriarch Dioscorus I of Alexandria (d. c.454), whose supposed heresy the Jesuits considered the beginning of Ethiopia's drift away from Roman Catholicism. The Jesuits also embarked on producing new literature on Ethiopia in European languages. Páez's *History of Ethiopia*, which was completed in 1622, remains a monument to the Jesuit endeavor in seventeenth-century Ethiopia.¹⁴² As historian Leonardo Cohen puts it: "Producing a history of early seventeenth-century Ethiopia would be impossible without Páez's *History*."¹⁴³ The Jesuits are also known to have contributed to Ethiopian art and architecture through a process of mutual enrichment that introduced European styles to Ethiopia and

141 Richard Pankhurst, "Education Language and History: An Historical Background to Post-War Ethiopia," *Ethiopian Journal of Education* 7, no. 1 (1974): 75–97.

142 Originally written in Portuguese under the title *História da Etiópia*, Páez's work exists in different forms in a number of manuscripts, one of which has been printed in volumes 2 and 3 of Camillo Beccari's (1849–1928) *Rerum aethiopicarum scriptores occidentales inediti a saeculo XVI ad XIX*, 15 vols. (Rome: Printed for C. de Luigi, 1903–17). It has been translated and published in English (see footnote 24 above) and in Spanish by Juana Inarejos Ortiz and published as *Historia de Etiopía*, 2 vols. (La Coruña: Ediciones del Viento, 2014).

143 Leonardo Cohen (Review), "A Jesuit in Ethiopia," *Journal of African History* 53, no. 3 (2012): 416–18, here 416.

exposed them to indigenous Ethiopian influence and adaptation.¹⁴⁴ Several Jesuit churches and residences were built throughout the country during this period. A much-discussed storied stone palace for the emperor was also constructed around this time, seemingly with notable expertise from Páez.¹⁴⁵

While still at its very peak of success, the second Jesuit mission in Ethiopia experienced a succession of events that would lead to its disastrous end. For years, Susənyos had been seeking Portuguese and Spanish support and protection before he could go public about his Catholic faith, which he was already practicing in private.¹⁴⁶ Frustrated by the lack of response from Europe, he increasingly became overt about his inclination toward Catholicism. Early in 1622, Susənyos was formally received into the Catholic Church and, through an imperial edict, declared his faith publicly. Although many from Susənyos's family and court followed suit, several others in their ranks opposed the move. This split in the imperial court mirrored the reality across the empire. Susənyos's decision triggered mass conversions to Catholicism as well as a renewed anti-Catholic outrage and fresh rebellions against his political rule. And, to make matters worse, Páez, who had been a close advisor to Susənyos, died on May 25, 1622, shortly after Susənyos's public confession of Catholicism.

Páez had presided over the Ethiopian mission as a simple priest and Jesuit superior, probably rarely monitored by higher authorities in Rome. His successor, Alfonso Mendes (1579–1656), arrived in the country in 1625 as a bishop with the full authority of a patriarch yet under stricter supervision by the Vatican's Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (the Propaganda Fide), which had been established in 1622. Moreover, while Mendes inherited an already precarious situation, it is probably true that his own missionary style did not help improve matters.

As patriarch, Mendes exerted greater influence internally and externally. He succeeded in getting more Jesuits into Ethiopia, recording the highest number of twenty-two present in the country at the same time in 1628. Furthermore, Apolinário de Almeida (1587–1638) entered Ethiopia in 1630 as coadjutor bishop and assistant to Mendes, a second senior Catholic cleric in a country where the

144 Kristen Windmuller-Luna, "Building Faith: Ethiopian Art and Architecture during the Jesuit Interlude, 1557–1632," *Aethiopica* 20 (2017): 343–45.

145 James Bruce, *Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile in the Years 1768–1773*, 5 vols. (Edinburgh: G. G. J. and J. Robertson, 1790), 2:267, 294–95; George Bishop, *A Lion to Judah: The Travels and Adventures of Pedro Paez, S.J.* (Gujarat: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1998), 172–76. However, it is worth noting that the extent of Páez's personal contribution to this edifice is currently disputed by scholars. See, for example, the editor's "Introduction" to Páez, *Páez's History of Ethiopia*, 1:1–65, here 39.

146 Coulbeaux, *Histoire politique et religieuse*, 2:188–89.

Orthodox hierarchy was feeling increasingly sidelined. Probably without requisite caution, Mendes opened several new stations. Whereas the exact number of Catholic churches, outstations, and residences established by the Jesuits during this period has not been determined with certitude, there have been mentions of as many as thirty-one residential sites and a hundred churches and chapels, most of them located in the regions of Təgray, Dämbəya, and Goğğam. Mendes also contributed to Ethiopian architecture, notably through the first bridge to cross the Blue Nile, which his own masons helped construct.¹⁴⁷

Despite his remarkable contribution to other developments in a fairly short period, Mendes's missionary style led to the collapse of the second phase of the early Jesuit mission in Ethiopia. Under pressure from the Propaganda Fide, he insisted on a rigid observance of Roman rituals and demanded public conversion testimonies under pain of death. As late as 1637, when Mendes had already left Ethiopia, the Propaganda Fide was still "strongly" reminding him "not to tolerate circumcision among the Abyssinians, under whatever pretext it might be carried out."¹⁴⁸ In some instances, Mendes even ordered people to be re-baptized and the clergy to be re-ordained by him. In this manner, Mendes, obviously under pressure, appears to have exploited the piety of the sympathetic Susənyos with the aim of making Catholicism a state religion over and above the Orthodox Church, literally causing non-conversion to become treasonous.¹⁴⁹ As a result, Susənyos found himself in a bloody war against the vast majority of his subjects who resisted these changes and against political opponents who made capital out of his religious inclinations. After a 1632 battle during which an estimated eight thousand of his opponents were killed, the emperor's heart was broken. He reversed course and declared complete freedom of worship for both Catholics and Orthodox Ethiopians in the country and then handed power over to his son, Fasilädäs (throne names Səltan Säggäd II and 'Aläm Säggäd [1603–67, r.1632–67]). Shortly after his abdication, Susənyos died a Catholic on September 27, 1632 in the presence of two Jesuits.¹⁵⁰

Fasilädäs's priority was to restore peace in the empire to make it governable again. The way he went about implementing this priority implied an

147 Jerónimo Lobo, *A Short Relation of the River Nile: Of Its Sources and Current; Of Its Overflowing the Campagna of Egypt, till It runs into the Mediterranean; And of Other Curiosities*, trans. Peter Wyche (London: Lackington, Allen & Co., 1798), 28–29.

148 Wendy Laura Belcher, ed., *The Jesuits in Ethiopia (1609–1641): Latin Letters in Translation*, trans. Jessica Wright and Leon Grek, intr. Leonardo Cohen (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017), 170.

149 Coulbeaux, *Histoire politique et religieuse*, 2:230; Philip Caraman, *The Lost Empire: The Story of the Jesuits in Ethiopia* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1985), 148, 156.

150 Tellez, *Travels of the Jesuits*, 241.

immediate reversal of fortunes for Catholics in Ethiopia. To re-establish authority, he judged it necessary to purge the empire of Catholicism. In March 1633, all Jesuits were ordered to leave their residences and march toward Fremona—a location later authors would call “the cradle and the grave” of the early Jesuit mission in Ethiopia.¹⁵¹ Together with them on this journey were numerous priests, seminarians, and lay Ethiopian Catholics who were also banished from the central regions of Ethiopia.

By the end of 1633, all but eight Jesuits had been forced to leave Ethiopia. Of the eight that remained, one had been allowed to stay because of age and infirmity, and the rest, which included the assistant bishop, had opted to stay in hiding to look after their persecuted flock. For some time, they managed to carry on with their clandestine ministry, changing locations as often as it was necessary to avoid capture. However, they were later killed in fights or captured and executed. The last two, Fathers Luis Cardeira (d.1640) and Bruno Bruni (d.1640), were promised an amnesty and, after surrendering, were publicly executed at Idaga Hamus, a hamlet south of Adwa, on April 12, 1640. It is believed that the Jesuits left behind a large number of Catholics, variously estimated to be between 130,000 and 225,000, who continued to suffer persecution under Fasilädäs's long and successful political reign.

After eighty-five years of sustained effort, the early Jesuit mission in Ethiopia thus came to a disastrous end. Individual Jesuits made a few attempts to return to Ethiopia through Egypt and Sudan in subsequent decades, but these did not amount to much. There is only one record of a courageous German Jesuit, Franz Storer (1617–62), who managed to enter Ethiopia in 1656 and served at Fasilädäs's court disguised as an Armenian physician under the pseudonym Gregorius Armenus. He died in this post in 1662.¹⁵²

Jesuits had also returned to Southeast Africa, to parts that are now in Mozambique and Zimbabwe, to re-establish the mission that had stopped with the death of Silveira in 1561 and the departure of Fernandes from Tonge in 1562. After these events, there are hazy references to intermittent Jesuit activities in the area, which must have stopped around 1607. Three years later, in 1610, Jesuits re-entered the region in a more determined fashion, traveling from Goa in the company of the Portuguese governor Estêvão de Ataíde and officially beginning what later Jesuits came to refer to as the first Zambezi mission. Eight Jesuits were initially assigned to the mission: Father Gaspar Soares, who

151 Coulbeaux, *Histoire politique et religieuse*, 2:237.

152 Kevin O'Mahoney, “Abune Tobia and His Apostolic Predecessors: In Commemoration of the Bicentenary of an Ethiopian Bishop's Consecration,” *Quaderni di studi etiopici* 8–9 (1987–89): 103–71, here 113–14.

was the superior, alongside Fathers João Paulo Aleixo, Julio César Vertula, Diogo Rodrigues, Luís Mariano, Francisco Gonçalves, and Paulo Rodrigues,¹⁵³ and a brother whose name has not been identified. During this period, the Jesuits were able to build upon the experience of the Dominican missionaries who had been operating in Mozambique since 1577. Besides ministering to Portuguese settlers in the colony, they joined in the primary evangelization of Africans. To that effect, Father Vertula produced a catechism in the Chisena language spoken around the Sena region of Mozambique.¹⁵⁴

The labor invested in the production of the catechism is indicative of the optimism the Jesuits had for the mission in its early days. Both the Portuguese governor and the Jesuit superior proposed big plans, immediately requesting additional missionaries to be sent to the region. This was a great responsibility for the Society, mused Gaspar Soares, who wished to see three colleges established immediately on the island of Mozambique, Sena, and Makaranga. The one on the island would become the main school in the mission, and that at Sena would serve as the main center for mission extensions in the broader southern African region that was then referred to as Kaffraria.

Some of these missionary projects were gradually translated into action. A college was opened in Tete in 1611, which in subsequent years served a vast area that included the Makaranga and other nearby communities. On the island of Mozambique, Latin and general literacy were taught from 1613. This initiative was transformed into the college of São Francisco Xavier, where as many as twelve Jesuits taught in 1628. A hospital building that belonged to the Brothers Hospitallers of Saint John of God was subsequently entrusted to the Jesuits and remained under their care until 1681. In 1667, schools were running at Tete and Sena, and a seminary was established in the latter location in 1697. Besides such educational projects, Jesuits manned six out of sixteen mission stations that were in the main centers of Sena, Tete, and Sofala. They had also established residences and churches in Quelimane, Luabo, Chemba, Marangue, Chivuri, Cabaceira, Caia, and Tambara. From these stations, their activities extended to other locations. Although they did not permanently reside in all these places, they made a point of visiting them regularly.

While this early Jesuit mission in Mozambique prospered, a major problem that lingered throughout its lifespan was its poor performance among African

153 Francisco Rodrigues, *Os jesuítas portugueses na África Oriental 1560–1759: 1890–1910* (Porto: Tipografia Porto Médico, 1927), 8.

154 Malyn Newitt, ed. and trans., *Journey which Father António Gomes Made to the Empire of Monomotapa (Viagem q' Fez o Padre Antº Gomes [...] ao imperio de Manamotapa)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), xvi–xvii.

communities. Schools were almost exclusively for sons of Portuguese settlers. Enduring African conversions remained limited, and the mission itself suffered from a poor supply of funds and manpower. “Mozambique remained a backwater of the [Portuguese] empire,” argues historian Dauril Alden, adding that “it never attracted a large number of settlers or priests.”¹⁵⁵ In the opinion of Jesuit historian William Francis Rea (1908–80), who did a comprehensive study of the mission’s economics,

the Portuguese were very thinly spread in East Africa, and those with education much more thinly still; the Jesuits accordingly were among the very few of them with education, and the crown would be very anxious to keep them there. Had they left, Portuguese influence would have suffered, and so a mission was to be continued which had little hope of success with the knowledge that this would help to keep the crown favourable and so win valuable support for missionary work in other parts of the Portuguese dominions.¹⁵⁶

Despite all the challenges they faced, therefore, Jesuits had other reasons to stay and become creative in the Mozambican context.

As a result of these circumstances, Jesuits came to occupy an influential position in the Portuguese administration of Mozambique, constituting a core of reliable opinion in the colony. Their influence increased further as they established themselves more and more in the country’s interior. Their familiarity with places and persons made them knowledgeable about geography, local politics, and economic opportunities—a wealth of useful information for the Portuguese *conquista*. In 1624, the industrious Jesuit priest Luís Mariano, who operated from Sena, sent to India and Europe some accounts of Lake Malawi and River Shire based on secondary information he gathered from the region.¹⁵⁷ Between 1613 and 1614, the same Mariano, alongside Father Pedro Freire, joined a Portuguese expedition to Madagascar to explore colonial possibilities there. The two Jesuits are said to have baptized about a hundred people, including a crown prince. Mariano wrote an account of this expedition and drew a map of it,¹⁵⁸ both of which would have been valuable information

155 Alden, *Making of an Enterprise*, 154.

156 William Francis Rea, *The Economics of the Zambezi Missions, 1580–1759* (Rome: IHSI, 1976), 47.

157 Rodrigues, *Os jesuítas portugueses na África Oriental*, 9.

158 “Supplement to the Report upon the State and Conquest of the Rivers of Cuama,” in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 3:502–8, here 504 (Portuguese original on pp. 496–501). Also Newitt, *Journey which Father António Gomes Made*, xvii.

that fed Portuguese interests in the Red Island. The same Jesuit is also said to have written a grammar of the Chisena language spoken around the Sena region in Mozambique,¹⁵⁹ probably the first such book to have been written in the region.

In another account of an extensive journey in the regions that were under the influence of the Monomotapa, Father António Gomes (b. c.1595) also provided geographical details of the country together with its products. These included ginger, sugar-cane, rice, ivory, and enslaved war captives, which could be obtained from the interior. "In Batonga, on the other side," continued Gomes,

the land is thickly populated as far as Sena and is very rich in wheat, grain [*milho*] of many kinds and of everything else such as pumpkins, vegetables, etc. Apart from this there are a lot of large and tame cattle, and many more in the interior, as well as a great quantity of goats and sheep, as the *cafres* are great [livestock] breeders.¹⁶⁰

The same circumstances forced the Portuguese *conquista* in Mozambique to depend on Jesuits in all manner of things, sometimes entrusting to them the execution of important business. In one instance, Jesuits were contracted to repair an entire fortress because they were "more likely to see the work carried out properly than the civil or military officials."¹⁶¹ They were also relied upon to convey important messages back to Portugal because it was believed that their word carried greater weight than that of the local administrative bureaucrats. Father Andrés Furtado (d.1683), for example, was sent in person to impress on the government in Lisbon that Portugal would have to forget about its possessions in eastern Africa if it was not willing to enforce its authority by military force.¹⁶² A widely cited 1667 report by Father Manuel Barreto, then superior of the Jesuit college at Sena, advised the Portuguese authorities on a wide range of topics, including the reasons for making his mission territory an archbishopric or a patriarchate, the necessity of conquering Madagascar before the French took over the island, and when best to launch a military attack to

159 Newitt, *Journey which Father António Gomes Made*, xvii.

160 Newitt, *Journey which Father António Gomes Made*, 107; also Newitt, *East Africa*, 150. The term *cafres* refers to "kaffir" (hence kaffirs in plural), a term that was commonly used to refer to southern Africans, whose lands also acquired the name Kaffraria. Today, the term is considered to be highly offensive.

161 Theal, *History of Africa South of the Zambesi*, 1:441–42.

162 Theal, *History of Africa South of the Zambesi*, 1:435–36; Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 8:501.

subdue Africans in the interior of the Zambezi region.¹⁶³ In some situations, financiers who lent money to the Portuguese did so through the Jesuits, whom they considered more reliable than their compatriots in the colony. In later years, the Jesuits also became creditors on their own account.¹⁶⁴ This involvement in political and economic activities that were not directly connected to the work of evangelization resulted in a close identification of the Jesuits with the Mozambique *conquista*.

That identification notwithstanding, Portugal's ability to provide for the Jesuit mission in southeastern Africa waned considerably. By the end of the seventeenth century, crown subsidies for the mission had become completely insignificant. Jesuits had to rely almost entirely on what the local economy provided. Like all other missionaries in the region, they had to sustain their missions through proceeds from agriculture and commerce. Jesuits possessed substantial *prazos* (estates) in which slave labor was employed to produce corn and stock. Sometimes the *prazos* could also be leased to tenants who paid rent to the Jesuits. One of their *prazos* in Tete is said to have been "one of the largest of the crown lands" in Mozambique.¹⁶⁵ With seventeen such *prazos* across the region, the Jesuits were among the most prominent landholders while also owning an equally large number of slaves that worked the lands.¹⁶⁶ Thus did the mission depend on the manner in which the Portuguese economy was organized in that colony, rendering itself susceptible to whatever would affect that economy in the future. While the mission survived under such constraints throughout the seventeenth century, it never actually flourished.¹⁶⁷

On the west-central side of the continent, the mission in Angola flowed into the seventeenth century with a marked improvement in relations between the Jesuits and the Portuguese *conquista*, although occasional frictions continued to flare up throughout the first half of the century. It was in the context of the controversies that led to the departure of Barreira in 1592 that Father Pedro Rodrigues visited the mission from 1593. Rodrigues stayed on as mission superior until 1602, when he was replaced by Father Pedro de Sousa (1554–1611).

Under Rodrigues's brief tenure, a decision was made to establish a college at Luanda. Conceived primarily for the education of the children of Portuguese

163 Manuel Barreto, "Report upon the State and Conquest of the Rivers of Cuama, Commonly and Truly Called the Rivers of Gold," in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 3:463–95 (Portuguese original, 3:436–63).

164 Rea, *Economics of the Zambezi Missions*, 172–73.

165 M. [Malyn] D. D. Newitt, *Portuguese Settlement on the Zambesi* (London: Longman, 1979), 89.

166 W. F. [William Francis] Rea, "Agony on the Zambezi: The First Christian Mission to Southern Africa and Its Failure, 1580–1759," *Zambezia* 1, no. 2 (1970): 46–53, here 50.

167 Alden, *Making of an Enterprise*, 154.

residents of the city, the college would also serve some Africans. Its comprehensive plan included a large church, and both school and church were to be built on a piece of land that was donated to the Jesuits by Captain Novais in the early days of the mission. The ground was broken with much fanfare in 1598 in the presence of Governor João Furtado de Mendonça (in office 1594–1602). However, a lack of resources delayed construction until 1607.

When it was eventually constructed, the college in Luanda became the most prestigious emblem of the Jesuit mission in Angola. Named Colégio de Jesus (College of Jesus), it opened its doors to students in 1622. In its early days, the college lacked African students, who were said to have neither interest nor enough supply of food with them.¹⁶⁸ This situation improved with time, and for more than a century the college served thousands of Portuguese and African children who learned together.

A year after it was opened, the college in Luanda was endowed by a bequest from Gaspar Álvares (d.1623), whom historian John K. Thornton describes as one of the most powerful members of a class of wealthy Angolan settlers.¹⁶⁹ Álvares's will was written in a rush at a time when he had fallen out with Governor João Correia de Sousa (in office 1621–23) and was a refugee at the Jesuit college, probably trying to get admission into the Society. The validity of the will was later challenged, and after payment of debts, its net benefit to the college was limited.¹⁷⁰ The college suffered another setback when the Dutch wrestled Luanda from the Portuguese and controlled the coastal region from 1641 to 1648. The Dutch took over the college and used it as their administrative center, forcing the Jesuits to escape to the interior alongside Governor Pedro César de Meneses (in office 1639–41). When Governor Salvador Correia de Sá e Benevides (d.1688, in office 1648–51) restored Portugal's control over Luanda in 1648, the Jesuits were happy to receive their buildings back, empty though they were.¹⁷¹ The college picked up momentum again, and its progress was, for the most part, outstanding. A technical school linked to the college also served a mixed population of Portuguese and African children. In 1655, the college's infrastructure was considered comparable to similar Jesuit colleges in Portugal, although the college itself was significantly understaffed. A 1688 text

168 "Carta do Padre Francisco Pacónio ao Padre Júlio Recupito" (September 8, 1623), in *MMA*¹ 7:140–47, here 146; also Kenny, *Catholic Church in Tropical Africa*, 26–27.

169 John K. Thornton, *A History of West Central Africa to 1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 121.

170 Gabriel, *Os jesuítas*, 42–45; Kenny, *Catholic Church in Tropical Africa*, 26.

171 Gastão Sousa Dias, *Relações de Angola (primórdios da ocupação portuguesa)* (Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade, 1934), 3.

stated that the Jesuits “daily teach and instruct the blacks in the Christian faith, in an easy and winning method.”¹⁷²

From Luanda, Jesuits extended their educational ministry to Mbanza Kongo/São Salvador, the capital of Kongo, thus returning to the northern kingdom for the first time since they left it in 1555.¹⁷³ Already in 1587, King Álvaro II (1565–1614, r.1587–1614) had made some overtures to the Jesuits, making it possible for them to preach and erect churches in his territories. It was under his successor Álvaro III (1595–1622, r.1615–22), however, that Franciscan bishop Manuel Baptista Soares (1559–1620, in office 1609–20) of São Salvador sought help from Jesuits in Luanda. Fathers Edward Vaz, at that time the superior, and Mateus Cardoso (1584–1625) went to Mbanza Kongo/São Salvador in 1616 and seriously invested themselves in the study of Kikongo, the local language.¹⁷⁴ The timing of these occurrences was quite propitious to the Jesuits, who soon found themselves in conflict with Portuguese governor João Correia de Souza (in office 1621–23) in Luanda because of their disapproval of the governor’s aggression against Kongo. The Jesuits were thus in need of an avenue for strategic retreat. While some Jesuits were deported from Angola back to Portugal, others escaped to Kongo and strengthened the mission in Mbanza Kongo/São Salvador. A Jesuit college was founded in the city in 1623, largely seen as an offshoot of the Colégio de Jesus in Luanda.

Despite the foreign bishop at its head, the church in Kongo, much like the state, was firmly controlled by Africans. In fact, Álvaro III’s successor Pedro Alfonso II (1575–1624, r.1622–24) actively participated in the construction of the Jesuit college in Mbanza Kongo/São Salvador. Reflecting this reality, the college served a mixed population of African and Portuguese children more

172 The English/South African Bantu languages specialist Clement Martyn Doke (1893–1980) writes: “Of this college Barbot wrote in 1688, in *A Description of Lower Ethiopia* (Churchill’s *Voyages* Vol. 5 p. 482): ‘The Jesuits have a college where they daily teach and instruct the blacks in the Christian faith, in an easy and winning method. There are also schools where youth are brought up and taught Latin and Portuguese’” (C. M. Doke, “Early Bantu Literature: The Age of Brusciotto,” *Bantu Studies* 18, no. 2 [1959]: 49–67, here 50). Although Doke attributes this observation to the Jesuit college in Mbanza Kongo/São Salvador, the sequence of events suggests that it is more likely about the one in Luanda, not least because the journeys during which the French commercial agent Jean Barbot (1655–1712) would have gathered his information were made between 1678 and 1682, when Jesuits had already left the Kongolese capital.

173 Most of the details concerning this second Jesuit mission to Kongo are from Van Wing, *Études Bakongo*, 48–55.

174 Kenny, *Catholic Church in Tropical Africa*, 24.

readily than its counterpart in Luanda.¹⁷⁵ As more Jesuits were missioned to Kongo, they sustained the college at Mbanza Kongo/São Salvador and established other ministries around it.

The initiatives in Kongo had to be maintained in a complex ecclesiastical and political environment. The bishops of São Salvador, whose jurisdiction included Luanda, were for the most part absent from their see, dead after a brief tour of duty, or too enmeshed in the Iberian politics of the time when claims to the *Padroado* were still being enforced while the newly established Propaganda Fide was wresting control over the mission from governments and religious orders.¹⁷⁶ Moreover, between 1619, when the Jesuits formally returned to Kongo, and 1669, when they left again, fourteen men had successfully claimed the Kongolese throne, and several others had fought for it without success. The college in Mbanza Kongo/São Salvador and all the other ministries were abandoned in 1669 when there were three claimants to the throne, and the Jesuits in Luanda were unable to re-enter Kongo.

In Luanda, standing within the same compound as the Colégio de Jesus was the Igreja de Jesus (Church of Jesus), another important monument to the early mission in Angola that points to a commitment to evangelization beyond the educational ministry. The church's construction started in 1612 and continued for twenty-four years, culminating in a magnificent edifice—with well-adorned chapels, altarpieces, paintings, and columns, which was then described as the best church and largest concrete structure in the southern hemisphere. Even before it was completed, the church served as the center for special Jesuit events. The beatification of Francis Xavier in 1619 was celebrated there. Most significantly, the church was the venue for elaborate celebrations of the canonizations of Ignatius of Loyola and his companion, Xavier, on March 12, 1622. The church's baroque style and its very name seem to have been designed to mirror the Jesuits' mother church of Il Gesù in Rome.¹⁷⁷ Like the college next to it, the church was also briefly taken over and used by the Dutch during their occupation of Luanda.¹⁷⁸

Both the church and the college in Luanda became a center from where activities flowed to the rest of the country. In Angola and Kongo, and unlike in Mozambique, Jesuits were more focused on ministering to Africans. Their mission made significant strides in the interior. They paid great attention to

175 Cécile Fromont, *The Art of Conversion: Christian Visual Culture in the Kingdom of Kongo* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 6, 144.

176 Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa, 1450–1950* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 88.

177 Maria Amélia, “Angola Field Trip: Seven Historic Churches Tour,” published online in February 2009 at <http://angolafieldgroup.com/historic-tours> (accessed September 15, 2021).

178 Gabriel, *Os jesuítas*, 72.

packaging their message in a manner that was suitable for the indigenous African populations, doing so specifically by employing local agents of evangelization and by means of translations of texts into local languages.

In the urban centers, Jesuits established sodalities to suit nearly every devotional disposition in Angola—for the more learned residents, for students, for more mature Africans, for formerly enslaved persons, to name but a few.¹⁷⁹ In the countryside, they established a network of Christian villages, which were run by Angolan and Portuguese catechists and were regularly visited by Jesuits. One of the Jesuits who excelled in this itinerant ministry was Pedro Tavares (1591–1676), who traveled continually to supervise courses, at one point for as many as twenty thousand catechumens.¹⁸⁰ The Jesuits also involved the students in their colleges in giving catechetical instructions to people in the Kimbundu language and possibly in translating instructional materials into local languages. Some of the students went on to be ordained themselves, providing a small but steady supply of priests for the diocese of São Salvador and further increasing the chances for an inculturated Christianity in Kongo and Angola.¹⁸¹

Evidence of that inculturation, which was midwifed by the Jesuits in west-central Africa, is best found in their written theological compositions and translations in African languages. The earliest catechism in Kikongo, which is no longer extant, was published as *Cartilha da doutrina christã em lingoa do Congo* (A primer of Christian doctrine in the language of Kongo) in 1556, most likely building upon an earlier manuscript by Cornelius Gomes whom we met in the first Jesuit mission to that part of west-central Africa.¹⁸² Smaller portions of important texts, such as the Our Father, were translated into Kikongo and Kimbundu and were probably circulated more liberally in the mission centers.¹⁸³ A book-length catechism in the Kimbundu language was composed by Italian father Francisco Pacconio (1589–1641) around 1620, which most likely circulated in manuscript form until a version was published over two decades later. While he would have relied on others as he put the text together, Pacconio would also have drawn upon his own authority, as he was one of the itinerant Jesuits who frequented the interior of Angola and had mastered Kimbundu.

179 Carvalho, "Angola," 171.

180 "Carta do Padre Pedro Tavares ao reitor do Colégio de Luanda" (June 8, 1631), in *MMA*^I 8:26–40, and 47–55; also Baur, *200 Years of Christianity in Africa*, 73–74; Gabriel, *Os jesuítas*, 47–50; Hastings, *Church in Africa*, 94.

181 Hastings, *Church in Africa*, 93.

182 "Capítulos do regimento do rei do Congo" (1553), in *MMA*^I 2:325–26, here 326; Thornton, "Conquest and Theology," 248.

183 "Carta do Padre Baltasar Barreira ao geral da Companhia" (January 31, 1582), in *MMA*^I 15:269–78, here 274; Thornton, "Conquest and Theology," 252.

Having entered the Society in 1606, Pacconio joined the mission in Angola in 1617 and stayed on for many years. In 1627, he baptized the new king and queen installed in Ndongo by the Portuguese after Queen Njinga (or Nzinga [c.1582–1663, r.1624–63]) had been forced to abandon the kingdom, and he subsequently opened missions in the regions of Cambambe and Masangano.¹⁸⁴

As Pacconio worked on the Kimbundu catechism, Cardoso put his Kikongo to good use, translating, again with help from others, the popular *Doutrina cristã* (Christian doctrine) of Marcos Jorge. Cardoso returned to Portugal briefly, during which sojourn he arranged for the printing of his catechism in 1624.¹⁸⁵ Returning to Kongo to become rector of the Jesuit college in Mbanza Kongo/São Salvador, he brought with him hundreds of copies of the catechism for circulation, the first time such a book was placed in the hands of indigenous priests and lay agents of evangelization in the region. Its impact was immense. In the estimation of the influential scholar of Christian history in Africa Adrian Hastings (1929–2001):

The importance of this one book can hardly be overstated. Even simple prayers were often learnt in Latin by the Kongolese. It seems only to have been the Jesuits who began a systematic teaching of prayers in Kikongo. That was followed up by the catechism. There was probably no other printed book in Kikongo, though there may have been a few briefer works, and there would be none other for centuries. Its authority was inevitably immense and, as many of the Kongolese élite could read, it is not difficult to imagine that through reading or class memorialization they will have known this one piece of vernacular literature.¹⁸⁶

Many villages in Kongo had their own catechists, continues Hastings, further emphasizing the influence of Cardoso's catechism, which was passed on across

184 Gabriel, *Os jesuítas*, 46; Carvalho, "Angola," 173; Thornton, "Conquest and Theology," 252.

185 This catechism was first printed under the title *Doutrina Christã composta pelo P. Marcos Jorge da Companhia de IESU doutor em theologia: Acrescentada pelo Padre Ignacio Martinez da mesma Companhia doutor theologo; De nouo traduzida na lingoa do Reyno de Congo, po ordom do P. Mattheus Cardoso theologo, da Companhia de IESU; Ao illustrissimo S. D. Miguel de Castro, arcebispo metropolitano desta cidade de Lisboa* (Lisbon: Por Geraldo da Vinha, 1624), and a second edition was printed in 1650. A critical edition including the original 1624 Kikongo text, the original Portuguese with minor alterations in grammar, the Kikongo text in modern orthography, and a French translation was produced by François Bontinck (1920–2005) in collaboration with D. Ndembe Nsasi and published under the title *Le catéchisme kikongo de 1624: Réédition critique* (Brussels: Académie Royale des Sciences d'Outre-Mer, 1978).

186 Hastings, *Church in Africa*, 91–92.

generations of catechumens.¹⁸⁷ Still extant today, the Kikongo catechism is considered the oldest preserved book in a Bantu language.

Fitting in the same tradition is the work of Father António do Couto (1614–66), who re-edited Pacconio's Kimbundu catechism and published it in 1642. Born in Mbanza Kongo/São Salvador to mixed African and Portuguese parents, Couto entered the Society in 1631 and later became rector of the Jesuit college in his native city. His background must have added enormous authority to his editorial work, which resulted in parallel columns of Portuguese and Kimbundu texts for easy use by the missionary priest and the African lay catechist alike. Like the catechism in Kikongo, the one in Kimbundu had a considerable impact. Its popularity is best attested to by the number of editions it went through over two centuries.¹⁸⁸

So much was achieved by so few Jesuits in west-central Africa. They averaged at about eleven priests and brothers at any one point throughout the seventeenth century, with 1605 registering the least number of five, and 1625 the highest of nineteen. In 1693, there were eighteen Jesuits in the mission. The largest number was always based at the Colégio de Jesus in Luanda. Although these numbers could not guarantee a significant expansion of the Angolan mission, they were stable enough to maintain existing ministries and to carry them forward to the eighteenth century.¹⁸⁹

The seventeenth century would not be complete without mentioning one curious adventure by six Jesuit mathematicians who, as part of a French royal embassy to Siam (today's Thailand) and China in 1685, stopped for refreshments at the Cape of Good Hope in southern Africa. The six were Jean de Fontaney (1643–1710), superior of the group, alongside Joachim Bouvet (1656–1730), Jean-François Gerbillon (1654–1707), Louis Le Comte (1655–1728), Claude

187 Hastings, *Church in Africa*, 92.

188 First printed under the title *Gentio de Angola sufficientemente istrudo nos mysterios de nossa sancta fê, obra posthuma composta pello Padre Francisco Pacconio da Compahia de Jesu redusida [...] pello Antonio de Couto [...]* (Lisbon, 1642), Couto's catechism was later revised by Capuchin priest Antonio da Monteprandone and re-printed with an additional Latin column under the title *Gentilis Angollae fidei mysteriis lusitano olim idiomate per R.P. Antonium de Couto Soc. Jesu theologum, nunc autem Latino per Fr. Antonium Mariam Prandemontanum, concionatorem Capucinum* (Rome, 1661). A third edition, also in three columns of Latin, Kimbundu, and Portuguese, was published in 1784 by order of Portuguese queen Maria I (1734–1816, r.1777–1816). Finally, a fourth edition commissioned by Portuguese military officer in Angola Francisco de Sales Ferreira (1820–57) was published in 1855 under the title *Explicações de doutrina christã em Portuguez e Angolese, para uso das missões di interior de Angola* (Lisbon: 1855).

189 Carvalho, "Angola," 173; Gabriel, *Os jesuítas*, 69–70.

de Visdelou (1656–1737), and Guy Tachard (1651–1712).¹⁹⁰ Tachard authored the most significant account of that embassy. The account contains details about the moment the Jesuits spent at the Cape, at that time the only Protestant enclave in Africa, which was controlled by Dutch Calvinists.¹⁹¹

The Jesuits were at the Cape for no more than a few days. Yet, Tachard's account is full of interesting snapshots of seventeenth-century European perceptions of reality on the southwestern corner of the African continent. Some of the details were from Tachard's own observations; others, especially those concerning native Africans, were collected from other people's accounts. The country is described as both barbarous and barren but also rich and fertile, with corn growing just like in Europe and vines producing delicate wine. Africans knew a god, lived a simple life, avoided strenuous labor, and displayed a sense of freedom and admirable trustworthiness that was rare even among Christians; yet, they were also barbarous, and they eschewed conversion to Christianity. "By that way of living they pretend to demonstrate that they are masters of the earth and the happiest people of the world, because they alone live in liberty and repose, wherein they place their felicity," said Tachard about some of the Africans at the Cape.¹⁹² The Dutch had already established a beautiful town, which was firmly ruled by Protestant principles. Catholic rituals were not tolerated within the town's precincts, even though there was a significant population of Catholics from all conditions and nationalities: free, slaves, French, Germans, Portuguese, Spaniards, Flemings, and Indians. A resident of the Cape, who suspected that "the holy Sacrament" was being smuggled to the Catholics, told one of the Jesuits: "I know that you are the greatest enemies of our religion."¹⁹³ Even then, the Jesuits were welcome visitors because of their scientific knowledge. An observatory was immediately put at their disposal. In return, the Jesuits helped calculate the town's longitudes—the first time they were accurately established, and they are still considered the standard measurement today.¹⁹⁴ After this remarkable imprint on the Cape from the

190 Catherine Pagani, *Eastern Magnificence & European Ingenuity: Clocks of Late Imperial China* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 182.

191 Guy Tachard, *A Relation of the Voyage to Siam: Performed by Six Jesuits Sent by the French King to the Indies and China in the Year 1685* (London: T. B. for J. Robinson and A. Churchill, 1688). The part concerning the Cape of Good Hope is found on pages 43–80 of this edition. Also see Anthony Egan, "Jesuits and Protestants in South Africa, 1685–2015," in Maryks and Mkenda, *Encounters between Jesuits and Protestants in Africa*, 83–109, here 84–88.

192 Tachard, *Relation of the Voyage to Siam*, 69.

193 Tachard, *Relation of the Voyage to Siam*, 62.

194 Egan, "Jesuits and Protestants in South Africa," 86.

briefest of sojourns, a whole century passed before Jesuits established a lasting presence in southern Africa.

3 Eighteenth Century: Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Angola

At the start of the eighteenth century, Jesuits were present only in southeast and west-central Africa, specifically in Mozambique and Angola. However, they still had their eyes fixed on Ethiopia, even though the Ethiopian mission field had been entrusted to Franciscans. Individual Jesuits attempted to get back to the eastern African country, but none of the efforts resulted in a lasting presence there.

An example of such attempts for Ethiopia is that of six French Jesuits who were mandated by the Propaganda Fide to explore the possibility of getting into Ethiopia from Cairo via Sudan. The French Jesuits were thought to be better placed than their Franciscan counterparts to execute this route partly because some of them spoke Amharic and partly because a French consulate was well established in Cairo. Moreover, the French government, specifically King Louis XIV (1638–1715, r.1643–1715), was eager to benefit from the dwindling Portuguese influence by establishing political and commercial relations with Ethiopia. Fathers J. Verszeau, Paul Bodin, Philip de Poislevache, Anthony Grenier, Theophile Bonamour, and Charles Brevedent were involved in this venture. Brevedent left for Ethiopia in May 1698 as part of a medical mission sent to Ethiopia by the French consul in Cairo in response to a request from Emperor Iyasu I (throne name Ädyam Säggäd [1654–1706, r.1682–1706]), who was himself ill. It is said that Brevedent saw God's hand even in the emperor's sickness, which he viewed as a unique opportunity to reopen the Ethiopian mission to the Jesuits. Alas, Brevedent died of dysentery on August 9, 1699, merely three kilometers away from Gondar, his destination.¹⁹⁵

When the news of Brevedent's death reached Cairo, a second Jesuit mission was dispatched almost immediately, again taking advantage of another French embassy. Fathers Anthony Grenier (d.1701) and L. Paulet (d.1702), also French, left Cairo for Ethiopia in November 1700. These two Jesuits were skilled in medicine and hoped to succeed in Ethiopia by offering needed medical services. However, when they reached Gondar in early 1701, they were stunned by the hostility directed at them, which seemed to lurk everywhere. In August of the same year, the emperor exiled them for their own safety, kindly asking them to

195 O'Mahoney, "Abune Tobia," 132–35; Giovanni Vantini, *Christianity in the Sudan* (Bologna: EMI, 1981), 224.

withdraw in disguise. Grenier died in Ethiopia on October 3, 1701; Paulet managed to reach Sennar in Sudan, where he died in March 1702.¹⁹⁶

Dangerous and futile though these missions were, they generated one of the most interesting cases of intra-denominational missionary rivalry and naked religious jealousy. The Jesuit caravans to Ethiopia coincided with those of the Franciscans, sometimes journeying together but clearly separated by what the Irish historian and missionary to Ethiopia Kevin O'Mahoney (1930–2015) describes as a “simulated mutual ignorance” that masked an element of hostility. The two groups of missionaries competed to arrive at Gondar first, and the Jesuits were accused of doing so purely for vainglory. At Sennar in the Fung (Funj) Kingdom in Sudan where the parties had to stay together while awaiting clearance to enter Ethiopia, the tension between them almost developed into an all-out conflict. After multiple complaints had reached the Propaganda Fide, the congregation's future prefect, Cardinal Giuseppe Sacripante (1642–1727, prefect from 1704), advised that

even if it befalls the lot of the Jesuits to become established in the Kingdom of Fung, the harvest is so great and the workers proportionately so few, rather than seeking human or political aims, everyone can make his own contribution to the glory of God provided there is mutual charity.¹⁹⁷

Charity or no charity, neither the Franciscans nor the Jesuits succeeded in reopening the mission in Ethiopia. The Franciscans continued to make occasional attempts through most of the eighteenth century, which ended in martyrdoms if not fruitless frustrations. For the Jesuits, the exile and subsequent deaths of Grenier and Paulet ended their sporadic efforts to get back to Ethiopia during this period.

That sad ending was not without some consolation, however. Imagined since 1697 as a launching pad for a return mission to Ethiopia, Egypt ended up hosting its first Jesuit presence from 1703 because efforts farther south had foundered. Father William Dubernat (c.1670–1711) decided to settle in Cairo and minister to Coptic Christians there, opening a school and a seminary that would operate in Cairo until 1764. Dubernat's experiences and studies in Egypt are understood to be the main source for Father Jean-Baptiste du Sollier's (1669–1740) *Tractatus historico-chronologicus de patriarchis Alexandrinis* (A historical-chronological treatise on the Alexandrian patriarchs [1708]).

196 O'Mahoney, “Abune Tobia,” 135–38; Vantini, *Christianity in the Sudan*, 226.

197 O'Mahoney, “Abune Tobia,” 131–32.

Dubernat's contemporary in Egypt and superior of the mission from 1712, Claude Sicard (c.1677–1726), established schools for his Coptic audience and advocated for tolerance of their understanding of the sacraments. So completely did Sicard identify with the Copts he served that he found himself in conflict with Franciscans, who would not comprehend such dilution of Latin purity with elements of Orthodox Christianity.¹⁹⁸

Sicard is considered one of the earliest European Egyptologists. He is remembered for his recorded observations of ancient Egyptian monuments. In a long report addressed to the comte of Toulouse, Sicard provides a detailed account of the remains of the ancient city of Antinoöpolis (modern Sheikh 'Ibade), which he visited in 1715.¹⁹⁹ Though often left out of accounts of eighteenth-century Jesuit contributions to knowledge, Sicard's records and maps have informed and enriched scholarship across multiple disciplines. Historian Renate Dürr concludes that Sicard "was the first to undertake thorough empirical investigations into the miracle of the Exodus." According to Dürr, he was also

the first (and for many years the only) European to travel not just along the Nile but throughout Egypt. He travelled farther upriver than any European before him, and only a few in the eighteenth century, such as Richard Pococke and Frederick Norden about twenty years later, ventured farther afield. It was after Sicard's rediscovery of Thebes in 1718 that the French Crown took him into its service. The court geographer Guillaume Delisle commissioned him on behalf of the French Regency to produce maps of both ancient and modern Egypt, and to describe all the ancient Egyptian monuments he could find. This made Sicard the fourth explorer of Egypt to be officially commissioned by the French government (after Johann Michael Wansleben [or Vansleb, 1635–79], Benoît de Maillet [1656–1738] and Paul Lucas [1664–1737]). His appointment appears to have followed from his success in rediscovering Thebes. By 1722 he had located and mapped many of the major monuments, including twenty pyramids, twenty-four complete temples and over fifty decorated tombs.

198 Renate Dürr, "Mapping the Miracle: Empirical Approaches in the Exodus Debate of the Eighteenth Century," *Past & Present* 237, no. 1 (2017): 93–133, here 101–2; also John Donohue, "Egypt," in *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the Jesuits*, ed. Thomas Worcester (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 273–74.

199 A heavily edited version of this report is published under the title "Lettre d'un missionnaire en Egypte a Son Altesse Serenissime Monseigneur Le Comte de Toulouse," in *Nouveaux mémoires des missions de la Compagnie de Jésus dans le Levant* (Paris: Chez Nicolas le Clerc, 1717), 2:1–288, and the account of Antinoöpolis appears on pages 233–55.

In addition, he travelled to, and mapped, the Nile delta, with all its lakes and tributaries. All this information appeared in his magnum opus, a five-volume description of Egypt which included a map measuring 138 × 79.5 centimetres.²⁰⁰

Among Sicard's maps is one that is dated 1717, the original of which is held in the maps and plans department of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. Titled "Carte des déserts de la Basse-Thébaïde aux environs des monastères de St Antoine et de St Paul hermits avec le plan des lieux par où les Israélites ont probablement passé en sortant d'Egypte" (Map of the deserts of the Lower Thebaid near the monasteries of St. Anthony and St. Paul the hermits, together with a plan of the places through which the Israelites possibly passed on their way out of Egypt), Sicard's 1717 map addressed early eighteenth-century scholarly inquiries into such subjects as the biblical Exodus and the Egyptian origins of monasticism.

Farther south on the eastern side of the continent, the Jesuit mission in Mozambique flowed into the eighteenth century intact, if not thriving. Jesuits continued to occupy an important place in Mozambican society. As late as 1720, the Portuguese viceroy in India was still entrusting to the Jesuits in Mozambique the important task of verifying details of the customs due to the crown treasury in Lisbon because "these religious act in similar matters with much fidelity and without personal interest."²⁰¹

Yet, a certain pessimism about the prospects for the successful evangelization of Africans had crept into the Jesuits of this period, an attitude that lingered on throughout the first half of the eighteenth century. Jesuits complained about the behavior of the Portuguese, who never adhered to their Christian ideals, and about the unwillingness of Africans to give up their religious traditions. A 1751 assessment by João de Castro (d.1761), the provincial superior in Goa who had jurisdiction over Mozambique, reveals how poor the harvest had been after more than a century of labor in southeastern Africa:

I do not count among the missions of my province that of the rivers of Sena, where all that is effected in God's service is the baptizing of a few children in years of famine and disease, when there is pestilence in those

200 Dür, "Mapping the Miracle," 96, 99.

201 Count Dom Luis de Menezes, "For the Tribunal of the General Council of the Commerce of Mozambique and the Rivers," in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 5:86–87, here 87 (Portuguese original on p. 86). See also "The Viceroy's Rubric," in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 5:84.

lands. As to the adults, although they show no difficulty in receiving holy baptism, they have very great difficulty in leading Catholic lives and observing the precepts of our holy creed, to which they never conform, as the experience of many years has shown, the good doctrine taught them only resulting in greater condemnation of their souls and excessive grief of those who labour to lead them to heaven.²⁰²

Nor could the Jesuits show much economic fruit from their decades of material labor. Overreliance on their imperial backer remained their Achilles' heel. In the early 1700s, Portugal's economy and military power were in decline. King João V (1689–1750, r.1706–50), who reigned during this period, was later described as “a monarch of no importance”²⁰³ whose reign was “long and inglorious.”²⁰⁴ It was during his reign that Portugal lost practically all its eastern African possessions north of the Zambezi except Mozambique.²⁰⁵ The Jesuits watched their own economic support structures collapse within the same period.

João V was succeeded by José I (1714–77, r.1750–77), who in 1755 appointed Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo (1699–1782), better known as the Marquis de Pombal or simply Pombal, an avowed opponent of the Jesuits, as his prime minister. Pombal's overall economic policy was to rebuild the mother country, which entailed favoring large Lisbon companies to the neglect of colonial establishments.²⁰⁶ For him, the remaining Portuguese possessions in Africa were of so little value that he did nothing to raise them from the abyss he found them in. Local chieftains in Mozambique took advantage of the situation to challenge Portuguese authority and claim more freedom for themselves. In a 1753 engagement, the Portuguese lost half of a makeshift army they had

202 João de Castro, “Account of the Missions of the Company of Jesus in the Province of Goa, with the Number of Missionaries, Catechists, and Christians Resident in Them” (November 16, 1751), in Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, 5:210–11 (Portuguese original on p. 10). A similar assessment was repeated in 1755 by António Rodrigues, then provincial of Goa. Rea, *Economics of the Zambezi Missions*, 47.

203 Theal, *History of Africa South of the Zambesi*, 1:450; also see Conde de Carnota, *The Marquis of Pombal*, 2nd ed. (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dye, 1871), 10–17.

204 Carnota, *Marquis of Pombal*, 39, see also 10–17.

205 Justus Strandes, *The Portuguese Period in East Africa* (Nairobi: East Africa Literature Bureau, 1961), 255.

206 Sanderson Beck, “Congo, Angola, and Mozambique 1700–1950”; <http://www.san.beck.org/16-13-Congo,Angola,Mozambique.html> (accessed September 15, 2021; also Carnota, *Marquis of Pombal*, 39–40.

assembled, together with several *prazos* and the desire to fight on.²⁰⁷ Even worse, exportation of slaves from the eastern African region was now regarded as more profitable than their local employment in the *prazos*, a change that had a devastating impact on the economy upon which Jesuits had depended.²⁰⁸ All these changes shook the foundations of the missions in the region and left the Jesuits weakened even before they were expelled from the colony in 1759. In their final years in Mozambique, Jesuits retreated from most of their stations and concentrated themselves at their headquarters at Sena and at their college on the island of Mozambique.

These observations go against Livingstone's impression of "riches of the fraternity, which were immense."²⁰⁹ As Rea has demonstrated, the Jesuit mission in Mozambique was in a financial crisis during its final years. At the time they were expelled, all their houses were in debt, with the singular exception of the main house at Sena, which had a balance of three thousand guilders.²¹⁰ Rea arrives at the conclusion that "even had they not been driven out by Pombal, and even had their expulsion not been followed fourteen years later by the general suppression of the order, it is doubtful whether under the circumstances their *prazos* and their missions could have survived."²¹¹

Even though they were exposed to the same political and economic challenges that arose from changes in Portugal, the sister missions in Angola seemed to have withstood the pressure better. They appear to have had a stronger institutional foundation around the college in Luanda, and over time had acquired relative autonomy from the Portuguese *conquista*. However, Angola's direct link with the Americas posed a different kind of challenge. Like many other secular and religious organizations in Brazil, Jesuits employed the labor of enslaved Africans, several of whom hailed from Angola and were occasionally forwarded to Brazil by fellow Jesuits on the African side of the Atlantic. To the surprise of a majority that viewed enslavement of Africans as necessary for the sustenance and progress of their order,²¹² and to the displeasure of the government in Portugal, a handful of Jesuits in Brazil had questioned the morality

207 Theal, *History of Africa South of the Zambesi*, 1:450, 453; cf. José Augusto Alves de Souza, *Os jesuítas em Moçambique, 1541–1991: No cinquentenário do quarto período da nossa missão* (Braga: Livraria Apostolado da Imprensa, 1991), 66.

208 Rea, *Economics of the Zambezi Missions*, 171.

209 David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa: Including a Sketch of Sixteen Years' Residence in the Interior of Africa* (London: Ward, Lock & Co., 1957), 551.

210 Rea, "Agony on the Zambezi," 51.

211 Rea, *Economics of the Zambezi Mission*, 171.

212 Alden, *Making of an Enterprise*, 513–27.

of trading in slaves.²¹³ Within Angola itself, a similar few who raised objections to the trade were called meddlers and troublemakers. This muted and all-too-small opposition to the shameful trade was later included on a long list of supposed Jesuit misdemeanors, marginally adding to the overall argument for their total expulsion from the Portuguese empire.²¹⁴

The African missions were casualties, first of a memorandum that was addressed to Pope Clement XIII (1693–1769, 1758–69) on April 20, 1759, complaining about Jesuit conduct in the Portuguese empire,²¹⁵ then of a subsequent Portuguese decree of expulsion in the same year. Because of a lack of sources, early in the last century Theal judged it reasonable to assume that at least some Jesuits in Mozambique would have escaped into the interior of Southeast Africa.²¹⁶ Today, it is known that, following the decree of expulsion, the Jesuits in Mozambique were literally pulled out of their houses and for some time were incarcerated at Quelimane.²¹⁷ Their properties were confiscated by the state,²¹⁸ and the Jesuits themselves were afterward shipped, first to Goa, where they were imprisoned alongside their companions in India, and later to Portugal. A number of them died at sea, while the rest arrived to continue their incarceration in Lisbon.

The Jesuits in Luanda suffered a similar fate. Officials in Angola responded swiftly to the order of expulsion, and the Jesuits at the Colégio de Jesus were surrounded and held under strict confinement until they could be repatriated. In July 1760, most of them were shipped first to Brazil and then to Portugal, from where they were later exiled to Italy among their companions from Portugal and its other dominions.²¹⁹ Five other Jesuits, probably brought in from elsewhere, still languished in an Angolan prison in 1768.²²⁰

Even though in the mid-eighteenth century the missions in Africa were small and underperforming, the expulsion had a devastating impact on the prospects for Christianity in southern Africa and more generally on the educational initiatives that were championed by the Jesuits. Initially, the Dominicans took over some of the stations previously manned by the Jesuits in Mozambique. However,

213 See Thomas, *Slave Trade*, 137, 147–48, 364, 449, and Beck, “Congo, Angola, and Mozambique.”

214 Beck, “Congo, Angola, and Mozambique.”

215 Carnota, *Marquis of Pombal*, 126–28.

216 Theal, *History of Africa South of the Zambesi*, 1:446.

217 Sousa, *Os jesuítas em Moçambique*, 66.

218 Livingstone, *Missionary Travels*, 551.

219 Carvalho, “Angola,” 174; Francisco Rodrigues, *História da Companhia de Jesus na assistência de Portugal*, 7 vols. (Porto: Livraria Apostolado da Imprensa, 1931–50), 4/1:238.

220 Rodrigues, *História da Companhia de Jesus*, 4/1:244.

they too were expelled from southeastern Africa in 1775. Just eight secular priests replaced the Dominicans, dealing a serious blow to the little flock that still existed in the region.²²¹ On the western side of the continent, King José I offered Luanda's Igreja de Jesus to the local bishop to be used as a cathedral. The great edifice was left to deteriorate. Only in 1953 did it receive renovation, which made it suitable for a military chaplaincy and, later, a cathedral once more.²²²

The blow to the Jesuits' educational ministry, probably the most important element of their missions, was fatal. The expulsion destroyed a sprouting culture of literacy and learning. The Jesuits had kept three schools running in the Mozambican region even when the whole mission was struggling. The college on the island of Mozambique was, in fact, a large institutional structure, still counted among "the very few buildings of importance" in 1911.²²³ After the Jesuits' expulsion, this building was converted into a residence for the Portuguese governor.²²⁴ In Luanda, the Jesuit college was immediately divided into two parts, one to shelter the bishop of Angola, the other to house a modest seminary. The little teaching that still took place was by law conducted in Portuguese and Latin, to the great detriment of the local languages that the Jesuits had promoted. Strictly enforcing the rule, Governor António de Lencastre (in office 1772–79) ordered all religious material that existed in African languages to be destroyed.²²⁵ In the last decades of the eighteenth century, the Colégio de Jesus was little more than a ruin. Describing the loss, historian of Portuguese Africa James Duffy observes how, for 250 years, the Jesuits had given the colony "whatever dim enlightenment it possessed" and, on occasions, were "the conscience of Angola and the only buffer between the African and his oppressor."²²⁶ With the suppression of the Society, such glimmers of hope were brought to an abrupt end.

Visiting the regions in which Jesuits had labored almost a century after they had been expelled from them, Livingstone identified over twelve abandoned churches in south-central Africa, which he believed had belonged to the Capuchins and the Jesuits.²²⁷ Declaring the Jesuits to have been "wiser in their

221 Theal, *History of Africa South of the Zambesi*, 1:461.

222 Amélia, "Angola Field Trip."

223 See "Mozambique" in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, ed. Charles G. Herbermann (New York: Appleton, 1911).

224 Theal, *History of Africa South of the Zambesi*, 1:461.

225 Beck, "Congo, Angola and Mozambique"; Amélia, "Angola Field Trip."

226 Duffy, *Portugal in Africa*, 66.

227 For a more detailed analysis of Livingstone's views about the early Jesuit missions in southeastern and west-central Africa, see Mkenda, "Protestant Verdict on the Jesuit Missionary Approach in Africa."

generation than we,” he greatly admired their missionary methods in Africa, especially the employment of each member in a field in which he was most likely to excel. This, he believed, guaranteed economic sustainability for the missions. “He who was great in barter was sent in search of ivory and gold-dust,” said Livingstone, “so that while in the course of performing the religious acts of his mission to distant tribes, he found the means of aiding effectually the brethren whom he had left at the central settlement.”²²⁸ When he visited Ambaca—“an important place in former times, but now a mere paltry village”—he discovered that the Jesuits were still fondly remembered as *os padres jesuitas* (the Jesuit priests). To his happy surprise, the Ambacans could read and write: “Ever since the expulsion of the teachers by the Marquis of Pombal,” he noted, “the natives have continued to teach each other.”²²⁹ He even attributed to the Jesuits and “other missionaries” the introduction to Angola of coffee and species of trees that were useful for timber.²³⁰

Besides the impressive Jesuit footprints they uncover, Livingstone’s observations help us see where the pre-suppression Jesuit missions in Africa underperformed. Livingstone decried the complete disappearance of Christianity from the regions where Jesuits had centuries of missionary labor. “Since the early missionaries were not wanting in either wisdom or enterprise, it would be interesting to know the exact cause of their failing to perpetuate their faith,” mused Livingstone.²³¹ If the Ambacans could pass literacy skills from one generation to another long after their teachers had been sent away, why could they not do the same with the faith of their evangelizers? Livingstone laid the blame on Catholic reluctance to pass on the scriptures to converts, leaving them with nothing that could become “a light to their feet when the good men themselves were gone.”²³² That so much Jesuit effort went to producing catechisms and grammars but none to Bible translations renders some credence to Livingstone’s observation. Livingstone also thought that Jesuits were too enmeshed in the systems that sanctioned trade in enslaved Africans for their faith to be taken seriously.²³³

While the slave trade undermined evangelization, it cannot fully account for the near total disappearance of Christianity in southeastern and west-central Africa as observed by Livingstone. His observations also led him to conclude

228 Livingstone, *Missionary Travels*, 29.

229 Livingstone, *Missionary Travels*, 330.

230 Livingstone, *Missionary Travels*, 347.

231 Livingstone and Livingstone, *Narrative of an Expedition*, 204.

232 Livingstone, *Missionary Travels*, 330.

233 Livingstone and Livingstone, *Narrative of an Expedition*, 204.

that the memory of *os padres jesuitas* was a positive one in Angola, but the Jesuits in Tete on the Mozambican side “do not seem to have possessed the sympathies of the people as their brethren in Angola did,” and “none of the natives here can read and write,” even though Jesuits had also translated a few prayers into the local languages of the area.²³⁴ It is puzzling that, according to this observation, Jesuits were better known and more appreciated in Angola than in Mozambique, yet it was in Angola that the slave trade—as opposed to the use of slave labor in local *prazos*—was rife through most of the period under consideration.

Seeking to shed more light on this question, Rea lays the blame on the dwindling economy of the Zambezi missions and further exploits standard explanations like the innate fickleness of the Africans and, especially, their inability or reluctance to give up polygamy.²³⁵ To this list are often added factors like opposition from Muslims, an inhospitable climate, and irregular contact with Europe.²³⁶ Even these additional factors do not explain fully the disappearance of Christianity in the regions that were evangelized by Jesuits, Dominicans, Franciscans, and many other Catholic missionaries from the fifteenth century to the eighteenth century. Not all Africans were polygamous, since nature has never provided so many women in any human population sample²³⁷; Africans never became Muslims en masse after the departure of the Christian missionaries but rather reverted to their traditional African religion; and, despite similar conditions in Ethiopia, Christianity never disappeared from that country, not even because of its irregular contact with Europe.

The Jesuits’ expulsion from Angola and Mozambique thus left behind a number of questions, many of which remain unanswered. The expulsion also ended the formal presence of Jesuits in Africa fourteen years before the 1773 comprehensive suppression of their order in other parts of the world.²³⁸ Officially under suppression for the following forty years, Jesuits could only return to Africa after the order was restored in the nineteenth century.

234 Livingstone, *Missionary Travels*, 551.

235 Rea, *Economics of Zambezi Missions*, and Rea, “Agony on the Zambezi,” *passim*.

236 “Mozambique” in *Catholic Encyclopedia*.

237 David G. Maillu, *Our Kind of Polygamy* (Nairobi: Heinemann Kenya, 1988), 2.

238 For a succinct discussion of the suppression and eventual restoration of the Jesuits, see Jonathan Wright, “The Suppression and Restoration,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Jesuits*, ed. Thomas Worcester (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 263–77.

4 Nineteenth Century: Algeria, Fernando Pó, Sudan, Egypt, Madagascar, Zambezi, and Congo

Jesuits were able to resume old missions or establish new ones after they were officially restored in 1814. The restoration happened at a critical moment for Christianity in Africa. Portugal was no longer the sole or even the most significant imperial power on the continent, and the *Padroado* claims had fallen into disuse. Additionally, whereas in previous centuries Catholic missionaries had most of the African field to themselves, in this period they had to compete with Protestants for African souls. Multidenominational missionary activities in Africa, which started as a drizzle toward the end of the eighteenth century, became torrential by the mid-nineteenth. A missionary rush not too different from the colonial scramble that would characterize the latter part of that century was taking place.²³⁹ Christian missionary activities were in fact a precursor to the European colonization of Africa. Missionary personnel were for the most part essential agents of the colonial process, and their evangelizing missions acquired a peculiarly European nationalist tint. As historian John W. O'Malley puts it, "missionaries were expected to carry and brandish the national flag."²⁴⁰ Jesuits had been restored just in time for them to play a part in this critical history.

The nineteenth-century Jesuit presence in Africa included small missions in Algeria, Fernando Pó (Bioko), Sudan, and Egypt, and major ones in Madagascar, the Zambezi region of southern Africa, and the Congo.

The first mission of the post-restoration era was that of the French Jesuits in the Maghreb. Following the French occupation of Algeria in 1830, several uncoordinated missionary activities took place in the north African country, sometimes for the limited purpose of ministering to foreign soldiers and European settlers.²⁴¹ This was happening at a time when an 1828 royal decree had proscribed Jesuits from involvement in education within France. Their activities in Algeria took advantage of a legal gray area regarding the applicability of that

239 Festo Mkenda, "Jesuits, Protestants, and Africa before the Twentieth Century," in Maryks and Mkenda, *Encounters between Jesuits and Protestants in Africa*, 11–29, here 13–15. For a comprehensive treatment of the colonial scramble, see Thomas Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa: White Man's Conquest of the Dark Continent from 1876 to 1912* (New York: Avon Books, 1991).

240 John W. O'Malley, *A History of the Popes: From Peter to the Present* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010), 251.

241 My account of the Jesuit mission in Algeria relies substantially, though not solely, on Kyle Francis, "Civilizing Settlers: Catholic Missionaries and the Colonial State in French Algeria, 1830–1914" (PhD diss., City University of New York, 2015).

decree in the newly conquered territory. That lack of clarity allowed political and ecclesiastical patrons to support an active Jesuit presence in the colony. Their unofficial presence can already be seen in Algeria from 1836. Disregarding Parisian opinion, in this year the Holy See appointed Jesuit Father Montera as prefect apostolic of the new mission, although for the most part the context rendered him powerless and ineffectual.

As long as Algeria remained a mission territory, the Holy See could continue to exercise authority over it through the Propaganda Fide. To wrestle that authority from the Vatican, the French government decreed the establishment of the bishopric of Algiers in 1838. Claiming its prerogative to select bishops in line with the concordat of 1801 between the Holy See and France to that effect, the government, through the same decree, named Antoine Louis-Adolphe Dupuch (1800–56) the bishop of Algiers (in office 1838–46). A priest in the diocese of Bordeaux prior to his appointment, Dupuch was perceived as sufficiently Gallican to check ultramontane tendencies believed to be harbored by Jesuits and others who thought like them. However, finding himself in a weak position, the first bishop of Algiers allied himself with the Jesuits, formalizing their presence and allowing them some institutional status within Algeria.²⁴²

Dupuch entrusted to the Jesuits a small orphanage he had established in his own house. Taking advantage of the improved conditions, the Jesuits, under the leadership of Father Ferdinand Brumauld (1798–1863), moved the orphanage to Ben Aknoun, a short distance from central Algiers, and increased its capacity. In this new facility, they looked after children—supposedly orphans—of both European and African descent. In 1848, the orphanage had about 250 children under its care, a figure that eventually rose to five hundred.²⁴³

For a long time, the orphanage remained the main activity of the Jesuits in Algeria. This focus marked a shift from earlier and largely unsuccessful efforts to make converts out of African and Muslim adults.²⁴⁴ With the orphanage, the Jesuits set a precedent that was advanced by others as a strategy for evangelization in Algeria, founded on the belief that, unlike adults, children converted before knowing another—supposedly African and Muslim—culture were more likely to remain Christian. This strategy was later perfected by the famous cardinal Charles Lavigerie (1825–92), archbishop of Algiers and Carthage (in office 1867–92) and founder of the Society of the Missionaries of Africa.²⁴⁵

242 Francis, "Civilizing Settlers," 57–65.

243 *Les jésuites missionnaires au XIX^e siècle* (Brussels: Librairie Albert Dewit, 1908), 214.

244 Ugo Colonna, "La Compagnie de Jésus en Algérie (1840–1880): L'exemple de la mission de Kabylie (1863–1880)," *Monde arabe: Maghreb Machrek* 135 (1992): 68–78.

245 Bertrand Taithe, "Algerian Orphans and Colonial Christianity in Algeria, 1866–1939," *French History* 20, no. 3 (2006): 240–59, here 247.

Dupuch also relied on Jesuits as teachers at a junior seminary he had established to nurture priestly vocations for his new diocese. In the early 1840s, Jesuits opened their own secondary school at Oran, moving their evangelization focus on children and youth a notch higher. After the Kabylia region of northern Algeria had been conquered by the French in 1857, Jesuits began missionary activities there and gradually focused their work on children in an orphanage that was established in 1869. From 1873, Jesuit attention was also extended to other local schools in Kabylia.²⁴⁶ Besides activities in schools and orphanages, Jesuits were also employed by Dupuch's immediate successor bishop, Louis-Antoine-Augustin Pavy (1805–66, in office 1846–66), as well as by Lavigerie to explore parts of the country that were controlled by African communities, especially the Saharan regions in the south, and acquaint themselves with their peoples and cultures. In this ministry, Father André Schembri (1805–72) is noted to have been particularly successful around Sétif.²⁴⁷ When Pius IX (1792–1878, r.1846–78) named Lavigerie apostolic delegate of the Sahara and the Sudan in 1868, the future cardinal turned to the Jesuits for initial collaboration. His long-term plan involved founding the already-mentioned Society of the Missionaries of Africa, of which the Jesuit François Vincent (1816–71) was the first master of novices.²⁴⁸

Like in many other places, Jesuit documents originating from Algeria have been used to understand not only the Jesuit mission but also the geography, history, and ethnography of the region. For example, the travelogue of the Sicilian Jesuit Giorgio Maria Ciaceri (1827–1908),²⁴⁹ who was part of the Algerian mission, and who traversed the Maghreb between 1861 and 1869, has been described by Arabic language and literature scholar Giuliano Mion as “a very rich source for anthropological, ethnographical, historical, social, religious and linguistic information about the countries and the cultures he visited.”²⁵⁰

From the start, these Jesuit activities in Algeria faced opposition from other religious organizations and from individuals who held different opinions or were concerned about the apparent illegality of an active Jesuit educational ministry in the colony when Jesuits were for the most part banned from

246 Colonna, “La Compagnie de Jésus en Algérie”; *Les jésuites missionnaires*, 67.

247 *Les jésuites missionnaires*, 216.

248 *Les jésuites missionnaires*, 218; Missionaries of Africa/White Fathers, “The First Novitiate at Maison Rostan”; <https://mafrome.org/first-novitiate-at-maison-rostan> (accessed September 15, 2021).

249 Giorgio Maria Ciaceri, *Panorama ricreativo per la studiosa gioventù italiana o cenni d'un doppio viaggio nell'America meridionale e nell'Africa settentrionale*, 2 vols. (Catania: Luciano Rizzo, 1885–86).

250 Giuliano Mion, “Giorgio Maria Ciaceri en Afrique du Nord: Les voyages d'un jésuite sicilien à la moitié du XIX^e siècle,” *Folia Orientalia* 54 (2017): 309–33, here 309.

carrying out similar activities in metropolitan France. However, Jesuits continued to enjoy support from bishops and high-ranking civil or military patrons in Algeria. When Governor-General Thomas Robert Bugeaud (1784–1848, in office 1840–46) was warned that Brumauld was a Jesuit, he reportedly responded: “He may be the devil himself if you will, but he is doing good in Algeria and will be my friend forever.”²⁵¹ To an accusation that Jesuits were plotting to overthrow the colonial state, the governor-general insisted that he saw “no danger in leaving a very small number of Jesuits to exercise a charity all the more useful to a colony where we are not able to do it ourselves.” He went on to praise the Jesuits for imparting the principles of religion, morality, and utility to children who “according to all appearances have been abandoned in the streets to a life of crime, [but] now become artisans useful to the colony.”²⁵² With this kind of opinion, Jesuits found political allies in nineteenth-century Algeria of a kind that they were unable to find in France. But they also lost these allies toward the end of the century when yet another suppression of Jesuits in France in 1880 could no longer escape implementation in the now more firmly controlled colony. Jesuit activities in Algeria were suspended in 1881.

Farther south from Algeria, post-restoration Jesuits took up another mission on the island of Fernando Pó (sometimes spelt as “Fernando Poo”), now also known as Bioko and part of Equatorial Guinea. When Portugal ceded control of this island to Spain in 1778, efforts were made to resume previously failed efforts at evangelization. With Spanish consent, the English also occupied Fernando Pó from 1827 to 1844, introducing an element of denominational competition among missionaries on the island. Queen Isabella II (1830–1904, r.1833–68) was eager to promote Catholicism among the island’s African population as a way of securing their loyalty to Spain, and she entrusted to the Jesuits the dual mandate to Hispanicize and Catholicize the islanders. Here, like in Algeria, the education of children was to be prioritized.²⁵³ A Jesuit mission was started in earnest in 1845 and, in 1855, a new apostolic prefecture that included Fernando Pó was created and entrusted to the Jesuits.²⁵⁴

251 Thomas J. Campbell, *The Jesuits, 1534–1921: A History of the Society of Jesus from Its Foundation to the Present Time* (New York: Encyclopedia Press, 1921), 813.

252 Francis, “Civilizing Settlers,” 63.

253 *Les jésuites missionnaires*, 66; also Jean Luc Enyegue, “The Adulteresses Were Reformers: The Perception and Position of Women in the Religious Fight of Fernando Poo, 1843–1900,” in Maryks and Mkenda, *Encounters between Jesuits and Protestants in Africa*, 215–32, here 217–18, 222.

254 Jean Luc Enyegue, “The Jesuits in Fernando Po, 1858–1872: An Incomplete Mission,” in *Jesuit Survival and Restoration: A Global History 1773–1900*, ed. Robert A. Maryks and Jonathan Wright (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 466–86.

The Jesuit mission in Fernando Pó fared no better than previous efforts to Catholicize the island. Jesuit historian Jean Luc Enyegue paints a picture of a fractious community of islanders who would not be persuaded to find unity in Catholicism. Moreover, while Jesuits desired to educate all the youth and thus to include girls in their school programs, they failed to find a formula that would make them effective ministers and teachers among women. Nor was the situation helped by animosity across Christian denominational lines. A mission weakened by multiple challenges was devastated by discontinued support following the Spanish liberal revolution of 1868 that banned religious orders. “Without resources for the mission, disappointed by the scarce results they harvested, and facing opposition from the natives with the support of Baptist and Methodist missionaries, the Jesuits left Fernando Poo in 1872,” never to return.²⁵⁵

Turning to the eastern side of the continent, post-restoration Jesuits first passed through Egypt again with a view to reaching Sudan, farther south. They were taking part in a mission that was neither initiated by them nor exclusively theirs.²⁵⁶ Adopting the idea of the Maltese bishop Annetto Casolani (1815–66) of ending the enslavement of Africans while working for their evangelization in the Sudan, the Vatican established the vicariate apostolic of Central Africa in 1846. Keen on exploiting the good relations he enjoyed with Muhammad Ali Pasha (1769–1849, in office 1805–48)—the Ottoman viceroy of Egypt with suzerain authority over Sudan—Pope Gregory XVI (1765–1846, r.1831–46) wished to see the project executed with speed. The matter was widely advertised in Rome and a team of missionaries was formed. Over a period of time, the initial team came to include Casolani himself and six other missionaries, including Angelo Vinco (1819–53), Ignaz Knoblecher (1819–58), and the Jesuits Emanuele Pedemonte (1792–1858) and Maksymilian Ryłło (1802–48). Three other Jesuits later joined the mission: Gaetano Zara (1819–53), Giuseppe Repetti (1810–95), and Francesco D’Ottavio (1805–59). The initial team of missionaries took different routes but reunited in Alexandria, Egypt, in April 1847. They passed through Cairo around September, and from there they headed to Khartoum, where they arrived in February 1848.²⁵⁷

255 Enyegue, “Adulteresses Were Reformers,” 225.

256 For a longer discussion of this mission, see Festo Mkenda, *Mission for Everyone: A Story of the Jesuits in Eastern Africa, 1555–2012* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2013), 130–40.

257 Robert Danieluk, “Maksymilian Ryłło S.J. (1802–1848) and the Beginnings of the New Catholic Mission in Africa in Nineteenth Century,” *Annales missiologici Posnanienses* 23 (2018): 7–22, here 13–18.

Pedemonte is variously described as a most worthy religious and a “tough Jesuit” who might have done well as an officer in the Napoleonic armies.²⁵⁸ It was probably because of these qualities that he was assigned to this important mission to the Sudan. It is said that, after the pope had appointed Ryłło to be pro-vicar apostolic of the nascent vicariate, it was felt among Jesuit circles that Ryłło would do well with the company of another Jesuit, a kind of “visible guardian angel” specially assigned to him by the superior general to keep him from a tendency to waste money and make rushed decisions.²⁵⁹ Pedemonte may have been just the right person for that angelic assignment.

Ryłło was a seasoned missionary. Polish by nationality, he had worked in Syria, Malta, and Sicily and was rector of the Urbanianum in Rome before his assignment to the Sudan mission. Because of his experience in the Middle East, he already spoke Arabic, a language that was crucial in the new mission field. Under his leadership, the mission moved with the speed that the Holy See desired and involved a broad vision that, in Ryłło’s view, would have turned Sudan into a new Paraguay.²⁶⁰ On their arrival in Khartoum, the missionaries learned more African languages and acquainted themselves with the local culture. Within a short time, they established a school that was primarily designed to serve the children of the local African population, but which also served foreigners who resided in the area. The African students at the school were mainly boys whom the missionaries had redeemed from the slave market. In their effort to insert themselves further into their new cultural context, the missionaries used the school to facilitate their own learning. They became “disciples of their own pupils,” learning the languages of their learners and collecting from them details about the character, habits, and customs of the local people.²⁶¹

While the beginning of the Sudan mission was impressive, it nevertheless stood on shifting sands. As Elias Toniolo and his co-editor and historian Richard Hill (1901–96) put it, the mission was being implemented “before the true cause of malaria was understood and tropical medicine itself was at its

258 Elias Toniolo and Richard Hill, eds., *The Opening of the Nile Basin: Writings by Members of the Catholic Mission to Central Africa on the Geography and Ethnography of the Sudan, 1842–1881* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 1974), 55.

259 Roland Werner, William Anderson, and Andrew Wheeler, *Day of Devastation, Day of Contentment: The History of the Sudanese Church across 2000 Years* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2000), 132.

260 Danieluk, “Maksymilian Ryłło S.J.,” 17. Here, the reference is to the Jesuit “reductions” or mission towns in Paraguay before the suppression of the Society. Girolamo Imbruglia, *The Jesuit Missions of Paraguay and a Cultural History of Utopia (1568–1789)* (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

261 Toniolo and Hill, *Opening of the Nile Basin*, 4–5.

infancy.”²⁶² Here, as elsewhere in tropical Africa, European missionaries were dying almost on arrival. The leader of the Sudan mission was also the first one to pay for it with his life. On June 17, 1848, just over four months after their arrival, Ryłło succumbed to a combination of dysentery and fever. Moreover, the Holy See’s inability to finance the undertaking led the Propaganda Fide to recommend its closure just as it was being started. Supplied thus poorly, the missionaries found themselves relying on slave traders for important services like navigation up and down the Nile. In 1851, Pope Pius IX was persuaded to decree the suppression of the vicariate apostolic of Central Africa, although Knoblecher, at that time the pro-vicar apostolic, prevailed over the pope and secured a delay in implementing the decision.

With the heaviest price in missionaries’ lives, the Sudan mission survived these problems. Soon after Ryłło’s death, Casolani and Vinco left for Europe, accompanied by two prospective Sudanese seminarians. That in such a short time they had already identified potential African agents of evangelization manifests their singular determination to see the mission last beyond their own truncated lives. In Rome, they appealed for finances and personnel to support the undertaking they had left behind under the care of Knoblecher and Pedemonte. In his hometown of Verona, Vinco made an appeal that had an enduring impact. Among his enthusiastic responders was one youthful (now saint) Daniele Comboni (1831–81), future vicar apostolic of Central Africa and founder of the Comboni Missionaries, who to date remain the most dedicated Catholic evangelizers of the Sudan.

The Comboni success story lay far in the future, however. Before then, the mission’s human cost proved unbearable. Twenty-two missionaries died in the Sudan between 1851 and 1858. Knoblecher himself returned to Europe completely weakened by fever and died on April 16, 1858, aged thirty-six. After Knoblecher’s death, Franciscans took over the mission and directed significant resources to it, but the human loss still made it unsustainable. There had been twenty-two more missionary deaths between January and April 1862, bringing the total to forty-six since the mission started. At this point, the Holy See ordered its indefinite closure. But Jesuits had already pulled out of the Sudan in 1852, when the superior general recalled those who were still in the mission. The Jesuit contribution was then limited to supporting a missionary school in Verona, which had been established to prepare missionaries for Africa.

The last of these small nineteenth-century Jesuit missions in Africa started in Egypt in 1879. Like that in the Sudan, the mission in Egypt was also an initiative of the Holy See, but it was entirely entrusted to the Society. While there

²⁶² Toniolo and Hill, *Opening of the Nile Basin*, ix.

were other Catholic missionaries already working in Egypt, Jesuits were asked by Pope Leo XIII (1810–1903, r.1878–1903) to start and run a seminary in Cairo for the Coptic Catholic community. The seminary would prepare candidates for further training in Beirut.²⁶³ Like other Jesuit missions in the Middle East, this one also depended on France, which had enormous interest in Egypt at that time. Remy Normand (1832–1916), who was superior in Syria, entered Egypt in January 1879 and rented a house at Muski in central Cairo. In October, the seminary started operating from the rented space. A regular school was also started and operated in the same premises under the name Collège de la Sainte Famille (Holy Family College, usually abbreviated as CSF), initially as a strategy for earning an income with which to support the seminary. Six Jesuits were assigned to CSF in 1880, three of them mainly as teachers in the school, which started with about sixteen students.

The 1882 school year started with an impressively multireligious body of 112 students: sixty-five Catholics, twenty-nine Orthodox, twelve Muslims, and six Jews.²⁶⁴ Seeing this development, a need for a fully developed school was discerned. With the facilitation of Father Michel Jullien (1827–1911), the school's principal, the Jesuits acquired land at Faggala on the outskirts of Cairo on which they later built the main campus of CSF. After much haggling among Jesuits in Cairo and in Lyon, construction started in 1888, now under Father Antoine Foujols (1850–1931), who had replaced Julien as principal, and Brother François Mourier (1829–1904), the chief architect. The project enjoyed immense support from the Egyptian government. Attending the ground-breaking ceremony were Egypt's prime minister Nubar Pasha (1825–99, in office 1878–79, 1884–88, and 1894–95) and several diplomats. At the occasion, Foujols declared:

We want to pay Egypt back the hospitality she has so generously extended to us, by providing her with a colossal structure designed to raise its children on knowledge and sublime ethics. We will be happy when we can provide her with a generation of devoted men of character, a legion of young people who will place their intellects, light, words and arms in the service of their nation.²⁶⁵

263 Henri Jalabert, *La vice-province du Proche-Orient de la Compagnie de Jésus (Égypte, Syrie, Liban)* (Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1960), 26–27; Maurice Martin, *Notes et articles sur l'Égypte* (Cairo: CEDE-Égypte/Soudan, 2018), 285, 292–95.

264 Dalia Victor, "140 Years on Jesuit Education in Egypt: 'The Men You Produce,'" Watani; <https://en.wataninet.com/features/education/140-years-on-jesuit-education-in-egypt-the-men-you-produce/29147> (accessed September 15, 2021).

265 As reported in Victor, "140 Years on Jesuit Education in Egypt."

Once it was started, the construction moved fast. The initial buildings were ready for the 282 students who, in May 1889, started the school year in the new premises. By the end of the century, CSF was counting thirty Jesuits among its residents and was boasting an impressive church that was “built in the Mozarabic style, inspired by the Andalusian style,” and an equally impressive theater among its main structures.²⁶⁶

The investments at CSF manifest the importance Jesuits in Egypt had given to the educational ministry. Seeking to preserve the few Coptic Catholics, bring the Orthodox into union with Rome, and lock out Protestants who were also seeking to make converts out of Egyptians, the Jesuits came to believe that no conversions would be achieved without a multiplicity of schools.²⁶⁷ Moreover, besides the initial impetus from Rome, they also received encouragement from the European community in Egypt, especially the staff of the French embassy in Cairo, who viewed them as specially placed to offer quality education to European children who lived in the country. Responding to these multiple interests, the Jesuits also started another school in Alexandria in 1882, which they named Collège de Saint François Xavier.²⁶⁸ Originally, CSF was meant to develop a more Egyptian curriculum while Collège de Saint François Xavier was to offer something more in line with the French system. The latter school appears to have lost to CSF in a competition for resources, however, and was closed in 1920.²⁶⁹ Competing for attention and resources was also the seminary that had been the reason for the Jesuit mission to Egypt in this period. This seminary in Cairo continued to exist side by side with the CSF until it was closed in 1907.

An important step toward the diversification of Jesuit ministries in Egypt was taken in 1887. To be more involved in the country outside of the CSF institutional structures, and to establish direct contact with communities from which their seminarians came, a residence was established at Minya, about 250 kilometers south of Cairo, to accommodate more itinerant Jesuits. These involved themselves in activities that were more pastoral in nature, going from village to village to preach, teach catechism, found community schools, and support recently ordained local priests.²⁷⁰ Here, too, from 1895, the Jesuits started another smaller seminary, designed to be simple and less rigorous,

266 Victor, “140 Years on Jesuit Education in Egypt.”

267 *Les jésuites missionnaires*, 224.

268 Frédéric Abecassis, “L’enseignement entranger en égypte et les élites locales 1920–1960: Francophonie et identités nationales” (PhD diss., L’Université d’Aix-Marseille I, 2000), 82.

269 Victor, “140 Years on Jesuit Education in Egypt”; Maurice Pierre Martin, “Jesuits in Egypt: The New Society,” *Yearbook of the Society of Jesus* (1990): 130–31.

270 *Les jésuites missionnaires*, 222; Martin, *Notes et articles sur l’Égypte*, 285.

specifically for mature vocations. In 1899, this seminary was transformed into a patriarchal undertaking serving a broader audience and was transferred to its own premises at Tahta in Upper Egypt. The Jesuits continued to support the seminary in Tahta, but they did not administer it.

There was significant success among the Coptic Catholic community in Egypt during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Although this resulted from multiple missionary and local efforts, Jesuits could claim a veritable share in that success. During that period, two bishoprics and a patriarchate were created in Egypt, all of them filled by men who had been educated by the Jesuits at one point or another. With these in place, a Coptic Catholic hierarchy was established in the country and was recognized by the Egyptian government. Minya, which had been a hub of Jesuit activity, was one of the newly created bishoprics. There were about twelve thousand Coptic Catholics spread out over many locations in Upper Egypt, and between one and two thousand conversions each year—a remarkable increase from the five to six thousand estimated to have been in the country at the start of the 1880s.²⁷¹ And, with sixty Jesuits present in Egypt in 1900, the century ended on a high point for their mission.

Unlike all the other smaller missions of this century, the Egyptian mission crossed into the twentieth century and has lasted to the present. In this regard, it is like the three major missions in Madagascar, Zambezi, and Congo. These three established an enduring Jesuit presence in those parts of Africa where the Society involved itself directly in serious primary evangelization.

French Jesuit activity in the larger islands on the southeastern part of the Indian Ocean inaugurated the first of the three major missions. By the sheer size of its geographical area and population, and the amount of Jesuit activity among its people, Madagascar dominates this story. However, as Jesuit anthropologist Stéphane Nicaise has indicated, this is a topic that is best treated as “Jesuit missions in the Indian Ocean,” which includes not only Madagascar but also the smaller islands of La Réunion and Mauritius.²⁷²

Jesuits always had their eyes on Madagascar. Earlier on, we mentioned the visit of Mariano and Freire to the island, where they are said to have baptized several people in the early part of the seventeenth century. Another story exists that claims that, also in the seventeenth century, a Malagasy prince, a younger son of the king of Anosy, was brought to Asia by some Portuguese visitors and was educated by the Jesuits in Goa before returning with two of the

271 Martin, “Jesuits in Egypt,” 130; Martin, *Notes et articles sur l'Égypte*, 281–82.

272 Stéphane Nicaise, *Les missions jésuites dans l'océan Indien: Madagascar, la Réunion, Maurice* (Namur: Éditions jésuites, 2015).

Jesuits to Madagascar. The story further claims that the two Jesuits were well received and for a while were allowed to evangelize, but, when they gained influence, they were shunned by the authorities and their mission simply withered away.²⁷³ The next time we hear of Jesuits in Madagascar on more solid historical ground is in the mid-nineteenth century. Monseigneur Pierre Dalmond (1800–47), a missionary priest—not a Jesuit—who at that time held the title of “prefect apostolic of the islands of the Southern Ocean,” invited the Jesuits to Madagascar. In the 1845 catalog of the province of Lyon, six Jesuits appear assigned to La Réunion and Madagascar, with Pierre Cotain (1796–1871) as their superior. They first established themselves in La Réunion, initially to minister to South Asians who were migrating to the island in significant numbers. Throughout the nineteenth century, the mission in La Réunion centered on the Saint Thomas church at Saint-Denis and evolved to become a ministry to the entire population regardless of their places of origin. The main Jesuit center in La Réunion was aptly named La Ressource, for it was initially imagined as a place for repose and training, open to missionaries going to and coming from Madagascar.²⁷⁴

Thus did La Réunion serve the Jesuits as a launching pad for missions to the larger island of Madagascar, which was much harder to penetrate because of a Protestant presence that predated that of Catholics, colonial competition between England and France, and internal Malagasy politics in the Merina kingdom at the center of the island. Queen Ranaivalona I (c.1778–1861, r.1828–61) was particularly hostile to missionaries. But, even during her reign, the foundations for a Jesuit presence on Madagascar were being laid. In La Réunion, some Malagasy children began to receive instruction at La Ressource. Among the children educated there was Basilide Rahidy (1839–83), son of a prince of the Linta ethnic group, who later entered the Society and was ordained priest in 1874,²⁷⁵ probably the first African Malagasy Jesuit ordained to the priesthood in the post-restoration era. From La Réunion, the Jesuits also started corresponding with Prince Rakotosehenondradama (usually shortened as “Prince Rakoto” [1829–63]), an important connection that would bear dividends in the years ahead.

273 Campbell, *Jesuits*, 816–17. Unfortunately, Campbell does not provide a reference for this story, and some are of the opinion that the events described may not have happened at all.

274 Jocelyn Rabeson, “Jesuits and Protestants in Nineteenth-Century Madagascar,” in Maryks and Mkenda, *Encounters between Jesuits and Protestants in Africa*, 171–93, here 175n22; also see Adrien Boudou, *Les jésuites à Madagascar au XIX^e siècle*, 2 vols. (Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne et ses fils, 1940), 1:98–99.

275 Rabeson, “Jesuits and Protestants in Nineteenth-Century Madagascar,” 175.

While Ranavalona I remained in power, the closest Jesuits could get to the main island was the smaller island of Nosy Be, about eight kilometers from Madagascar's northwestern coastline. Here, a mission was first opened in 1846, officially beginning Jesuit activities on the peripheral parts of the larger island. Marc Finaz (1815–80) was one of the first Jesuits at Nosy Be. While there, Finaz was appointed prefect apostolic of "the smaller islands" in 1850, although his eyes remained fixed on the larger island. Disguised as a trader, and with help from a real, well-established trader in Antananarivo, Finaz reached the interior of Madagascar in 1855. In this manner, he obtained permission not only for his own stay but also for Fathers Louis Jouen (1805–72) and Joseph Webber (1819–64), who joined him shortly afterward. They, too, disguised themselves, though not as traders but as experts in medicine, a skill that was highly prized in Madagascar. Within Madagascar, Finaz stayed in contact with Prince Rakoto and, with the prince's protection, celebrated Mass in Antananarivo in July 1855. The Jesuits stayed in Antananarivo until 1857, when, after quelling an insurrection against her, Ranavalona I expelled all Europeans on the grounds that they were aiding the insurrectionists.²⁷⁶

It was after Ranavalona I's demise in 1861 that, under Prince Rakoto, her successor who was now known as Radama II (r.1861–63), Jesuits opened their first mission in Antananarivo. Radama II was open to Europeans in general, favored the French, and, with the French, Catholicism. As if to mark this dawn of favor, Mass was celebrated by the Jesuits before the king's coronation, during which ceremony they even blessed his crown.²⁷⁷ In a short time, Jesuits were running two schools with about four hundred students under their care, and they had several hundred Malagasy people following instructions in preparation for baptism.²⁷⁸ Unfortunately for the Jesuits, Radama II's reign was cut short by a regicide that ushered in forty years of competition between the French and the British for control of Madagascar. Momentary victory on either side depended on the inclination of whoever occupied the royal throne at the center of Malagasy politics at a particular time, and, in turn, that victory determined whether Catholics or Protestants could stay and evangelize with varying degrees of freedom.²⁷⁹

276 Rabeson, "Jesuits and Protestants in Nineteenth-Century Madagascar"; Bernard Blot, "Finaz, Marc," *Dictionnaire bibliographique des Chrétiens d'Afrique*; <https://dacb.org/fr/stories/madagascar/finaz-marc> (accessed September 15, 2021).

277 Rabeson, "Jesuits and Protestants in Nineteenth-Century Madagascar," 177–78.

278 Campbell, *Jesuits*, 818; *Les jésuites missionnaires*, 90.

279 Rabeson's chapter on Jesuits and Protestants in nineteenth-century Madagascar, already cited above, specifically treats this Catholic–Protestant contest.

The precariousness of the context notwithstanding, Jesuits carried out multiple activities in Madagascar, some of which were appreciated by all independent of creed or politics. From 1873, Father Désiré Roblet (1828–1914) started topographical surveys of Madagascar, which culminated in an improved cartography of the island. Roblet “was an indefatigable explorer and geographer, a true pioneer of the early cartography of Madagascar,” says Jesuit historian of science Agustín Udías.²⁸⁰ In 1889, Father Élie Colin (1852–1923) founded a geophysical observatory, at that time the first of its kind in the whole of Africa. Stationed on the hill of Ambohidempona at the heart of Antananarivo, this “ambitious scientific project” has been described by historian Evelyne Combeau-Mari as one that “symbolizes the expression of Jesuit power and Catholic Christianity in the Malagasy capital.”²⁸¹

Jesuits also kept several mission stations running through the turbulent years. For the most part, the ruling class at the center favored Protestant Christianity, so Jesuits and other Catholic missionaries “recruited more to the south, on the coasts, and among the lower classes of Imerina.”²⁸² At the start of the Franco-Hova Wars (1883–96) in 1883, Jesuits had four residential stations at the center of Antananarivo and seventeen more around the city, seven among the Betsileo people in the Fianarantsoa region, and one at Tamatave (Toamasina). These were in addition to their active presence on the islands of Nosy Be and Nosy Boraha (or Sainte-Marie), a vibrant station at Saint-Denis in La Réunion, and two similar ones in Mauritius. These mission stations could be divided into several smaller centers of activity that did not entail residential Jesuit presence. There were up to eighty-three such mission centers in Fianarantsoa alone, which Jesuits visited regularly. These developments pointed to a need for more laborers. For purposes of training a local Malagasy clergy, Collège Saint Michel was established in 1888 at Amparibe, a prominent section of the capital city. The land on which the college stood had been given to the Jesuits by Prince Ramahatra (1858–1938), a cousin and brother-in-law of Queen Ranavalona III (1861–1917, r.1883–97), who has been described as “a member of the Catholic faction at the Merina court.”²⁸³

280 Agustín Udías, *Searching the Heavens and the Earth: The History of Jesuit Observatories* (n.p.: Springer, 2003), 168; also Rabeson, “Jesuits and Protestants in Nineteenth-Century Madagascar,” 182.

281 Evelyne Combeau-Mari, “L’observatoire d’Ambohidempona à Madagascar (1888–1923): Pouvoir jésuite et science coloniale,” *French Colonial History* 12 (2011): 103–21, here 104.

282 Philip M. Allen and Maureen Covell, *Historical Dictionary of Madagascar*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2005), 48.

283 Allen and Covell, *Historical Dictionary of Madagascar*, 240.

The late nineteenth-century political context in which these missions developed speaks for the determination of the Jesuits to make Catholicism in Madagascar a success. Unlike their other missions in nineteenth-century Africa, their urge to outsmart the Protestants, who were already established in Madagascar, was stronger than the need to brandish the colonial flag. For this reason, the Jesuits found ways of surviving even when French power was absent or dwindling.²⁸⁴ During the reign of Ranavalona III, relations with France deteriorated considerably. The period saw repeated clashes between the French and the Malagasy, including the Franco-Hova (also known as Franco-Malagasy) Wars of 1883–86 and 1894–95, and was further complicated by protracted rebellions that ensued from the wars. The missions survived through most of this turbulent period. All Catholic missionaries, including the Jesuits, were forced to leave Madagascar during the early years of the wars. The missionaries were allowed back into the country after a peace treaty between France and Madagascar had been signed in 1885. As things appeared to have improved, a Jesuit, Jean-Baptiste Cazet (1827–1918), was consecrated bishop in Paris and returned as vicar apostolic of the whole of Madagascar. These developments did not bring an immediate end to hostilities, however. French domination was still resisted, and Catholics continued to experience challenges through most of the remaining part of the century. At one point, missionaries were forced to leave the central parts of Madagascar again because of increased tension. It was during this period that Father Jacques Berthieu (1838–96) was killed after he had decided to stay with his community of converts. Berthieu quickly acquired the popular status of the proto-martyr of Madagascar.²⁸⁵ Declared saint by Pope Benedict XVI (1927–, r.2005–13) in 2012, today Berthieu is the most obvious link between Malagasy Catholicism and Jesuit history on the island.

More importantly, Jesuits and other missionaries had passed on durable faith to their converts. In turn, Malagasy converts appropriated, preserved, and defended their Christian faith when missionaries left during the late nineteenth-century upheavals. This was remarkably different from the pre-suppression experiences in Angola and Mozambique. When Jesuits and other missionaries returned after the wars, they found their converts holding firmly to their faith, notwithstanding the closing of schools and sacking of churches that had taken place in the interim. The symbol of this success became Victoire Rasoamanarivo (1848–94), a princess with great courage and determination

²⁸⁴ Combeau-Mari, "L'observatoire d'Ambohidempona à Madagascar," 103.

²⁸⁵ Adrien Boudou, *Le Père Jacques Berthieu (1838–1896)* (Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne et ses fils, 1935).

who rallied fellow Catholics and, in opposition to members of her own extended family, defended the church against political assault. She became the pillar of the Catholic faith in Madagascar when missionaries were expelled, so much so that later writers called her “mother of the mission.”²⁸⁶ Her faith and courageous service were granted public recognition by the Catholic Church when she was beatified by Pope John Paul II (1920–2005, r.1978–2005) in 1989.

At the end of the Franco-Hova Wars in 1895, Madagascar became a French protectorate. Lingering rebellions necessitated the complete takeover of the territory and the creation of a French colony in 1896. Complete colonial rule, marked by the arrival in Madagascar of French governor-general Joseph-Simon Gallieni (1849–1916, in office 1896–1905), ushered in greater freedom for missionaries to evangelize and for the local population to convert to Christianity, but all at the expense of the centuries-old Merina monarchy that the governor-general summarily abolished in 1897 before exiling its last queen. For Catholics, Madagascar was gradually divided into three vicariates: in 1896, the southern part was entrusted to the Lazarists; in 1898, the north was given to the Holy Ghost Fathers; and in 1901 the central region was assigned to the Jesuits. Among the Jesuits, the province of Toulouse became responsible for the Imerina people in the central region around Antananarivo, and, from 1906, the province of Champagne was in charge among the Betsileo people in Fianarantsoa, farther south. The Jesuit mission and, more generally, the Catholic Church had become more organized in a much calmer context for evangelization.

The second of the major nineteenth-century Jesuit missions to Africa was directed to the southern part of the continent. Jesuits were first invited to the territory that is now South Africa by the vicar apostolic of the Cape of Good Hope, eastern district, Bishop James David Ricards (1828–93, in office 1871–93), to staff a school that was designed to nurture local vocations to the priesthood. The bishop first approached Jesuits in France, who turned him down for lack of enough French Jesuits who could operate in English. Unperturbed, the bishop then toured Europe in person to earn the Jesuits' commitment. During the tour, he met with Superior General Peter Jan Beckx (1795–1887, in office 1853–87), superior of the English province Peter Gallwey (1820–1906, in office 1873–76), superior of the Irish province Nicholas Walsh (1826–1912, in office 1973–77), and Alfred Weld (1823–90), an English Jesuit who was assistant to the superior general in Rome. After the high-powered meetings, the

286 *Les jésuites missionnaires*, 95. Also see Alexandre Brou, “Les missions des jésuites de France, 1930–1931,” an issue of *Relations de Chine* 30, no. 1 (1932): 1–96, here 19–20; and Étienne Fourcadier, *La vie héroïque de Victoire Rasoamanarivo* (Paris: Editions Dillen, 1937).

Jesuits acquiesced to Ricards's proposal. They were particularly attracted to the possibility of using Grahamstown as a base for missions into the interior of Africa, farther north, in the territories that were being claimed for the British empire,²⁸⁷ a factor that might explain the special role the English assistant would assume in the matter. Shortly afterward, eight Jesuits drawn from different provinces were assigned to the region, six of them to staff St. Aidan's College in Grahamstown and two to take up parochial ministries at Graaff-Reinet.²⁸⁸ Their arrival in October 1875 marked the return of the Jesuits to southern Africa after the restoration of the Society.

St. Aidan's College remained in Jesuit hands for almost a century. In the early years, it became—as it was then described—“the first stone in the work of the evangelization of the south-eastern part of the dark continent.”²⁸⁹ However, for many years it also remained the only significant Jesuit enclave in the territory that is today's South Africa, playing a role similar to that which La Réunion played in relation to Madagascar. Early efforts to establish centers for Jesuit formation within South Africa itself tended to die out after short periods of time. A novitiate that started at Graaff-Reinet in 1887 hardly lasted a year, and the mission itself was handed back to the bishop in 1889. Dunbrody was another ambitious mission idea that did not last for long. Established in 1882 on a property acquired from the Trappists, Dunbrody was envisaged as a mission station as well as a formation center for the studies of philosophy and languages, and for the completion of the tertianship after ordination.²⁹⁰ By 1890, the formation program at Dunbrody was already closed, although the mission itself lasted until 1934. A station at Keilands in the Eastern Cape lasted between 1886 and 1908, and another station at Valschfontein in the Western Transvaal started in 1884 and was shut down in 1894.²⁹¹ Thus, St. Aidan's College notwithstanding, South Africa remained for the most part a doorway for missionaries headed to other places. At most, they stopped by to learn a language before moving farther north, and local South Africans who aspired to join the Jesuits received basic preparation there before they were dispatched for training in England.

287 H. [Henry] Depelchin and C. [Charles] Croonenberghs, *Trois ans dans l'Afrique australe, le pays de Matabélés: Débuts de la mission du Zambèse; Lettres des Pères H. Depelchin et Ch. Croonenberghs, S.J.* (Brussels: Imprimerie Polleunis, Ceuterick et Lefébure, 1882), xi.

288 Francis Coleman, *St. Aidan's College Grahamstown* (Grahamstown: Institute of Social & Economic Research, Rhodes University, 1980), 19.

289 “History of the Zambesi Mission,” *Zambesi Mission Record* 1, no. 1 (1898): 49–52, here 49.

290 Egan, “Jesuits and Protestants in South Africa,” 90.

291 Jude Anne Ryan, “An Examination of the Achievement of the Jesuit Order in South Africa, 1879–1934” (MA thesis, Rhodes University, 1990), viii, 66–67.

In fact, the Jesuits had their eyes on a larger prize in the north. In 1877, they were entrusted by Propaganda Fide with a vast territory covering the whole of today's Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Malawi, and parts of South Africa, Botswana, Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mozambique, and Tanzania. This was designated the Zambezi mission—in Jesuit parlance, the second mission, following the one that took place in Mozambique before the suppression of the Society. Not all the territories that were included in the mission's jurisdiction were reached by Jesuits during its existence. And, although the mission included parts of today's South Africa, the Zambezi mission expanded mainly in today's territories of Zimbabwe (formerly Southern Rhodesia), Zambia (formerly Northern Rhodesia), and, later, Mozambique. The mission remained international in its early days, attracting Jesuits of multiple nationalities from several provinces. It was thus organized from the headquarters in Rome, with Weld playing a key role as its Roman coordinator.

The man appointed to lead the mission on the ground was Henri Depelchin (1822–1900), a Belgian Jesuit who had eighteen years of missionary experience in Asia. Depelchin was called back from Asia specifically to carry out this new role. Besides the leader, there were three other Belgians: Father Charles Croonenberghs (1843–99) and Brothers Frans de Sadeleer (1844–1922) and Louis de Vylder (1841–83). Three of the missionaries were German: Fathers Antoine Terörde (1844–80) and Charles Fuchs (1839–80), and Brother Théodore Nigg (1848–91). Two were Italian: Father Salvatore Blanca (1834–1916) and Brother Pietro Paravicini (1834–99). Two others were English: Father Augustus Law (1833–80) and Brother Joseph Hedley (1846–1933).²⁹² A High Mass, presided over by Bishop Ricards, was celebrated in Grahamstown cathedral on April 15, 1879 for the missionary team that was ready to depart, and in the afternoon on the following day the eleven Jesuits headed north:

At the appointed signal the four waggons, named after four great Jesuit Saints, Ignatius, Peter Claver, Francis Xavier, and John de Britto, moved off, the sixteen oxen by which each was drawn descending at a trot into the valley, thence to climb the slopes of the hill which overlooks the town. At first the missionaries followed the waggons on foot, mingling with the crowd of well-wishers and the members of St. Aidan's College who accompanied them for some distance; but at length, after hearty leave-takings, their friends fell behind, and the missionaries were forced

292 Depelchin and Croonenberghs, *Trois ans dans l'Afrique austral* (1882), xii–xiii.

to take refuge in the waggons to escape the clouds of stifling dust raised by the oxen and the ponderous vehicles.²⁹³

After initial wonderings, in September 1879 they established their first station at Tati, in today's Botswana. They built a wooden hut that was thatched in grass, which they named Residence of Good Hope. Shortly afterward, they purchased another house in the area, which they named Residence of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Their initial dream of turning this into an asylum for children never materialized, but Tati remained an important first center.²⁹⁴ From here, multiple other explorations were sent to places near and far, including one to Gazaland in 1880, a second to the Tonga in the same year, and a third to the Lozi people, which was carried out between 1880 and 1883. The last two explorations went farther up along the Zambezi River and marked the mission's first attempts into today's Zambia. During one of these expeditions in 1880, they pitched tent at Pandamatenga, north of Tati, and established a station they named Sacred Residence of Saint Joseph. A little farther north of Pandamatenga, on the northern bank of the Zambezi, they started another station in the territories of Chief Mwemba, which they named Residence of the Holy Cross. All these stations had a very limited life span.

The Jesuits had resolved from early on that a mission among the Ndebele people (also referred to as the Matabele and their land, Matabeleland) would be a more realistic center for the whole Zambezi endeavor. It was also from Tati that they made inroads into Matabeleland and, over time, had several meetings with Lobengula Khumalo (c.1845–94, r.1870–94), king of the Ndebele. Lobengula had already interacted with European traders, who sought mining concessions from him, and with Protestant missionaries, who wanted to teach and convert his people. Not without reason, the Ndebele king had become suspicious of their motives. He is reported to have said to one missionary:

Did you ever see a chameleon catch a fly? The chameleon gets behind the fly and remains motionless for some time, then he advances very slowly and gently, first putting forward one leg and then another. At last, when well within reach, he darts his tongue, and the fly disappears. England is the chameleon, and I am that fly.²⁹⁵

293 "History of the Zambesi Mission," *Zambesi Mission Record* 1, no. 7 (1900): 229–32, here 230.

294 Rob S. Barrett, "The Zambezi Mission and the Residences of Good Hope and Immaculate Heart of Mary, Old Tati," *Botswana Notes and Records* 32 (2000): 25–38, here 27–30.

295 Kenneth P. Vickery, "European Conquest and African Resistance," lecture video available on YouTube; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GuxQW1XapEA&list=PLNbgwjRVRm597uOZ1sKrIdruznBqrxzs&index=21> (accessed September 15, 2021).

Lobengula treated the Jesuits with the same suspicion,²⁹⁶ which was further compounded by the Jesuits' expeditions into other kingdoms that were enemies of or in competition with the Ndebele.²⁹⁷ In October 1879, Lobengula allowed the Jesuits to stay among his people purely to benefit from their medical and mechanical skills and nothing more. During this time, the Jesuits established their first residence in Bulawayo, which they called the Mission of the Sacred Heart. Most of their time was spent doing little more than mollifying Lobengula. Their unfruitful beginnings were dealt a serious blow in 1881 when the king decided to relocate his capital and burn down the existing one, leaving the mission station without a population around it. It was not until 1884 that Lobengula allowed Father Peter Prestage (1842–1907) to start a school at Empandeni, a significant distance from his new Bulawayo capital.

Lobengula's reluctant offer was valuable, but too little and too late. Five years had passed since the mission had started, and the Jesuits had no convincing results to show. The missionary death toll was beyond anything they could have imagined. By the end of 1883, eight Jesuits had died. Croonenberghs, one of the pioneers who was still alive in November 1884, wrote somberly: "We believed or seemed to believe that the blessings of early success would crown the enterprise which obedience had sent us to undertake. Alas! Numerous are the graves of my first companions. They are scattered far and wide in the mid-African wilds at whose entrance I now stand."²⁹⁸ The mission's superior was himself broken—as Jesuit historian of this mission David Harold-Barry explains—by physical exertions and sickness, by disappointing results, and by accusations of mismanagement leveled against him by fellow Jesuits in the mission.²⁹⁹ Weld, who had been the Roman organizer of the Zambezi mission, replaced Depelchin as mission superior in December 1883 and, in 1886, ordered a tactical retreat from Matabeleland before the school at Empandeni could be established. The stations in Tati and Pandamatenga had already been closed in 1885.³⁰⁰

296 Nicholas M. Creary, *Domesticating a Religious Import: The Jesuits and the Inculturation of the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe, 1879–1980* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011), 26.

297 Barrett, "Zambezi Mission," 30–32.

298 As cited in Edward P. Murphy, ed., *A History of the Jesuits in Zambia: A Mission Becomes a Province* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2003), 83.

299 [David Harold-Barry, s.j., interview with Emmanuel Gurumombe, s.j.], "Jesuit Historical Tracks 2: The Establishment of Empandeni Mission," JesCom Zimbabwe–Mozambique TV; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kMiQekq4MGY&t=348s> (accessed September 15, 2021); also Barrett, "Zambezi Mission," 32, 34–35.

300 Murphy, *History of the Jesuits in Zambia*, 85–86; Barrett, "Zambezi Mission," 37.

In May 1887, Prestage, Hedley, and Father Henry Booms (1853–90), who had joined the mission in 1881, returned to Matabeleland and started the station at Empandeni. They set up a school and also opened a farm on which they attempted to introduce the local people to the plow. Results were still disappointing, and, after Lobengula had been tricked into signing the 1888 Rudd Concession that purportedly extended mining rights to the British South Africa Company (BSAC) of Cecil Rhodes (1853–1902) over the whole of today's Zimbabwe, the Ndebele king felt even more uncomfortable with the Europeans dwelling among his people. Many traders were forced to leave Matabeleland. In 1889, Empandeni was closed and, frustrated, the Jesuits returned to Grahamstown, abandoning their mission yet again.

Thus were Jesuit inroads into Zimbabwe insignificant before the territory was pacified through colonial occupation. The Jesuits themselves—like all the other missionaries—had come to believe that deposing Lobengula was the only way to ensure freedom to preach on the part of missionaries and freedom to convert on the part of the Ndebele people.³⁰¹ With this conviction, the Jesuits featured as chaplains in Rhodes's Pioneer Column that facilitated the conquest of Mashonaland to the north in 1890 and exposed Matabeleland to easy European takeover.³⁰² During the First Matabele War against occupation in 1893–94, Lobengula himself died while in exile. In a rare ecumenical moment, the Jesuit chaplains ministered to both Catholic and Protestant members of the Pioneer Column and to all those who fought on the BSAC side of the war. They also baptized dying members of their African contingent before they succumbed to their wounds.³⁰³ Those who thus participated in the creation of the BSAC-controlled settler colony of Southern Rhodesia were usually rewarded with lands on which to farm. Jesuits also “received extensive land grants to establish permanent mission stations” in and around the colony's emerging capital, Salisbury, and in Bulawayo.³⁰⁴ The Chishawasha mission, by far the most famous of the mission stations, was opened in 1892 on a twelve-thousand-acre land located about twenty-two kilometers south of Salisbury, that is, today's Harare.

From the missionary and the Jesuit point of view, the conquest strategy produced immediate results in Zimbabwe. Jesuit activities in Mozambique, which had been resumed in 1891, also witnessed some progress. This, coupled with

301 Mkenda, “Jesuits, Protestants, and Africa,” 21–22.

302 J. [Joshua] Chakawa, “The Tragedy of German Jesuits Working in Chinhoyi Diocese during Zimbabwe's War of Liberation,” *The Dyke* 5, no. 2 (2011): 6–24, here 7.

303 Marcus Barthélemy, “During the Matabele Wars,” *Zambesi Mission Record* 1, no. 1 (1898): 19–21, here 21.

304 Cf. Creary, *Domesticating a Religious Import*, 32.

complex colonial politics, necessitated the partitioning of the Zambezi mission into two in 1894. Rhodesia/Zimbabwe was stripped of its initial international status and assigned to the then English province, and the Lower Zambezi, which covered Mozambique, was assigned to the Portuguese province.

In Zimbabwe, the Empandeni mission station, with its focus on schooling African children, was re-established in 1895. In the following year, St. George's School for children of European settlers was opened in Bulawayo. As success became newsworthy, the first issue of the *Zambesi Mission Record* was published for the first time in 1898. Aimed at relaying information to "home readers" and benefactors in England and elsewhere in Europe, the journal was both a chronicle of the mission's performance and a strategy for resource mobilization, both human and financial. A church was opened at Umtali (Mutare) in 1899. Events marking the close of the century in Zimbabwe in 1900 included the opening of the Sacred Heart Church in Salisbury/Harare. They also included the death of Depelchin in India on May 29.

The third of the larger Jesuit missions to Africa in the nineteenth century is that of the Belgian Jesuits in the Congo region that constitutes today's DRC, not to be confused with the territory of the earlier missions to the ancient Kongo Kingdom. Like their counterparts in the Zambezi region, the Belgian Jesuits are counted among the primary evangelizers of the DRC, although several other Catholic and Protestant missionaries had been working there for a long time before their arrival. In going to Congo, the Belgian Jesuits were responding to years of persistent appeal from King Leopold II (1835–1909, r.1865–1909), who wanted the Society to take part in the civilizing mission that he had supposedly committed himself to when he acquired the expansive central African region for his own personal colony. As they ultimately yielded to the royal pressure, the Jesuits established a mission that acquired a national character far greater than that of the Zambezi mission and was thus viewed by critics as a mere extension of Leopold II's colonial project.³⁰⁵

The king's lobbying for Jesuits went all the way to the Jesuit headquarters in Rome and to the Holy See. In response, a papal decree of April 1892 created the Kwango mission, which was entrusted to the Belgian province of the Society. The first team of Jesuits arrived in the new mission in 1893. Their superior was Emiel van Hencxthoven (1852–1906), who had been the rector of Collège

305 Toussaint Kafarhire Murhula, "Jesuit-Protestant Encounters in Colonial Congo in the Late Nineteenth Century: Perceptions, Prejudices, and the Competition for African Souls," in Maryks and Mkenda, *Encounters between Jesuits and Protestants in Africa*, 194–214; also Roger Aubert et al., *History of the Church: The Church in the Industrial Age*, trans. Margit Risch (London: Burns & Oates, 1981), 548–50.

Saint-Stanislas in Mons. The others included Fathers Edouard Liagre (1853–99) and Jean-Baptiste Dumont (1843–93), who died before reaching Congo; Brothers Edmond Lombary (1865–1918), Justin Gillet (1866–1943), and Frans de Sadeleer, who had had a stint in the Zambezi; and Ernest de Meulemeester (b.1868), at that time a scholastic. They first established themselves at Kisantu in Kwango, marking the first Jesuit return to west-central Africa after the suppression and laying the foundations that would help re-establish the Catholic Church in that region. Before the nineteenth century ended, Jesuits had stations at Kimwenza, Ndembo, Lemfu, and Boense in today's diocese of Kisantu.

Like Jesuit missionaries elsewhere, the Belgian Jesuits in Congo viewed the education of youth as the most effective tool for evangelization. This focus became the meeting point between the Jesuit mission and the controversial policies of the Congo Free State (CFS) created by Leopold II in 1885 to administer his personal colony. The CFS sought to make out of schooled Africans a cadre of junior assistants and members of its gendarmerie, the Force Publique (Public Force). In the early days, the Jesuits became quite innovative in their delivery of education, creating for that purpose what came to be known as chapel-farms. These were small villages exclusively for the youth, each consisting of a chapel, a missionary lodge, a farm, and accommodation for the targeted children and for a few married couples who would serve as mentors to the youth and models of African Christian life. Located in different parts of the mission territory, the chapel-farms were then linked by a road network that was also designed by the Jesuits and realized not only through the ingenuity of Hencxthoven but also through the immense labor of Brother Augustus van Houtte (b.1868) and others.³⁰⁶

The chapel-farms experiment attracted praise and criticism in equal measure. Contemporary critics, mainly Protestant missionaries of nationalities other than Belgian, accused the Jesuits of reconstructing in nineteenth-century Congo the “reductions” of seventeenth-century Paraguay, a charge the Jesuits vehemently refuted.³⁰⁷ Moreover, in executing their mission in Congo, the Jesuits were perceived to be too close to the CFS and in receipt from it

306 More generally on the chapel-farms, see Ivan de Pierpont, “La mission du Kwango,” in *Au Congo et aux Indes: Les jésuites belges aux missions* (Tours: Alfred Cattier, 1906), 9–135, here 99–124; Emile Thibaut, *Les jésuites et les fermes-chapelles: A propos d'un débat récent* (Brussels: Imp. du Roi, 1911); Léopold Denis, *Les jésuites belges au Kwango, 1893–1943* (Brussels: l'Édition Universelle, 1943); F. Cordi, “Les fermes chapelles du Kwango et la campagne anti-missionnaire 1909–1914” (licentiate diss., Université catholique de Louvain, 1970).

307 “The Catholic Missions in Belgian Congo: A Statement of Facts,” *Tablet* 119/3741 (January 20, 1912): 106–10.

of material favors in exchange for silence over state-sanctioned atrocities against native Africans.³⁰⁸ Later analysts have viewed the chapel-farms positively as evidence of a missionary contribution to the material development of the Kwilu region,³⁰⁹ or, more negatively, as being akin to the nineteenth-century “poorhouse farms” of Flanders, which are said to have been designed as “decentralized depots for human misery.”³¹⁰ The controversy surrounding them notwithstanding, the Jesuit chapel-farms in Congo remain one of the most interesting missionary experiments in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Africa.

The overall impact of the Jesuit mission in the Congo was significant and lasting. At the end of the nineteenth century, there were fifteen Jesuits in the country. These were distributed in three main stations, that is, Kisantu, Kimwenza, and Ndembo. Their number increased steadily during the twentieth century. They reached twenty-three in 1903, during which year another papal decree turned Kwango into an apostolic prefecture, now headed by Julian Banckaert (1847–1924), Hencxthoven’s successor.

5 Twentieth Century: Continuation, Consolidation, and Expansion

Twentieth-century Jesuit history in Africa fits into two periods, namely before and after the Second World War (1939–45). Before the war, the political, economic, and religious context of the first part of twentieth-century Africa provided the Jesuits—as indeed all missionaries—with opportunities they never had before. The turbulent period of conquest and resistance was over, territorial networks of administrative structures and infrastructure had gradually been put in place, and the peace imposed by colonial order appeared finally to be holding, interrupted only briefly by the First World War (1914–18). Within this context, Jesuit missions already in existence were continued, consolidated, and expanded. New realities after the Second World War also created completely new missionary opportunities. With the post-war collapse of colonial

308 Murhula, “Jesuit–Protestant Encounters in Colonial Congo,” 206–12; Marvin D. Markowitz, “The Missions and Political Development in the Congo,” *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 40, no. 3 (1970): 234–47.

309 Anicet N’Teba Mbengi, *La mission de la Compagnie de Jésus au Kwilu: Contribution à la transformation d’une région congolaise (1901–1954)* (Rome: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2010), 356–64.

310 Bruno De Meulder, “Mavula: An African Heterotopia in Kwango, 1895–1911,” *Journal of Architectural Education* 52, no. 1 (1998): 20–29, here 27.

empires, missions in Africa came to involve Jesuits from Asia and the Americas, somewhat altering the still significant European dominance over the African religious landscape. New Jesuit initiatives were taken independently from those that had been brought forward from the nineteenth century. It was also during the post-war period, especially under Superior General Pedro Arrupe (1907–91, in office 1965–83), that Jesuit missions in Africa actively sought to shed off their missionary garb to become African.

The pre-war period saw the Jesuits consolidate their presence in Egypt, a process that involved closures of some ministries and expansions of others. The Collège de Saint François Xavier in Alexandria was closed in 1920, allowing greater focus to be placed on CSF in Cairo. New buildings were added to increase the capacity of CSF, and in 1930 and 1934 two new campuses were constructed to provide primary education to hundreds of Egyptian children. CSF resumed service to seminarians who attended school as externs between 1927 and 1947.

However, if the initial motivation for the mission in Egypt had been the preservation and expansion of a Catholic community in that country,³¹¹ experience gradually reoriented that motivation toward molding cultural and religious respect in a decidedly multicultural society. Historian Chantal Verdeil makes the point that “it was only in the 1920s or 1930s that they [Jesuits in the Middle East, including Egypt] began to show greater interest in Islam, as indicated by the publication of the journal *En terre d’Islam* (In the Muslim land), which the Lyon province took over in 1934.”³¹² Increasingly, CSF became a center for nurturing tolerance, then understanding, and, even better, acceptance. Visiting the school in 1916, Sultan Hussein Kamel (1853–1917), who ruled Egypt from 1914 to 1917, told the Jesuits: “What I love about you is your respect for the beliefs of others: you have students of various faiths and they are all very much at home.”³¹³ As the twentieth century progressed, the student body became overwhelmingly Muslim, with Christians, including Catholics, constituting a small minority. This trend remains true today, with the promotion of tolerance,

311 Catherine Mayeur, “Une collège jésuite face à la société multiconfessionnelle égyptienne: La Sainte-Famille du Caire (1879–1919),” *Revue d’histoire de l’église de France* 78, no. 201 (1992): 265–86.

312 Chantal Verdeil, “The Jesuits and the Middle East from the Nineteenth Century to the Present Day: A Historiographical Essay,” *Jesuit Historiography Online*, ed. Robert A. Maryks, February 2018; http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2468-7723_jho_COM_205617 (accessed September 15, 2021).

313 As cited in Victor, “140 Years on Jesuit Education in Egypt.”

understanding, and acceptance across the faiths being the characteristic feature of all Jesuit activities in Egypt.³¹⁴

French Jesuits also resumed activities in Algeria in the latter part of the nineteenth century and, in the twentieth, were maintaining a presence in the larger Maghreb region that extends from Morocco to Tunisia. Here, as in Egypt, initial zeal for active proselytization was swiftly abandoned. They became a ministry of maintaining a friendly Catholic presence among Muslims. Lack of an institutional focal point like that which CSF offered to the Jesuits in Egypt allowed those in the Maghreb to take opportunities as they came and abandon situations when it became necessary to do so. Over the years, their activities became many and varied, including “teaching in the universities and high schools, work in documentation, involvement in libraries, efforts in sociology and botany, audio-visual work, translations, helping in the dioceses['] ministries.”³¹⁵

Farther south, the Zimbabwean part of the Zambezi mission saw enormous progress in the period before the Second World War. This could properly be called the period of the great mission stations, nearly all of which were extensions of the Chishawasha mission under the leadership of its founding and long-serving superior Francis Richartz (1854–1928). By 1908, says historian Judy Anne Ryan, “Empandeni had three outstations and by 1923 there were twenty-five outstations in Matabeleland and Mashonaland, each controlled by a Black catechist. Some of these outstations such as Musami and Makumbi grew into flourishing mission stations themselves, deep in the Shona and Ndebele areas.”³¹⁶ St. Paul’s mission, Musami—more simply, “Musami mission”—was established in 1923 in Murewa, about ninety-seven kilometers south of Salisbury/Harare, on a land that was given to the Jesuits by a man whose name the mission bore. Makumbi mission was also established in the same year, about forty-eight kilometers north of Salisbury/Harare, in the Chinamora district. In 1932, Makumbi mission became the birthplace of the first indigenous congregation of religious women in Zimbabwe, the Little Children of Our Blessed Lady (LCBL), which was founded by the Jesuit Aston Ignatius Chichester (1879–1962), first bishop of Salisbury/Harare.

Each of the major missions would ordinarily include a church, a school, a hospital, and other facilities like water supply and sports grounds. In such a

314 Vincenzo Pogi, “Jesuits and Islam,” *Yearbook of the Society of Jesus* 48 (2008): 74–76; Anthony Fenech, “Serving Christians and Muslims Alike in the Shadow of Egypt’s Pyramids,” *Yearbook of the Society of Jesus* 44 (2004): 137–40.

315 Georges Carlioz, “The Maghreb Region,” *Yearbook of the Society of Jesus* (1989): 138–39.

316 Ryan, “Examination of the Achievement of the Jesuit Order,” 242.

setting, charitable services could be offered both to make the Christian message appealing and to nurture the faith of African converts, many of whom lived in surrounding, supposedly Christian, villages. Schools and hospitals were run with great collaboration between Jesuits and Dominican and Notre Dame sisters. In later years, the LCBL sisters also joined those who worked closely with the Jesuits in the missions.

During this period, the Zambezi mission also succeeded in establishing a permanent presence north of the Zambezi. In 1902, Prestage, alongside Father Joseph Moreau (1864–1949), reached the land of the Batonga in the southern part of today's Zambia. They were welcomed by Chief Haamiyanda Monze, who allowed them to go back with four Tonga youths to have them educated by the Jesuits. In 1905, Moreau returned in the company of Father Jules Torrend (1861–1936), and the four, now educated and baptized, Tonga youths named James Haatontola (b.1885), Joseph Bbinya, Alfred Jojo (1890–1987), and Henry Jahaliso (1887–1974). The six constituted the team that established the Chikuni mission, which became the locus of Catholic evangelization in the southern parts of Zambia. While containing all the constituent elements of the other major missions in Zimbabwe, Chikuni mission became particularly famous for its schools. Between 1905 and 1940, the mission concentrated on primary education.³¹⁷ Focus was later shifted to secondary education and teacher training. The Chikuni mission retains its record as one of the earliest centers of learning in Zambia.

The two Jesuits who founded Chikuni separated toward the end of 1905. Leaving Moreau alone at Chikuni, Torrend moved north and, in 1906, established what later became Kasisi mission on the Ngwerere River near the present-day Lusaka International Airport. He was accompanied by four young African men. One of them had been with Torrend for a long time, having been rescued from slavery and named Francisco Borja after the Society's third superior general. The young man's original name was later discovered to be Nsungwe. As things turned out, the mission was established near Nsungwe's home village. There he was reunited with his family and then became the first catechist who sustained the mission in its early days while Torrend moved back and forth between Kasisi and Chikuni.

Beginnings at Kasisi were slow, demanding a lot of patience, creativity, and personal sacrifice on the part of its first Jesuit missionary. To form a core team of Christian converts who would influence others, Torrend resolved to provide paid employment to people who would combine work with catechism. He was

317 Brendan Carmody, "Conversion and School at Chikuni, 1905–39," *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 58, no. 2 (1988): 193–209.

convinced that this missionary method was the best way to proceed at that time because he had no resources with which to run schools:

No, for the moment I see no other practical plan than that which I follow. It is to hire as many catechumens that my resources can pay. I give them a catechism class every day and teach them their prayers. Catechumens are not lacking. If I had the initial necessary resources, I could keep up continually more than one hundred, and the time will come without doubt when I will be able to do it. If their work so far has not covered the expenses, it is because there are no oxen and ploughs to do the heavy work. But at present that of the catechumens helped by oxen is positively gainful.³¹⁸

Torrend's reference to plows and oxen is significant, for these early Jesuits in Zambia would later be remembered as "pioneers of the agricultural development of northern Rhodesia, [who] taught the population modern methods of agriculture and cattle breeding."³¹⁹ Thus Torrend, a highly qualified linguist, turned himself to a farmer to sustain his life and his mission. Even then, he hardly generated enough resources to keep the mission going. Often on the brink of bankruptcy, the mission was regularly rescued by generous donations from Countess (now Blessed) Maria Teresa Ledóchowska (1863–1922), sister to Jesuit superior general Włodzimierz Ledóchowski (1866–1942, in office 1914–42) and founder of Missionary Sisters of St. Peter Claver, who were dedicated to service in Africa.³²⁰

Even as a farmer, Torrend still found time to research African languages. He confessed that it was his interest in the language of the people—not the people themselves—that caused him to remain when the going got tough. While Jesuits have not celebrated his missionary achievements as much as they do those of Moreau at Chikuni, linguists and historians acknowledge his immense contribution to the study of Bantu languages. Torrend's *A Comparative Grammar of the South African Bantu Languages* (1891) is considered a groundbreaker

318 Jules Torrend, "The Founding of Kasisi Mission," in *A History of the Jesuits in Zambia: A Mission Becomes a Province*, ed. Edward P. Murphy (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2003), 232–40, here 238.

319 Aubert et al., *History of the Church*, 554; also Brendan Carmody, "Secular and Sacred at Chikuni: 1905–1940," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 21, no. 2 (1991): 130–48, here 132–33.

320 Festo Mkenda, "Mission Context and the Jesuit Visitor: Charles Bert and the Visitation of Polish Jesuits in the Zambezi Mission, 1924," in *With Eyes and Ears Open: The Role of Visitors in the Society of Jesus*, ed. Thomas M. McCoog (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 214–35, here 226.

in the field.³²¹ Talking generally about late nineteenth-century interest in *Siedlungsgeschichte* or “history of settlement,” Vansina considers Torrend to be the first author to treat that question in connection with the expansion of Bantu-speaking peoples. “His linguistic comparisons led him to postulate a double migration,” says Vansina,³²² a theory that was developed and refined by later research on Bantu migration but never refuted. Other celebrated works by Torrend include *Grammatica do Chisena* (A grammar of Chisena [1900]) and numerous other writings on the Tonga language.³²³ Through these works, Torrend developed the language’s orthography, which remains one of his most celebrated legacies to date.

The Chikuni and Kasisi missions had been extensions of those in Zimbabwe. By sheer accident, Zambia played a reconnecting role between the Zimbabwean and the Mozambican branches of the greater Zambezi mission. Under the Portuguese province since 1894, the Lower Zambezi mission struggled through the last part of the nineteenth century and made it to the twentieth, all under considerable stress. Progress was impeded by a physical climate in Mozambique that was unfamiliar to foreign personnel and a political climate in Portugal that was unfriendly to missionary work in the colonies. In twenty short years, the mission lost twenty-seven of its members to disease. At the same time, remnant claims from the times of the *Padroado* allowed the state to micro-manage missions within Portuguese-controlled territories, generating what Belgian ecclesiastical historian Roger Aubert (1944–2009) and his co-authors termed “a simply catastrophic situation,” which “was largely to blame for the decline of the missions, running parallel with the collapse in the motherland.”³²⁴ Despite the harsh climates, the Jesuits had founded several centers and small communities in Mozambique, the more successful ones including those in Quelimane, Coalane, Chupanga, Inhambane, Boroma, Miruru, Milange, and Angónia. Schools were a significant feature of these

321 Jules Torrend, *A Comparative Grammar of the South African Bantu Languages Comprising Those of Zanzibar, Mozambique, the Zambesi, Kafirland, Benguela, Angola, the Congo, the Ogowe, the Cameroons, the Lake Region, etc.* (London: Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1891).

322 Jean Vancina, “Bantu in the Crystal Ball, I,” *History in Africa* 6 (1979): 287–333, here 299 and passim.

323 Some of the writings by Jules Torrend include *Grammatica do Chisena: A Grammar of the Language of the Lower Zambezi* (Chipanga: Zambezia, 1900); *Specimens of Bantu Folk-Lore from Northern Rhodesia* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1921); *An English-Vernacular Dictionary of the Bantu-Botatwe Dialects of Northern Rhodesia* (Mariannhill, Natal: Trappist Mission Press, 1931); “Proper Nouns in Rhodesian Tonga,” *Journal of the Royal African Society* 30, no. 121 (1931): 386–98; and “The Classification of Common Nouns in the Rhodesian Tonga,” *Anthropos* 31, nos. 5/6 (1936): 874–93.

324 Aubert et al., *History of the Church*, 553.

centers. The missions had also attracted Jesuits from beyond Portugal and were counting among their personnel a number of Austrians and Poles. Following the 1910 republican revolution in Portugal, however, Jesuits were expelled from Mozambique.³²⁵ Among those expelled were eight Poles and Austrians. Rather than return home, these eight crossed over to Zambia and established their first station at Kapoche, thus coming directly under the jurisdiction of the Zimbabwean branch of the Zambezi mission.

Thus did the stone the builders rejected in Mozambique acquire the status of a cornerstone in Zambia. The Polish Jesuits were entrusted with the northwestern region of the country. That region had just been separated from the Nyasa vicariate and established as the Luangwa mission within the jurisdiction of the greater Zambezi mission that was now properly called the Salisbury mission. As Jesuit activities in Zambia increased and Poland supplied more Jesuits, there arose the subsection of the Zambezi mission that came to be known informally as the Polish missions in Northern Rhodesia, also referred to as “the Polish fathers’ district” in some documents. Said to have constituted “the first mission territory given to the Poles,” the missions in Zambia acquired an identity that was significantly distinct from the more “English” Salisbury mission.³²⁶

For the Poles, the developments in Zambia were a fulfillment of a salient desire “that the Polish Province should have an exclusive territory in a friendly mission.”³²⁷ Even though not all the Jesuits on the mission were from Poland, the mission itself retained its Polish character. As Jesuit historian Edward Murphy observes, those who crossed over from the Lower Zambezi mission “carried with them a well tried and basic missionary approach,”³²⁸ implying that they were not easily subsumed into the more English tradition of the Salisbury mission. Their admirable progress under difficult circumstances attracted a great deal of attention. Within fifteen years, six mission stations had been brought under the Luangwa mission: Kapoche; Katondwe, established in 1910 as an extension from Kapoche and soon more prominent than Kapoche itself; Kasisi, which was incorporated into the Luangwa mission in 1913; Chingombe, established in 1914; Chikoloma, established in 1923; and, finally, Broken Hill, established in 1924.

325 Rodrigues, *Os jesuítas portugueses na África Oriental*, 11–13.

326 Mkenda, “Mission Context and the Jesuit Visitor,” 216–21.

327 Edward P. Murphy, ed., *Katondwe: The Polish Mission of Luangwa in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia)*, trans. Jan Kielbasa (Lusaka: Jesuit Archives, 2016), 58.

328 Murphy, *History of the Jesuits in Zambia*, 160.

Most of these developments in Zambia happened under the constraints of the First World War and its limiting consequences in subsequent years. Not only did the war prevent the arrival of new Polish missionaries and other forms of material support but it also made it hard for Poles who were already in the British-administered territory of Northern Rhodesia/Zambia to carry out their ordinary missionary work. They were required to prove that they were not army reservists from an enemy country and pay a hundred pounds per person just to remain within the confines of their mission stations.³²⁹ In 1914, Apollonius Kraupa (1871–1919), then superior of the Polish missions, wrote to the superior in Salisbury, Robert Sykes (1854–1920), saying, “We are only six Poles here [...]; Poles who had the misfortune to be born in Germany and Austria.”³³⁰ Brother Adalbert Paczka (1875–1955) was even incarcerated for a week before Sykes could intervene on his behalf and secure his release.³³¹

Besides the war, the region was also tried in other ways. In 1919, someone described the Polish mission as being “full of hardships, difficulties and privations: their numbers are few, and their work hard in a trying climate.”³³² Indeed, seasons of drought added to “the tale of want and distress” that had become the mission’s lot. Reporting from Kapoche in November 1922, and depicting the level of resignation on the mission, Gaspar Moskopp (1869–1923), the station’s superior, said:

So far, only few drops of rain have fallen: December and January will be even worse. One good result will be that we shan’t have to fear thieves: there won’t be anything to steal on the place. For prudence sake I have prepared a nice cemetery, so that my last resting-place need not be in the bush among wild animals. On the gate I have placed the inscription: “Munda wa Murungu”—“The White Man’s Garden.”³³³

What became even more distressful about the Polish missions was their high human cost. Between 1917 and 1923, five Jesuits had succumbed to disease, leaving only eight missionaries in that ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Among the dead was also Monsignor Edward Parry (1861–1922), then prefect apostolic and

329 Murphy, *Katondwe*, 63.

330 Kraupa to Sykes, November 18, 1914, as cited in Murphy, *History of the Jesuits in Zambia*, 165–66.

331 Murphy, *History of the Jesuits in Zambia*, 166.

332 “Obituary: Fr. Felician Czarlinski, S.J., Superior of the Mission in Northern Rhodesia,” *Zambezi Mission Record* 7, no. 95 (1922): 25–26, here 25.

333 “Notes from the Different Stations,” *Zambezi Mission Record* 7, no. 99 (1923): 154–61, here 160.

superior of the Zambezi mission, who succumbed to an illness while visiting the Polish missions in 1922.

Parry's visit was itself triggered by the frequent deaths of missionaries in Northern Rhodesia/Zambia. Superior General Ledóchowski had been alarmed by the state of the missions and had asked Parry to make a formal visit and submit a report. Parry never concluded his visit and therefore never submitted the report. In 1924, Northern Rhodesia/Zambia became a British protectorate administered directly from London rather than by the BSAC. As such, the territory acquired a significantly different political identity from the settler-controlled colony of Southern Rhodesia/Zimbabwe. This development made the Holy See consider turning the territory of the Polish missions into an independent apostolic prefecture, a change that had been proposed by Ledóchowski in 1921. These considerations called for a thorough analysis of the state of the Polish missions, for which purpose a visitor in the person of Charles Bert (1869–1952) was dispatched to Northern Rhodesia/Zambia in 1924.

Bert produced a report that has remained controversial to this day. Probably unable to understand local challenges in Northern Rhodesia/Zambia and appreciate the distinctness of the Polish missions, Bert used his visitation as a corrective exercise rather than an evaluation. After the visitation, he stayed on as mission superior, but by 1927 it had become clear that a complete change, not mere correction, was needed in the Polish missions. In that year, the missions were constituted into the independent mission prefecture of Broken Hill with the Polish Jesuit, Monsignor Bruno Wolnik (1882–1960), as its first apostolic prefect. Wolnik redefined the mission, first by getting other congregations to take over large parts of his new prefecture. The Franciscan Conventuals accepted the Copperbelt province, and the Franciscan Capuchins took the whole of the western province of today's Zambia. In a short time, Wolnik had reduced his prefecture down to about one-third of its original size. He also managed to get more men and funds out of Poland, both of which were now focused on a much smaller mission territory, and all that to a remarkable success.³³⁴

Farther north from Zambia, Jesuits in the Congo were also adjusting to new realities in the twentieth century. The CFS officially ceased to exist in 1908 when Leopold II was forced to renounce his private rights over the Congo so that it could become a Belgian colony. By that time, the chapel-farms project was on its deathbed, and the new administration wasted no time to put it to rest. Eager to turn the Congo from the frightful humanitarian disaster it had become into a model colony, the new administration sought to distance itself

334 Mkenda, "Mission Context and the Jesuit Visitor," 233.

from the structures of the past and to establish a monopoly over the molding of the Congolese youth. "It was this benevolent, humane intention that wiped the chapel farm system off the map in no time at all," argues Bruno De Meulder: "Soon the chapel farm system was no more than a memory, a memory of the foundation and of its founder: *tata kisina vutukusi*, our father, the one from the beginning, Emile Van Hencxthoven, who passed away in Wombali in the Kwilu in 1911."³³⁵

Yet, the Jesuit mission in the Congo thrived throughout the twentieth century. It was as if the Society had been liberated from its real and perceived links with the former Belgian administration and had more energy to spare for its own mission in the Congo. Between the start of the century and the start of the Second World War, no fewer than thirty-eight houses or mission stations were opened throughout the country—an average of one new establishment in every calendar year. In 1928, the apostolic prefecture of Kwango became an apostolic vicariate, a status that allowed it to be administered by a bishop. For this purpose, the Jesuit Sylvain van Hee (1875–1960) was appointed titular bishop of Possala and vicar apostolic of Kwango, a role he continued to play until 1936. In 1931, the region of Kisantu was separated from Kwango and made an independent apostolic vicariate under Jesuit bishop Alphonse Verwimp (1885–1964). By the time the apostolic vicariate of Kisantu was created, there were ninety-one Jesuits in the Congo, manning twenty-three primary schools, eight colleges for catechists, two minor seminaries, two other colleges (one for medical assistants and another for agricultural assistants), besides several other parochial and spirituality ministries at the service of about sixty thousand Catholics. The Jesuits' jurisdiction in Congo later extended to Rwanda and Burundi, which, after the First World War, also came under Belgian colonial administration.

Like in the Congo, Jesuit missions in Madagascar thrived during the period before the Second World War. More than elsewhere, here Jesuits contributed significantly to the establishment of a local church with a strong local clergy. For this purpose, Collège St. Michel was turned into a minor seminary in 1910 and a major seminary in 1921. Jesuits also admitted indigenous Malagasy youths into their own ranks during this period. In 1925, a Jesuit novitiate was opened in the country at the same time as the first Malagasy Jesuits were ordained priests—remarkably early when compared with other places in Africa.

In 1901, Jesuits from the province of Champagne commenced work in the region of Fianarantsoa in the south while those from Toulouse concentrated more on the central parts of Antananarivo. In 1913, Fianarantsoa was made

335 De Meulder, "Mavula," 27.

an apostolic vicariate; what used to be the apostolic vicariate of Central Madagascar became the apostolic vicariate of Tananarive; and both vicariates were entrusted to the respective Jesuits working in them. These ecclesiastical jurisdictions were also placed under Jesuit bishops: Charles Givelet (1857–1935), who was freshly appointed to Fianarantsoa, and Henri de Lespinasse de Saune (1850–1929), who continued to hold the office in Tananarive.

While the trend of continuing, consolidating, and expanding old missions was maintained beyond the Second World War in Madagascar, Congo, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, the Society was also forced to adjust to the radically altered context of post-war Africa and to exploit new apostolic opportunities that were emerging in that context. To appreciate post-war Jesuit performance in Africa, therefore, it is necessary to understand the post-war context.³³⁶

After the war, there was a revolutionary spirit in Africa that affected every aspect of society, including the Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus. While conditions for this revolution had long ripened, the war had triggered its actualization, not least by weakening the grip of colonial empires on the peoples of Africa. It was within this context that, in 1960, British prime minister Harold Macmillan (1894–1986, in office 1957–63) admitted “there was an irresistible wind of change” that was blowing through the continent of Africa, urging for its recognition “whether we like it or not.”³³⁷ Even more important is the fact that Africans themselves championed the revolution, which came to be captured by the term “Africanization.” There was a deliberate move to Africanize structures and personnel in newly independent countries and in the churches that operated in them.

Macmillan’s “wind of change” may not have started from the church, but it blew in its direction as if to force ecclesiastical windows open and bring in much needed fresh air. In 1956, Cameroonian Jesuit Meinrad-Pierre Hebga (1928–2008) had started speaking about the need for an “African fundamental theology”—probably the first time the emerging discipline was mentioned by its enduring name.³³⁸ More radical African authors like the Ugandan Okot p’Bitek (1931–82) had given up their Christian belief altogether and were mocking those they viewed as mimicking westerners while trying to speak about

336 Most of the ideas presented below have been developed more fully and published in Festo Mkenda, “Pedro Arrupe and Africa: Clear Vision and Bold Steps in a Moment of Unsettling Transitions,” *Archivum historicum Societatis Iesu* 88, fasc. 176 (2019–2): 440–70.

337 Harold Macmillan, *Pointing the Way, 1959–1961* (London: Macmillan, 1972), 475.

338 Meinrad Hebga, “Christianisme et négritude,” in *Des prêtres noirs s’interrogent* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1956), 189–203, here 190; also see N’Soki K., “Genèse de l’expression ‘Théologie africaine,’” *Telema* 20, no. 4 (1979): 45–57, here 44.

African spirituality.³³⁹ Quoting Andrew Hike (1925–2003)—one of the most open-minded missionaries who lived in Nairobi, Kenya—another author described Christianity as “the religion of the white man with a white Christ who is worshipped in temples built in foreign styles, and praised with European songs accompanied by the organ.” The trouble with such a religion was that it made Christ “an answer to questions a white man would ask, the solution of problems and needs a *mzungu* [white person] feels.” At a time when the policy of Africanization was being pursued vigorously by independent governments, the author argued, “there would be no reason not to witness its manifestation in the church at all levels.”³⁴⁰

Calls for Africanization reverberated within Christianity. There was a clear demand for some form of transition from foreign missionary control over churches to indigenous African leadership. Among Protestants, in 1971 Reverend John Gatu (1925–2017), then general secretary of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, called for a moratorium on foreign missionary personnel and funding to Africa. His controversial call generated a lot of debate and was eventually endorsed by the All African Conference of Churches that met in Lusaka, Zambia, in 1974.³⁴¹ Among Catholics, the Tanzanian theologian Laurenti Magesa lamented the fact that, while it had generally been agreed that the time had come for the “phasing out” of missionary control over the church in Africa, “the missionary [...] still has a predominant say both in its organization and running.”³⁴² Magesa later proposed that even papal envoys to Africa be selected from among African church members of good repute. In his view, the change would facilitate a move away from what he described as “the [mainly Italian] nationalistic character of these envoys [...], which can be a significant barrier to the envoy’s and therefore Rome’s proper appreciation of Africa’s problems and aspirations.”³⁴³ Cameroonian Jesuit Eboussi Boulaga

339 P’Bitek’s most concise critique of the study of religions in Africa is *African Religions in Western Scholarship* (Kampala: East African Literature Bureau, c.1970).

340 M. D. Odinga, “Decolonizing the Church in East Africa,” *East Africa Journal* 4, no. 4 (1967): 11–15, here 11–12. For a longer study of this theme, see Amanda Ruth Ford, “The Decolonization of Christianity in Colonial Kenya” (PhD diss., University of Arkansas, 2015).

341 Eugeniah Ombwayo Adoyo, “Mission and Moratorium in Africa” (M.Phil diss., Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, 1990); Karabo Mpeane Makofane, “The Moratorium Debate in Christian Mission and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa” (M.Th. diss., University of South Africa, 2009).

342 Laurenti Magesa, “Towards a Genuine African Church,” *African Ecclesial Review* 12, no. 3 (1970): 280–83, here 280.

343 Laurenti Magesa, “Reflections on Papal Envoys,” *African Ecclesial Review* 18, no. 4 (1976): 216–18, here 216.

(1934–2018) pushed these ideas to their logical extreme. He published his famous “La démission” (Resignation) article in 1974, which advised European and American missionaries to leave Africa altogether in order to give African Christianity a chance.³⁴⁴

With time, the post-war period would also be shaped by the Second Vatican Council (1962–65). By its pronouncements, the council opened new possibilities for the church in Africa and, in a way, gave legitimacy to those who called for the Africanization of Christianity. The council’s greatest impact on Africa stemmed from its affirmation of cultural diversity. “The variety of ways in which objects are utilized, labor is applied, the self is expressed, religion is practiced, customary ways of behaving take shape, laws and juridical institutions are established, the sciences and arts develop, and beauty is pursued,” the council came to understand, “all give rise to different conditions of life in common and different expressions in the structuring of life’s resources.” It went on to affirm that “the handing on of customs becomes an inheritance peculiar to each human society.”³⁴⁵ This fresh affirmation of cultural diversity breathed new life into cultures in Africa that hitherto had been considered as nothing but uncivilized obstructions to the western ways of being Christian. For Africa, some of the council’s most potent pronouncements were to be found in its decree on the missionary activity of the church (*Ad gentes*), its pastoral constitution on the church in the world of today (*Gaudium et spes*), and its constitution on the sacred liturgy (*Sacrosanctum concilium*). Theologians were encouraged to find new ways through which “the faith can be understood in terms of the philosophy and wisdom of these peoples, and how their customs, their attitude to life and their social structure can be reconciled with the way of living proposed by divine revelation.”³⁴⁶

The church itself had started to change the language it used when talking about Africa. In 1957, Pius XII (1876–1958, r.1939–58) could still describe Africa as “what is called ‘darkest’ Africa, where 85,000,000 people still sit in the darkness of idolatry,” and Europe, vis-à-vis Africa, as “that Europe without whose influence, extended to all fields, they might be drawn by a blind nationalism to plunge into chaos or slavery.”³⁴⁷ Yet, in 1969, Paul VI (1897–1978, r.1963–78) was striking a completely different tone, urging Africans to become missionaries

344 Fabien Eboussi Boulaga, “La démission,” *Spiritus* 15, no. 56 (1974): 276–87, here 282, 287.

345 Vatican II, “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the World of Today,” no. 53. This and subsequent citations from Vatican II documents are from Norman P. Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2 vols. (London: Sheed & Ward, 1990).

346 Vatican II, “Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church” (*Ad gentes*), no. 22.

347 Pius XII, “*Fidei donum*: On the Present Condition of Catholic Missions, Especially in Africa” (Rome, 1957), nos. 15, 20.

unto themselves and insisting that the church did not “intend, while performing her mission, to impose the particular traits of so-called Western culture, at the expense of the good, human characteristics of African culture.”³⁴⁸

Like the rest of the church, Jesuits gradually adjusted to the post-war developments in Africa and took advantage of their opportunities. As missions on the continent were becoming less entangled with colonial projects, Jesuit missionary personnel became more international in their composition even in the already existing missions: in 1948, Jesuits from Sicily (Italy) joined those from Champagne (France) in Fianarantsoa (Madagascar); in 1953, Irish Jesuits joined the missions in Zambia; in 1955, Jesuits from Turin (Italy) joined those from Toulouse (France) in Antananarivo (Madagascar); and in 1958, the Chinhoyi (Sinoia) mission was established in Zimbabwe under German Jesuits, becoming independent from the Salisbury mission that remained under English Jesuits. To their credit, in 1948 the Jesuits in Congo set the pace by establishing a novitiate for the religious formation of young Africans who joined them, which was followed in 1954 by an institute for the philosophical training of African Jesuits who were newly incorporated into the Society.

Besides these changes, new missions were also established in other parts of Africa, extending Jesuit presence beyond the territories covered by the nineteenth-century initiatives. At the invitation of Emperor Haile Selassie (1892–1975, r.1930–74), Canadian Jesuits arrived in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 1945. They commenced an educational ministry with a secondary school in the capital and eventually assisted the government in establishing the University College of Addis Ababa, which later became the University of Addis Ababa. In 1947, French Jesuits went to Chad, where they helped in founding two dioceses and establishing a local hierarchy in the country. In Cameroon, they accepted responsibility for a school in Douala in 1957, and, in Ivory Coast, they established the African Institute for Economic and Social Development (*Institut Africaine pour le Développement Économique et Sociale*, abbreviated as INADES) in 1962. In eastern Africa, Indian Jesuits moved to Tanzania in 1961 and, starting with a parish on the shores of Lake Victoria, opened a mission that spread to the rest of the region. They were later joined by Maltese Jesuits, who concentrated on seminary work in Uganda. Following the 1964 expulsion of European missionaries from Sudan, Indian Jesuits were allowed to move into the country in 1971. They helped to rebuild the church in South Sudan while concentrating on the formation of a local clergy in minor and major seminaries. In 1962, one American Jesuit from New York joined the faculty at the University of Lagos,

348 Paul VI, “Journey to Uganda: Address of Paul VI to the Parliament of Uganda” (Kampala, 1969).

Nigeria, and in the following year he was joined by two others from the same place, who taught at the university and provided chaplaincy services in various institutions around the city. Another Jesuit, also from New York, was sent to teach at the University of Ghana in 1974. Like those in Lagos, he also worked as chaplain to several institutions in Legon, near Accra.³⁴⁹ In 1983, at the end of Arrupe's term of office as superior general, the Society was present in twenty-four African countries.

Elected to that office in 1965, Arrupe presided over the Society when most of these post-war changes in Africa were taking place. At that time, numerous African countries had become free from colonial rule, and many more were on their way to gaining political independence. Now with significant African Jesuit voices also calling for the Africanization of the Society,³⁵⁰ Arrupe realized that, while increased Jesuit presence took advantage of emerging opportunities, it did not automatically deliver on the critical changes that were being demanded in all structures and institutions in Africa. For the most part, the myriad Jesuit initiatives across the continent were "missionary" in the most traditional sense of the term and rather out of tune with the Africanization spirit of the time. Arrupe himself had come to believe that the Society had to become "African in Africa, just as it is American in the United States and Spanish in Spain."³⁵¹ It was his burden to steer the Society in that direction, a responsibility he took very seriously.

Arrupe's pronouncements and decisions on Africa make it possible for us to discern a three-point policy that was designed to help the Society live up to the challenges of the post-war and post-independence period. The policy consisted of deliberate acts of empowering, supporting, and inspiring the Jesuits on the continent. In a letter he addressed to superiors in the Near East and in Africa after his first visit to those regions shortly after he was elected superior general, Arrupe said: "My collaborators and I are anxious about your

349 Festo Mkenda, "Jesuits and Africa," *Oxford Handbooks Online*, 2016; <https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935420.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199935420-e-56> (accessed February 15, 2021); also Mkenda, *Mission for Everyone*, 141–76, 220–29; *From Generation to Generation: The Story of the Nigeria/Ghana Mission of the Society of Jesus* (n.p.: Something More Publications, 1994), 19–20; Gabriel Ujah Ejembi, "Story of Success: The Golden Jubilee of the North-West Province of Africa (ANW)," *Year Book of the Society of Jesus* (2012): 25–28; Bill Wood, "Nigeria–Ghana Mission Has University Roots," *National Jesuit News: Africa Supplement* (January 1992).

350 Jean Luc Enyegue, "New Wine into Old Wineskins?: African Reactions to Arrupe's Governing Vision (1965–1978)," *Archivum historicum Societatis Iesu* 88, fasc. 176 (2019–2): 471–507.

351 Pedro Arrupe, *A Planet to Heal: Reflections and Forecasts*, 2nd ed. (Rome: International Center for Jesuit Education, 1977), 228.

problems, for we are determined to further your labors, coordinate your efforts and assist you to the full with the means that Our Lord will put at the Society's disposal."³⁵² In 1970, while addressing an assembly of the bishops of Africa and Madagascar on behalf of other superiors general, Arrupe emphasized again: "We wish to work in the development of the countries where we serve and to aid Africa to become ever more herself."³⁵³ To the extent that Arrupe's policy of empowering, supporting, and inspiring succeeded, it changed the many disjointed Jesuit missions across the continent by giving the Society in Africa an organizational structure and a continental spirit that still characterize it today.

The strategy for empowering the Society in Africa was executed mainly through the creation of enabling structures for discernment and apostolic action. This strategy flowed from Arrupe's belief that, more than anyone else, Jesuits on the ground carried greater responsibility for articulating the continent's pressing needs. Concretely, it was they who were a part of the churches of Africa and Madagascar that were, as he appreciated, "taking their own destinies in their hands."³⁵⁴ Some of the reasons Arrupe advanced for creating the eastern Africa region in 1976 had the obvious intent of empowerment: "The main apostolic decisions will be made on the spot with a better knowledge of the local situation," he said. Moreover, the new structure would allow for a "better overall planning [...] and the priorities of the service of Church will be more easily taken into account." Even though most members would still be missionaries from outside the continent, at least "African Jesuits will be incorporated into an independent 'African' entity." If one still wondered why these things mattered, Arrupe provided an additional reason, that his action was "an answer to renewed requests from African Episcopal Conferences that Major Superiors of religious working in Africa should also live there." Finally, the structure would provide an independence that would be "in accord with the present trend of the history both of Africa and of the Church on that continent, where the Hierarchy has been established a few years ago."³⁵⁵

In March 1971, Arrupe created the new assistancy of Africa, which included the island of Madagascar. In his decree of erection, he referred to a desire for such an entity that was expressed by the Thirtieth General Congregation in 1957,³⁵⁶ and to the recommendation of the Thirty-First General Congregation

352 Pedro Arrupe, "Ad Superiores Proximi Orientis et Africae expleto itinere P. Generalis," *Acta Romana* 14, fasc. 6 (1966): 771–72, here 772.

353 Pedro Arrupe, "Religious in Africa," *Yearbook of the Society of Jesus* (1970–71): 89–96, here 96.

354 Arrupe, "Religious in Africa," 90; also cf. Arrupe, *Planet to Heal*, 224–25.

355 Pedro Arrupe to the provincials of Goa-Puna, Malta, and Ranchi, April 1, 1976, Nairobi, JHIA Archives, ARR/AOR/001.

356 GC 30, decree 58: "On Establishing an African Assistancy."

(May 1965–July 1966) for the new superior general to have a councilor for African affairs. The new structure would better coordinate the Society's apostolic activity and administrative organization, and, among other things, give an impetus to the process of Africanizing the Society itself.³⁵⁷ Arrupe appointed Father Victor Mertens (1912–2003) to be the first assistant for Africa. A missionary from Belgium, Mertens had worked in the Congo for several years and was at one point its vice-provincial and, from 1961, provincial superior.

Mertens knew what his new office entailed. In his view, Arrupe had created the assistancy to help the Society situate itself more apostolically in the face of Africa's needs. Communicating Arrupe's mind, Mertens summarized those needs in two categories: a *tendency to freedom* and a *tendency to development*. While the former tendency was "found in all areas, political, economic, cultural and religious," Mertens noted that the latter "pronounced wish to develop" was "an invitation to the Church to be present in this great movement and at the same time to help Africa avoid the materialism which threatens it more than Marxism." He further emphasized that Africa needed partnership, not what Arrupe dismissed as organized charity. Moreover, "ready-made solutions imported from Europe and America" were not going to work, Mertens warned. As the Society *Africanized* and *Malgasized* itself more, the first assistant for Africa envisaged a gradual reversal of roles. Increasingly, Africans were to take their destiny into their own hands, and foreign missionaries were to play a supportive role. "The work continues," said Mertens, but "the methods must be adapted to modern times." He warned that, in the course of this reversal of roles, foreign—specifically Western—Jesuits might feel they were being inefficiently employed; yet the need to "plant the church with deep roots" in Africa and to *Africanize* and *Malgasize* their Society called for their greater, not lesser, collaboration and patience.³⁵⁸

Arrupe was also aware that, though important and enabling, the assistancy structure alone would not bring about the apostolic contextualization he envisaged for the Society in Africa. Although about 1,600 Jesuits were spread over twenty African countries when he created the assistancy, only the province of Central Africa (then including today's DRC, Rwanda, and Burundi) and the then vice-provinces of Madagascar and Zambia had some juridical capacity within the Society to make decisions for themselves and directly answer to the superior general in Rome without the mediation of major superiors who

357 Pedro Arrupe, "Decretum quo nova assistentia Africae constituitur," *Acta Romana* 15, fasc. 5 (1971): 718–20.

358 Victor Mertens, "The Society of Jesus in Africa and Madagascar," *Yearbook of the Society of Jesus* (1971–72): 7–15, passim; Arrupe, *Planet to Heal*, 224–28.

resided outside Africa. There was an obvious need for more grassroots structures for decision-making and administration across the continent. After the creation of the African assistancy, Madagascar became a province (May 1971); the dependent region of Cameroon and the missions in Chad, Ivory Coast, and Senegal were consolidated into one independent vice-province (July 1973), which it was envisaged would eventually become coextensive with the jurisdictions of the International Episcopal Conferences of Central Africa and West Africa;³⁵⁹ the missions in Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan (then undivided), Tanzania, and Uganda were brought together to constitute the independent eastern Africa region (July 1976); and the missions of Salisbury and Chinhoyi (Sinoia) were merged to form the independent vice-province of Zimbabwe (November 1978). As he stated when creating the eastern Africa region, Arrupe expected a lot from these unified structures:

I hope that this unification will help our men to render better service to the Church: they can more easily collaborate with each other; they should be able to plan their apostolate better by a more judicious use of the means at their disposal for priority needs. I hope too that this will contribute to the development of the Society which now becomes more fully African in these countries.³⁶⁰

Still, the created provinces, vice-provinces, and regions could not deliver the expected results on localization, and Arrupe had to confront another structural challenge to his empowerment strategy. Not only did some of the created jurisdictions comprise multiple countries but they were also geographically enormous. When it was created, the vice-province of West Africa had a total area of 2.8 million square kilometers—well over half the size of the European Union and without the benefits of proximity and easy transport across numerous political borders. With a total area of 5.4 million square kilometers, the eastern Africa region was almost twice the size of the vice-province of West Africa, operated in at least four different national languages, and enjoyed no

359 The International Episcopal Conference of Central Africa included Cameroon, Congo, Gabon, Central African Republic, and Chad; that of West Africa included Ivory Coast, Benin, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, and Togo. See Pedro Arrupe, "Viceprovincia independens Africae Occidentalis erigitur," *Acta Romana* 16, fasc. 1 (1973): 75–78, here 76.

360 Pedro Arrupe, "Versio Anglica decreti quo erigitur regio indep. Africae Orientalis," *Acta Romana* 16, fasc. 4 (1976): 903–6, here 904; see also Arrupe, "Decretum quo nova viceprovincia independens Zimbabvensis constituitur," *Acta Romana* 17, fasc. 2 (1978): 349–52, here 350.

better means of transport and communication. A major superior residing in one particular city in these vast administrative units could never claim to have the “better knowledge of the local situation” that Arrupe considered necessary for making apostolic decisions on the spot. Such a superior could hardly be effective at “thinking with the church” or, better still, “feeling with the church,” if that is understood, at least partly, as a process of “discernment that [is] attentive to the particular circumstances of the local Catholic community and to the specific needs of [a particular national] society.”³⁶¹ To use a current expression, such a superior could not “take on the ‘smell of the sheep.’”³⁶² For Arrupe, while smaller units would not make sense because of limited human and other resources, authority centralized in a major superior as in the current practice of the Society would not make the mammoth structures efficient mechanisms for discernment and governance.

Moreover, within the multi-country Jesuit units, legitimate national sentiments from outside the Society could make it difficult to collaborate with bishops and episcopal conferences. The large units still failed to be an answer to what Arrupe said were “renewed requests from African Episcopal Conferences that Major Superiors of religious working in Africa should also live there.” As it is often said, Africa is a continent, not a country. If we limit our judgment to the question of apostolic efficiency, and if a decision is to be made on a truly local matter in Sarh (Chad), then whether the major superior concerned sits in Douala (Cameroon) or in Paris (France) makes very little difference.

In one case that was looked at in detail, Arrupe faced the problem head on. To the first superior of the newly constituted eastern Africa region—geographically, the largest unit he had created—Arrupe made the following proposals: first, at least at the beginning, a consultor could be appointed from each of the region’s constituent countries. Second, there could be a “representative” of the regional superior in each of the countries. Such a representative did not need to be a superior, Arrupe suggested, but some powers could be “delegated” to him so that he could make decisions on behalf of the regional superior in cases of emergency. Third, for each country there could be “some sort of ‘Pastoral Council’ composed of a few Jesuits” who would reflect on local needs and propose what the Society might do, all in the service of the regional superior and his consultors. The proposed “Pastoral Council” could act “like a

361 Douglas Marcouiller, S.J., “Archbishop with an Attitude: Oscar Romero’s *Sentir con la Iglesia*,” *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 35, no. 3 (May 2003): vii–52, here 3; also see 18–38 and 50–52.

362 Cf. Francis, “Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*” (Rome, 2013), no. 24.

‘Commission for Ministries’ in each country,” added Arrupe.³⁶³ In 1977, Arrupe recommended similar “country councils” for Rwanda and Burundi when he suppressed the eastern region of Central Africa and merged the two countries into the province that covered the present-day DRC.³⁶⁴ Maintaining the proposed structure was going to be costly, yet Arrupe considered it entirely worth the expense: “It will perhaps be difficult, on account of long distances and high travelling expenses, to have regular consultation meetings. However, I consider them as indispensable.”³⁶⁵

Distances and expenses were not the only challenges to the restructurings proposed by Arrupe. The African missionary context of the 1960s and 1970s impeded the immediate implementation of some of his best ideas. At a time when most of those whom Arrupe could consult on Africa or could appoint to positions of leadership in Africa were foreign missionaries, he could still be criticized for not allowing the Society to experience a full measure of Africanization. Some of the changes he envisioned could only happen long after he had left the scene. In some cases, the amalgamation of missions was greeted with something other than outright enthusiasm. For example, the creation of the vice-province of West Africa entailed the suppression of Cameroon as a region under a Cameroonian regional superior and its placement under a French vice-provincial. To some, this decision was incomprehensible in the heyday of the Africanization movement.³⁶⁶ In East Africa, the initial response of the Canadian Jesuits in Ethiopia to Arrupe’s invitation for them to join the region he was contemplating to create is best described as foot-dragging. At some point, the superior general was forced to express his proposition with some firmness.³⁶⁷ In South Africa, which was at that time a mission of the English province, Jesuits faced challenges that were not entirely unrelated to realities in a racially segregated society. Confirming the assessment of Canadian Jesuit Gordon George (1911–94), who was an official visitor to the English province around the time Arrupe was elected superior general, Arrupe ordered the closure of St. Aidan’s College in 1965.³⁶⁸ The college was struggling financially, and Jesuits feared that, with declining vocations in England, they would not be able to staff it in the future. Most importantly, an

363 Pedro Arrupe to Polycarp Toppo, July 22, 1976 (1), Nairobi, JHIA Archives, ARR/AOR/001.

364 Pedro Arrupe, “Regio Orientalis olim statute pro provincia Africae Centralis suppressitur,” *Acta Romana* 17, fasc. 1 (1977): 165–66.

365 Pedro Arrupe to Polycarp Toppo, July 22, 1976 (2), Nairobi, JHIA Archives, ARR/AOR/001.

366 Enyegue, “New Wine into Old Wineskins?,” 491.

367 Mkenda, *Mission for Everyone*, 239–40.

368 Oliver P. Rafferty, “Gordon George and the Visitation of the English Province, 1964–1965,” in McCoog, *With Eyes and Ears Open*, 286–304, here 300–2.

all-white college run by Jesuits in apartheid South Africa was finally recognized as simply a bad idea. As the college's historian Francis L. Coleman puts it:

In this socio-political climate, the provision of a highly privileged education to a relatively wealthy minority group, especially in a country where a policy of total racial segregation was being ever more firmly implemented, must inevitably have seemed to be not only out-of-step with contemporary opinion, but also possibly bad politics in the long term as well.³⁶⁹

If that observation should have been obvious, it did not make Arrupe's decision easy to implement on the ground.

After the creation of structures for empowerment, Arrupe's second strategy was to offer support. For success in the African missions, financial support was critical. In the decrees with which he erected provinces and regions in Africa, Arrupe paid great attention to financial viability at least in the early days of their existence. Ordinarily, provinces that oversaw the missions that he had merged into independent units were required to assist in establishing necessary funds.³⁷⁰ Cases that involved multiple provinces demanded greater attention than others, and Arrupe made special financial appeals on their behalf and even planned for the care of missionary members in their provinces of origin in cases of sickness and advanced age.³⁷¹ Equally important were arrangements for Jesuit personnel. Arrupe wished to ensure that there was an initial stable membership in each established unit, for he had come to realize that "the sudden departure of several members could cause serious harm to our apostolates."³⁷² The Thirty-First General Congregation had asked provinces to "consider mission works that are entrusted to them as an integral part of the province, on the same level as the other works of the province" and thus help them "with money and men."³⁷³ This resolution made it easy for Arrupe to apply the same provision to the newly established independent units in

369 Coleman, *St. Aidan's College*, 93.

370 Pedro Arrupe, "Epistola qua puncta practica declarantur in decreto erectionis vicepr. Zimbabvensis," *Acta Romana* 17, fasc. 2 (1978): 352–55, here 354.

371 Pedro Arrupe to Polycarp Toppo, July 22, 1976 (1); Pedro Arrupe to Phillip Ekka, July 22, 1976; Pedro Arrupe to Romuald D'Souza, July 22, 1976; Pedro Arrupe to Julien Harvey, July 22, 1976; Pedro Arrupe to Salvino J. Darmanin, July 22, 1976, all in Nairobi, JHIA Archives ARR/AOR/001. Also see Arrupe, "Epistola qua puncta practica," 353.

372 Arrupe, "Epistola qua puncta practica," 353.

373 GC 31, decree 24, no. 8.1.(a).

Africa in relation to their former provinces.³⁷⁴ Besides money and men, Arrupe keenly followed what was happening on the ground, offering every kind of personal support to the first major superiors he had appointed in Africa.

In the end, Arrupe's sustained interest in what was unfolding in Africa enriched his own self-reflection. As a result of that reflection, he became charismatic, prophetic, and inspirational to many Jesuits and people around the world. In Africa, Arrupe's inspiration was his third strategy, which was implemented in two ways: first, as insight into problems, which led to actionable proposals; and second, as depth of thought over matters of greater moment.

Because of his perception of the African situation at that time, Arrupe believed that he was able to identify Africa's true needs. For example, when he addressed Jesuit superiors of Africa and Madagascar in 1972, he proposed a tentative list of common challenges that, in his view, called for common action.³⁷⁵ In 1976, he attempted a more substantive summary of Africa's needs, which he invited Jesuits on the continent to discuss and deepen, as well as to propose a way forward. To a gathering of Jesuits from different parts of Africa that took place in Kinshasa, DRC (then Zaïre), Arrupe addressed the following words:

During my recent visit to some of your countries I have realized how great your problems are, how fast the evolution in all domains is going on, and how different the situations are from one country to another; however I could notice that some fundamental problems were more or less the same for all of you. For instance, I am thinking of the rather general tendency towards absolute political power, the developing of socialism in various but not always clearly expressed forms, the increasing difficulties to our work of evangelization in many countries, the spreading of materialism, not to say anything about difficulties coming from uncontrollable urbanization, the spreading of nationalization of our schools, more and more difficulties in our work of education of the young, the aging of our Jesuit manpower, the urgent need for inculturation and many other problems.³⁷⁶

Arrupe called upon the gathered Jesuits not only to clarify the needs in question but also to suggest "how the Society, in the coming years, would best

374 Arrupe, "Decretum quo nova viceprovincia independens Zimbabvensis constituitur," 352.

375 Arrupe, *Planet to Heal*, 224, 230–31.

376 Pedro Arrupe to Jesuits gathered in Kinshasa, September 29, 1976, printed in JECAM, *Jesuit Response to the Challenge of Mission in Africa and Madagascar Today: Report on Jesuit Conference on Africa and Madagascar (JECAM), Kinshasa, Zaire, October 5–8, 1976* (Washington, DC: Jesuit Missions, 1976), 9–12, here 9.

contribute to meet the needs of the Church in Africa and Madagascar” and propose “a joint course of action” at least in some domains.³⁷⁷

One of the ideas that Arrupe nurtured for a long time was the task of theological research and reflection, which he identified as a priority for the whole Society but felt was even more urgent in Africa. He believed that, by harnessing Jesuit experiences from the continent and beyond, the Society had “a real possibility of rendering great service to the Church in this part of the world.”³⁷⁸ Eventually, Arrupe proposed to major superiors a project for an all-Africa school of theology, which, as its first goal, would “equip the Society of Jesus in Africa with a well-established center of theological reflection and research, integrated in an African cultural and social environment that would collaborate with and serve the local churches as well as the universal church.”³⁷⁹ This idea matured into what is now Hekima College in Nairobi, Kenya, which first opened its doors to students in 1984.

That the envisaged center would be for the whole of Africa was not merely incidental to Arrupe’s concern for theological reflection and research. In a continent characterized by rapid change, Arrupe was also concerned about fostering among Jesuits a sense of belonging to the universal body of the Society—to something bigger than their own countries and still bigger than the provinces and regions he was creating. On the one hand, he viewed diversity as an apostolic opportunity to give witness to Catholicity. He often quoted Paul VI’s *Evangelii nuntiandi* to emphasize that “diversity of service in the unity of the same mission makes up the richness and beauty of evangelization.”³⁸⁰ For this very reason, Arrupe argued that missionaries did not have to leave independent Africa after all. “Instead of looking too much to the past or fixing our sight on elements that could cause division,” he suggested, “let us rather look to the future which we shall still build together and let us keep an eye on the things that can unite us.”³⁸¹ He thus took a clear position against the proponents of a missionary moratorium in Africa as well as Eboussi Boulaga’s proposed *La demission*.

Arrupe argued equally strongly that universality gave meaning to Jesuit apostolic works. He thus warned against all “regionalism or nationalism” that

377 Arrupe to Jesuits gathered in Kinshasa, 9–10.

378 Arrupe, *Planet to Heal*, 230; Arrupe to Jesuits gathered in Kinshasa, 10.

379 Cecil McGarry, “Hekima College: The First Twenty Years 1984–2004,” *Hekima Review* 32 (2004): 87–93, here 88.

380 Paul VI, “Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii nuntiandi*” (Rome, 1975), no. 66, see also no. 77. Arrupe, “Versio Anglicana decreti quo erigitur regio indep. Africae Orientalis,” 904; Arrupe, “Decretum quo nova viceprovincia independens Zimbabvensis constituitur,” 350.

381 Arrupe, *Planet to Heal*, 228.

could hinder the desired universal ideal: “We all form but one body composed of members who came from different continents and countries.”³⁸² Despite the “sound pluralism” that Arrupe himself encouraged, he believed that “union of hearts” still emerged “from the sharing of one and the same ideal, as indicated by God through St. Ignatius”: “You have to aim at that in your meeting at Kinshasa, in your Provinces and in your communities.”³⁸³ Arrupe’s idea of an all-Africa center for theological reflection and research was thus meant as a way to pursue this universal ideal as its second goal. It was expected that it would “foster the growth of belonging to a universal body and of co-operation between the many jurisdictions of the African Assistancy by means of formation together and a growing mutual knowledge among the younger Jesuits of Africa and Madagascar.”³⁸⁴

Arrupe himself came to take pride in the “international character” of the Jesuits in parts of the African assistancy, understanding it to be “in line with our missionary vocation as it was from the beginning of the Society, even in the time of Saint Ignatius.” For that reason, he viewed the internationalism of the Jesuits in Africa as a desirable ideal for the rest of the Society: “When I consider the advantages of a certain internationalism, I believe it is better not to entrust to Jesuits of the same nationality the exclusive service for a geographical area or for a work in the same Province or the same Mission.”³⁸⁵ His mature reflection on Jesuits and missions, so obviously enriched by African experiences, came to be appreciated for its wider application in other parts of the world.³⁸⁶

As a third strategy for Africa, Arrupe worked toward becoming inspirational by engaging directly in the main topics of the moment. An example of Arrupe’s contribution to the deepening of thought over an emerging theme of great theological significance to Africa is to be found in his ideas on inculturation. His many years of missionary experience in Asia notwithstanding, Arrupe’s understanding of inculturation was also heavily influenced by his direct engagement with the African context of his time as general superior. In October 1966, while reflecting on the relationship between the church and culture, Arrupe insisted that, just as Christianity was rightly Western in the West, “it must be Eastern in the East, and African in Africa.” He added: “European Christianity was transplanted to Asia and Africa with its logical and rational structure, usages, and artistic expressions; therefore, notwithstanding the enormous

382 Arrupe, *Planet to Heal*, 228; also see Pedro Arrupe, “On Inculturation,” *Acta Romana* 17, fasc. 2 (1978): 256–63, here 262.

383 Arrupe to Jesuits gathered in Kinshasa, 11.

384 McGarry, “Hekima College,” 88; GC 32, decree 6, no. 29.

385 Arrupe, *Planet to Heal*, 229.

386 See introductory note in Arrupe, *Planet to Heal*, 209.

efforts of the missionaries and the immense amount of energy expended in evangelization, Christianity did not succeed in becoming Asian or African.”³⁸⁷ Arrupe saw a correlation between the Africanization campaigns of the time and the much richer theological process of inculturation. And Africa had a lot to contribute to the process and to the enrichment of the concept of inculturation: “The extraordinary efflorescence of African independent Churches ought to help us reflect on this necessary Africanization and draw from it the pastoral consequences.”³⁸⁸ It is interesting that Arrupe chose to speak about an “extraordinary efflorescence” of independent churches rather than the frequently used but somewhat derogatory “mushrooming” of churches in Africa.

Arrupe’s concerns about inculturation were picked up by the Thirty-Second General Congregation, which met between December 1974 and March 1975. Declaring itself “aware of the great importance that must be given today to the work involving inculturation of both faith and Christian life in all the continents of the world, but especially in the regions of Asia and Africa, and in some countries in Latin America,” the congregation mandated the superior general to work toward a further clarification of the concept and to propose concrete ways of implementing it.³⁸⁹ Furthermore, the congregation called for more contextualized Jesuit formation programs. The desired contextualization was to be attained through training in all kinds of disciplines, including “the cultural traditions of the nation.”³⁹⁰ The process that was entrusted to the superior general by the congregation culminated in Arrupe’s much-cited 1978 letter on inculturation. In that letter, Arrupe defined inculturation as

the incarnation of Christian life and of the Christian message in a particular cultural context, in such a way that this experience not only finds expression through elements proper to the culture in question (this alone would be no more than a superficial adaptation), but becomes a principle that animates, directs and unifies the culture, transforming and remaking it so as to bring about “a new creation.”³⁹¹

He had come to see inculturation as “one of the best services which the Society of today can render in the cause of evangelization.” Correspondingly, Jesuit

387 Pedro Arrupe, “The Church and the Culture,” *Yearbook of the Society of Jesus* (1967–68): 84–88, here 84, 86; Arrupe, *Planet to Heal*, 226.

388 Arrupe, *Planet to Heal*, 226.

389 GC 32, decree 5: “The Work of Inculturation of the Faith and Promotion of Christian Life”; see also decree 4, nos. 53–56, and decree 6, nos. 27–29.

390 GC 32, decree 6, no. 27.

391 Arrupe, “On Inculturation,” 257.

training was to prepare “agents of inculturation,” said Arrupe, and younger members of the Society were to be formed “in its spirit and in its concrete expression.”³⁹² The center for theological reflection and research that Arrupe proposed for Africa was to have the cause for inculturation as its third goal. It was

to ensure that the younger Jesuits of Africa and Madagascar have at their disposal an inculturated and integrated theological formation programme close to their local environment that would prepare them well to proclaim the Word of God and to enter the various ministries of the Society in their respective countries.³⁹³

Conclusion

The Arrupe years were a watershed in the history of Jesuit involvement with the continent of Africa. For centuries before Arrupe, starting with Ignatius’s focus on Ethiopia, Jesuits invested resources—including personal labor and life—for the conversion of Africans into a form of Catholicism that was understood primarily from a European perspective. Indeed, the earliest-known Catholic martyrs in sub-Saharan Africa are Jesuits, starting with Gonçalo da Silveira in southeastern Africa in 1561, and including the eight who faced persecution and death after they had opted to remain with their flock when they had been ordered to leave Ethiopia in 1633. If this part of the history should start from within Africa, it flows northward as if in search of a Europe. Like so many others, Jesuits sought to work from within Africa to mold the continent into the image and likeness of Europe. In the early centuries, the peoples of Ethiopia and Kongo rejected this approach to evangelization. In the other regions where rejection was not so organized and dramatic, a meagre harvest still suggests poor or bad sowing on the part of the Jesuits, or simply a muted rejection by the would-be recipients of the seed, and not necessarily the barrenness of the soil as was often proposed by many a failed missionary. And so, Livingstone’s question still begs for a comprehensive answer: How does one account for so much labor over so long a time with so little fruit that could not even last beyond the missionaries’ departure?

Observations by others, mainly Protestant critics of Catholic missions under the *Padroado*, also remain true. Jesuits were not the only Catholic missionaries

392 Arrupe, “On Inculturation,” 263.

393 McGarry, “Hekima College,” 88.

in Africa in that period. Other religious congregations also evangelized in regions that were under Portuguese influence. Yet, as one critic puts it, “Rome would show badly, notwithstanding her early start in the field, if it had not been for the Jesuit body.”³⁹⁴ Frederic Perry Noble (b. c.1863), the congregationalist secretary of the 1893 Chicago Congress on Africa, suggests that the Jesuit’s imprint on the *Padroado* missions is so significant that it would be impossible to ignore him: “He [the Jesuit], despite the activity of the Capuchin, Dominican, Franciscan, Lazarist and other orders, is the dominant figure in the missions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,” adding that the Jesuit “compels us to center our vision on him until the coming of Lavigerie.”³⁹⁵ Interestingly, Noble even calls Cardinal Lavigerie “the Loyola of Africa.”³⁹⁶

What these observations suggest is not so much about the achievements of Jesuits in those middle centuries of Christianity in Africa but that an understanding of those centuries at all, including the successes and failures therein, will rely on our understanding of pre-suppression Jesuit activities in Africa. Such an understanding would, for example, entail rediscovering and re-examining Jesuit documents like those that Theal described as “the clearest, best written, and far the most interesting documents now in existence upon the country,”³⁹⁷ and that Newitt would later call “the first systematic attempt at an anthropology of eastern Africa.”³⁹⁸ The dearth of such records for pre-colonial Africa makes the Jesuit documents all the more important, justifying Cohen’s view that it would be impossible to produce a history of early seventeenth-century Ethiopia without Páez’s *History*.³⁹⁹ More recent translations of Jesuit documents, such as Newitt’s *Journey which Father António Gomes Made to the Empire of Monomotapa* (2021), and Jessica Wright and Leon Grek’s *The Jesuits in Ethiopia (1609–1641): Latin Letters in Translation* (2017), edited by Wendy Laura Belcher, are exposing such documents to scholars of pre-colonial Africa who might otherwise not be able to access them in their original languages and are allowing the documents themselves to yield information on subjects beyond Catholic proselytism. The pre-suppression Jesuits may have set out to

394 K., “On the Character of Jesuit Missionary Teaching,” *Church Missionary Intelligencer and Record* (July 1886): 529–44, here 530.

395 Frederic Perry Noble, *The Redemption of Africa: A Story of Civilization*, 2 vols. (New York: Young People’s Missionary Movement, 1899), 1:361.

396 Noble, *Redemption of Africa*, 1:396.

397 Theal, *History of Africa South of the Zambesi*, 1:442.

398 Newitt, *East Africa*, xxi.

399 Cohen (Review), “Jesuit in Ethiopia,” 416.

orient a Catholic Africa toward Europe, but their documents might just allow us an insight into the heartbeat of indigenous Africa.⁴⁰⁰

The missionary style of the colonial missions of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was not significantly different from that of the *Padroado* period, save for the multiplicity of agents and the denominational competition that characterized it. As has been shown in this narrative, when circumstances after the Second World War allowed it, this style came to be rejected as well. “Africanize” was the cry, which theologians refined into the more complex concept of inculturation. Jesuits were not spared from this continental movement, and that is where their history in Africa began to flow in another direction. While the movement started earlier in Africa, a Jesuit policy recognizing the need for the Society to become “African in Africa, just as it is American in the United States and Spanish in Spain,”⁴⁰¹ together with practical steps to allow that to happen, emerged in earnest during the Arrupe years. Now Jesuits were being asked to work in Africa with the sole purpose of helping Africa rediscover herself. That, hoped Arrupe, would happen in the light of the Christian Gospel.

What started under Arrupe was a process whose culmination lay farther ahead. Now, merely thirty-eight years since Arrupe’s term of office ended, it would be too soon to assess the full impact of his policy toward Africa. However, it can be said that the process he initiated is irreversible, not least because its progress is directed by realities on the continent and by Africans themselves. For that very reason, when a fuller analysis of the post-Arrupe period will be possible, for good and bad, African characters will loom large in the narrative.

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400 Expression borrowed from R. Sambuli Masha, *The Heartbeat of Indigenous Africa: A Study of Chagga Educational System* (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000).

401 Arrupe, *Planet to Heal*, 228.

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