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Publication Date

2005-11-16

The Early-Modern Jesuit Missions as a Global Movement

presented at

“Global Social Movements in World Historical Perspective”
A Conference of the World History Multi-Campus Research Group
University of California, Santa Cruz

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October 31, 2005

In the eighteenth century, a Borgia heiress contacted the Jesuits about making a gift to found three new missions. Asked for her geographical preference, she instructed the Jesuits to establish them “in the most outlandish place in the world.” The Jesuits used their atlases to determine an answer: “The most outlandish place in all the world is California.”¹ The result was three new missions in Baja California.

The traditional historiography of the early-modern² Jesuits has relied on the order's perceived centralization in order to treat the various missions in a decentralized fashion. Under the assumption that the impressive normative documents of the Society led immediately to a system of regional missions directed effectively from Rome, historians have too often been content to write local studies about what they assume to be a global phenomenon. By contesting

I am obliged for the suggestions and encouragement of the University of California World History Multi-Campus Research Group, especially Randolph Head and my two anonymous readers, who offered me leads I will pursue far beyond the bounds of this present paper.

Abbreviations

AHPMCJ	Archivo Histórico de la Provincia Mexicana de la Compañía de Jesús, México
ARSI	Archivum Romanum Societatis Jesu, Rome [Archivio Antico]
	Epp. NN. Epistolae Nostrorum
	FG. “Fondo Gesuitico,” section restored in 1924
	JS [JapSin] Provincia Japoniae et vice provincia Sinensis
BA/JA	Biblioteca da Ajuda, Lisbon, Jesuítas na Asia collection
BHStA	Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Munich
	Jes. section Jesuitica
BStB	Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich
	CLM Codd. MSS. latinor.
WB	<i>Welt-Bott</i> (Augsburg and Vienne, 1728-1761).

¹ Bolton offers neither a source nor the original word he translates as “outlandish.” Herbert Eugene Bolton, *Rim of Christendom: A Biography of Eusebio Francisco Kino, Pacific Coast Pioneer* (New York: Macmillan, 1936), p. 594.

² Breaking with common usage, I hyphenate attributive instances of “early-modern” in order to signify a self-sufficient period with distinctive characteristics. The “early-modern world” could have existed without a modern world, whereas the “early modern world” assumes the subsequent existence of a late modern world. For further discussion that classifies historiographical approaches to the period as deductive or inductive—which broadly correspond to “early modern” and “early-modern,” respectively, see Luke Clossey, “Early Modern World,” in *Berkshire Encyclopedia of World History* (Great Barrington, MA: Berkshire, 2005), pp. 592-98.

the Society's seamless centralization, this project argues for the importance of tracing non-normative, horizontal connections between regional missions with the ultimate goal of a natural global history of the Jesuit institution. In fact, the vast distances separating the missions led to logistical problems of transportation and communication incompatible with the idealized view of the Society of Jesus as a tightly centralized and smoothly running military machine. In this paper I first give suggestive evidence about the variety of connections unmediated by Rome that sprung up between the missions in Germany, Mexico, and China, touching in particular on missionaries, funding, and the flow of information and relics. I then use the existence of this world-spanning network to initiate a discussion of how to frame global phenomena historiographically.

1. Missionaries

The key, of course, was the missionaries themselves. A frenzied enthusiasm for working in the overseas mission developed among German Jesuits in the sixteenth and, especially, seventeenth centuries. This enthusiasm found expression in many ways: the Jesuit poet Friedrich Spee, for example, wrote a hymn celebrating Francis Xavier.³ More revealing are the hundreds of requests made to Rome for an overseas mission posting. One German wrote the Jesuit general using his own blood, while another applied fourteen times over twenty-one years.⁴

³"Poëtisch gesang von dem H. Francisco Xauier der geselschafft IESV, als er in Jappon schiffen wolte." This work would later be dear to the Romantics, especially Friedrich Schlegel and Clemens Brentano. Spee's working draft, now called the "Straßburger Autograph" (Bibl. Nat. et Univ. Strasbourg, Sign. Ms 2328. L. germ. 353), and an additional 1634 manuscript (Stadtbibliothek Trier, Sign. Hs 1118/2283 8°) also survive.

⁴Anton Huonder, *Deutsche Jesuitenmissionäre des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts: Ein Beitrag zur Missionsgeschichte und zur deutschen Biographie* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder'sche

Nevertheless, there was continuous resistance to Germans going abroad. The papacy had awarded responsibility for the Mexico mission to the Spanish crown and for the China mission to the Portuguese crown. Portugal had relatively little control over the China mission; its resistance was generally limited to feeble observations that the German missionaries would be needed more in Greenland than in China. Mexico, however, was a colony of Spain, and the crown was able to restrict the number of non-Iberians to a small portion (usually about a quarter) of actual missionary expeditions.

There was also resistance on the German side. When the rector of the Jesuit college in Ingolstadt heard that German missionaries were going abroad, he protested: "Why travel so far away? The time is near when we in Germany will have our own Indies, and the number of workers will not suffice."⁵ The situation changed by the middle of the seventeenth century. Around 1670, there were 6601 German Jesuits, well more than in all the Spanish and Italian provinces combined.⁶ Germany could afford to export missionaries, and forty-two German Jesuits left for China or Mexico during the seventeenth century.

As one would expect, there was no corresponding movement of missionaries from China and Mexico into Germany. The China mission, however, did send mission procurators to Germany to assist in recruitment and to solicit financial support.

Meanwhile, only one Mexican Jesuit worked in China during the 17th century. Didace Barreto was born in Mexico of a Spanish father, joined the

Verlagshandlung, 1899), pp. 11-12.

⁵Franz Hattler, *Der ehrwürdige Pater Jakob Rem aus der Gesellschaft Jesu und seine Marienconferenz* (Regensburg: Manz, 1881), p. 184.

⁶Felix Alfred Plattner, *Deutsche Meister des Barock in Südamerika im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert* (Freiburg: Herder, 1960), p. 17.

Society around 1636 in China, and for about seven years served as brother coadjutor at Nanjing. He was released from his vows around 1645 to enter the service of the Manchus as a soldier.⁷ In addition, the Belgian Jesuit Pedro Van Hamme was transferred to the China mission after a two-year tenure in Mexico. God called him to China, the Jesuit explained, because he did not deserve the glory of a Mexican martyrdom.⁸

2. Funds

Although the Spanish crown effectively supported missionaries in Mexico, the Portuguese were hopelessly derelict in their fiscal responsibilities. As one popular saying had it, royal payments arrived "*tarde, mal, e nunca*" (either "late, in part, or never").⁹ Sometimes Jesuits even had to bail out colonial officers by issuing loans to pay soldiers or to bribe native rulers. Consequently, the China mission solicited German funds to fill such gaps. The principal benefactors were the dukes of Bavaria, who established an annual donation of five hundred florins in 1616.¹⁰ Payments continued into the eighteenth century, with intermittent

⁷Louis Pfister, *Notices biographiques et bibliographiques sur les Jésuites de l'ancienne mission de Chine. 1552-1773* (Wiesbaden: Kraus, 1971), p. 295. Pfister suggests that "Nova Hispania" is the Philippines, but I see no evidence to support this.

⁸"Dios me llamó de ahí y me envió a China, porque no era digno de una muerte tan gloriosa y para ayudar a muchas otras almas y hacer a mis amigos partícipes de mis méritos." Van Hamme, from China, printed in Constant-Philippe Serrure, ed., *Het leven van Pater Petrus Thomas van Hamme, missionaris in Mexico en in China (1651-1727)* (Gent: C. Annoot-Braeckman, 1871), pp. 100-101; Luis González Rodríguez, "Un cronista flamenco de la Tarahumara en 1688: Petrus Thomas van Hamme," *Estudios de historia novohispana* 3 (1970): pp. 131-35, 146.

⁹Charles R. Boxer, *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire, 1600-1800* (London: Hutchison, 1965), p. 77.

¹⁰Heinz Dollinger, *Studien zur Finanzreform Maximilian I. von Bayern: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Frühabsolutismus*, Schriftenreihe der Historischen Kommission bei der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 8 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck u. Ruprecht, 1968), p. 443; Alfons Vöth, *Johann Adam Schall von Bell, S.J.* (Nettetal: Steyler, 1991), pp. 34-35; Hermann Schneller, "Bayerische Legate für die Jesuitenmissionen in China," *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft* 4 (1914), pp. 177-79; Georg Leidinger, "Herzog Wilhelm V. von Bayern und die Jesuitenmissionen in China," in *Forschungen zur Geschichte Bayerns* 12 (1904), pp. 171-75.

interruption by plague, the Thirty Year's War, or the *Hofkammerrat's* objections to sending money so far away.¹¹ Other German nobles, especially the prince-bishops, also made donations. Long-term funding from the Hapsburgs began in 1654, when Ferdinand III contributed 1000 gulden per year, drawn from a tax on Bohemian beer.¹²

Surprisingly, financial support also came to China from Mexico. In the 1690s the Mexican Jesuit province, at the request of the China vice-province's procurator, donated 400,000 reis.¹³ From 1707 to 1725, the Mexican Marquis de Villapiente donated considerable amounts for missions around the world, but especially for those in China.¹⁴ His correspondence offers a clear picture of what a mission benefactor expected in return: In one letter, the Marquis remarked, conversationally, that his donations to Asia would continue in the future on the condition that he receive news of missionary success. Information was at a premium. Most importantly, the Marquis asked that he be remembered in the missionaries' masses; after his pointed hints were heard, he also gratefully received a relic of St. Francis Xavier.¹⁵

¹¹December[?]12, 16[5?]6, BHStA 588, pp. 30-31.

¹²"De Caesarea Clementia," September 9, 1654, ARSI FG 722/17.

¹³"Contas da v. prov.^a começada ao 1º de julho de 1690 athe fim de julho de 1691" in ARSI, JapSin, 23, fols. 170-71. See Dauril Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise, The Society of Jesus in Portugal, Its Empire, and Beyond, 1540-1750* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 644.

¹⁴"Transsumptum Contractus initi de fundatione a D Marchione de Villapiente," Mexico, February 15, 1707, ARSI F G 722/17; Andres Licardi, Mexico, to the P. Provincial of Japan, February 18, 1723, BA/JA/49-V-28 fol. 64v; Marquez de Villa Puente, Mexico, to the Provincial of Japan, March 20, 1724, BA/JA/49-V-28, fols. 94r-95v, at 94v and at 95r-95v; Augustin Soler, Mexico, to the P Provincial of Japan Joseph Pires, March 9, 1725, BA/JA/49-V-28, fols. 209v-210v; Marquez de Villa Puente, Mexico, to the P Provincial of Japan Joseph Pires, March 24, 1725, BA/JA/49-V-28, fol. 208v.

¹⁵Andres Licardi, Mexico, to the P. Provincial of Japan, February 18, 1723, BA/JA/49-V-28, fol. 64v; Marquez de Villa Puente, Mexico, to the P Provincial of Japan Joseph Pires, March 24, 1725, BA/JA/49-V-28, fol. 209r; Augustin Soler, Mexico, to the P. Provincial of Japan Joseph Pires, March 9, 1725, BA/JA/49-V-28, fol. 210r; Marquez de la Villa Puente, Mexico, to the P. Provincial of Japan Joseph Pires, March 20, 1724, BA/JA/49-V-28, fol. 95v.

3. Information

One of the most valuable commodities to crisscross this Jesuit network, therefore, was information. It was also the most fragile, and it rarely arrived intact. While by the end of the Seven Years' War a humbled Spain had actually lost Havana and Manila to the English, her loyal missionaries in Sonora celebrated a victorious Spain's destruction of London.¹⁶ Thank-you letters were crucial to encouraging donors. One reported: "this year your gift bought eternal life for 1,789 children."¹⁷ Scientific information was so regularly exchanged between Germany and China that Leibniz joked with the Electress of Brandenburg that he was putting a "Post Office for China" sign above his door.¹⁸ Letters also served recruitment purposes: a German missionary in Baja California urged Jesuits from his homeland to join him, pointing out the similarity between the German and California climates.¹⁹

What little survives of the Mexico-China correspondence shows an amicable competition in saving souls and erecting edifices. This exchange was subject to interminable delay, however. It took over three years without a

¹⁶Bernd Hausberger, *Jesuiten aus Mitteleuropa im kolonialen Mexiko: Eine Bio-Bibliographie*, Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur der Iberischen und Iberoamerikanischen Länder 2 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1995), pp. 81-82.

¹⁷"... allein dieses Jahr, eintausend siebenhundert neun und achtzig Kindern das ewige Leben erkauffet haben." WB 648, 100.x.

¹⁸"Je feray donc mettre une affiche à ma porte avec ces mots: *bureau d'adresse pour la Chine*, à fin que chacun sçache qu'on n'a qu'à adresser à moy pour en apprendre des nouvelles." December 14, 1697, Onno Klopp, ed., *Die Werke von Leibniz gemäß seinem handschriftlichen Nachlasse in der königlichen Bibliothek zu Hannover* (Hannover: Klindworth, 1864-84), X: 42.

¹⁹"Clima in aliquibus est calidum, in aliis frigidum, eiusdem ferme temperamenti quam in Germania. Ad has aptissimi sunt Germani ad rigoris et aëris inclementiam assueti, vnde eo miserunt ad novas missiones Tauromares dictas uersus septentrionem P. Joannem Ratkai et P. Josephum Neuman mense Novembri." Mancker, "Schreiben. . .", 37, in WB Nr. 30 [vol.1, pp. 85-90].

response before one correspondent expressed his concern that his interlocutor was dead.²⁰

4. Spiritual Exchanges

Relics were necessary when missionaries established new churches; fortunately, many became available as they were evacuated from European areas won over by Protestants. Numerous martyrdoms abroad, moreover, allowed relics to flow back towards Europe as well. Wilhelm V of Bavaria hoped for the head of a martyr, and although the China mission had not suffered enough persecutions, they were able to procure one for him from Japan.²¹ They also sent the duke's daughter Magdalena the rib of a young martyred Japanese girl, with whom she shared a name.²² By around 1750, pieces of Francis Xavier's arm bone were in the Michaelskirche in Munich, with the inscription, "120,000 baptized."²³

Another exchanged good, ubiquitous in Jesuit correspondence, consisted of many requests for prayers and masses, either from missionaries to their home provinces, or on behalf of a patron. A particularly generous gift could lead to Jesuit provinces around the world praying and performing masses for the donor.²⁴ Prayers for missionaries could be both for the safety of the soul and for

²⁰"Si V R^a tuuo noticia en que estado se halla la Christiandad dela Gran China, estimaré muy mucho mela comunique V R^a porque ya tres años que no recibo carta de mis corresponsales el P P^o Van Hame y P. Engelberto Frideli, quiza le havrán muerto." Kappus, Bacanora, to the P. Proc. Gen. Juan de San Martín, January 24, 1716, AHPMCJ México, Nr. 1712.

²¹"Pater Hieronymus Rodericus Societatis Iesu Vistator Provinciae Japonensis, et Sinensis missionis omnibus has inspecutris salutem in Domino," February 9, 1620, BStB CLM 27323, fol. 7r; Trigault, Macao, to Wilhelm, February 2, 1620, BStB CLM 27323, fol. 2r.

²²Georg Leidinger, "Herzog Wilhelm V. von Bayern und die Jesuitenmissionen in China," in *Forschungen zur Geschichte Bayerns* 12 (1904), p. 174.

²³Peter Steiner, "Der erhaltene Kirchenschatz von St. Michael," in *St. Michael in München: Festschrift zum 400. Jahrestag der Grundsteinlegung und zum Abschluß des Weideraufbaus*, ed. Karl Wagner and Albert Keller (Munich: Schnell & Steiner, 1983), pp. 158 (ill) and 159.

²⁴De Noyelle, Rome, to Ferdiand, September 19, 1682, ARSI Epp. NN. 7 (Epistolae Generalium ad externos) ff. 604v-605v.

the safety of the body—highly relevant because of the dangers of the missions. Indeed, most German missionaries leaving for China in the seventeenth century never arrived. The requests for prayers ran along almost every branch of the Jesuit network. The China missions requested prayers from Europe and even from America.²⁵ Kino sent geographical data to the superior of the German province, and added that he commended himself to the masses of “my sweetest mother the Upper German province.”²⁶

Taken collectively this evidence gives some sense of the nature of the early-modern Jesuit networks. Few of these exchanges amounted to much in terms of substance or significance, but their mere existence indicates that a new sort of religious institution was developing. What, then, is the best way that a historian can approach a world-spanning religious body?

Framing Global Phenomena

The original inspiration for this research came from world-systems analysis. Traditional accounts of the Jesuit missions devote discrete chapters to each region, without showing how they all fit together. Reading economic history encouraged me to look for connections among these regional missions. Immanuel Wallerstein himself, however, has been skeptical of the incautious application of such concepts to non-economic phenomena. The distinction between core and periphery, he feels, is nonsensical when applied to a context lacking the “endless accumulation of capital.”²⁷

²⁵“Con las oraciones y ayudas espirituales que de todos los fieles y siervos de nuestro señor que au en estos Catholicos y cristianissimos Reynos de nuestra Europa e America.” RAH Cortes 566, no. 27, “Triumphos, Coronas, Tropheos,” fol. 489r.

²⁶“R.V.^{ae} Missæ Sacrificijs ac dulcissimæ Matri meæ Prov.^{ae} Germaniæ Superioris demississime comendo.” Kino, Dolores, to the P. Prov. of the Upper German Province, May 14, 1701, SBB PK, Ms. lat., fol. 640, fol. 52v.

²⁷He calls this the “nomothetic temptation” and finds Chase-Dunn and Hall seduced by it.

That world-systems ideas can nevertheless be applied usefully beyond the economic sphere is suggested by several historians' recent attempts to include information and ideology as "tradable" items. Christopher Chase-Dunn and Thomas Hall have explicitly added an "information" level to their world-system.²⁸ George Modelski and William R. Thompson have considered the cultural angle, and William H. McNeill explicitly mentions missionaries as key to communications networks.²⁹

The most highly developed precedent for applying world-systems analysis to the religious rather than the material world has been the case of Islam.³⁰ Robert Irwin's survey chapter, for example, speaks of an "Islamic World System," though without addressing theoretical concerns explicitly.³¹ Alice Willard has argued for Islam as an important motivation for trans-Saharan trade, though her more substantial evidence shows that Islam served more as a stumbling block than as a facilitator of long-distance exchanges.³² The most thorough exploration comes from John O. Voll, who presents Islam (ca. 1000-

Immanuel Wallerstein, "Hold the Tiller Firm: On Method and the Unit of Analysis," in *Civilizations and World Systems. Studying World-Historical Change*, ed. Stephen S. Sanderson (Walnut Creek, Calif.: Altamira, 1995), pp. 239-47.

²⁸Stephen K. Sanderson and Thomas D. Hall, "Civilizations and World Systems: Dialogue and Interplay," in Sanderson, ed., *Civilizations and World Systems*, p. 231.

²⁹Forward by William H. McNeill in *The World System: Five Hundred Years or Five Thousand?*, ed. A. G. Frank and B. K. Gills (London: Routledge, 1993), p. xii; George Modelski and William R. Thompson, *Leading Sectors and World Powers: The Coevolution of Global Politics and Economics* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1995), p. 3.

³⁰For a creative political-economy approach to the Islamic world, posed as an alternative to a strategy and perspective informed by modernization theory, see Peter Gran, "Political Economy as a Paradigm for the Study of Islamic History," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 11 (1980), pp. 511-26.

³¹Robert Irwin, "The Emergence of the Islamic World System 1000-1500" in *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Islamic World*, ed. Francis Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 32-61.

³²She offers examples both general (such as doctrinal divisions between Sunnism, Sufism, and "a popularized form of Sufism" or the tendencies of local rulers) and specific (such as the Timbuktu 'ulamā's role in obstructing the empire building of Sonni 'Ali in the late fifteenth century). Alice Willard, "Gold, Islam, and Camels: The Transformative Effects of Trade and Ideology," *Comparative Civilizations Review* 28 (1993): pp. 80-105, here 95-97.

1800) as a special world-system, a “community of discourse” “identified by a distinctive set of sociomoral symbols for the definition of proper human relationships.” After the Mongol conquest of Baghdad, Islam lacked the political unity of a world-empire, yet its geographical expansion suggests it was not a disintegrating world-economy. Because of this extended reach, stretching from Sub-Saharan Africa to Bosnia to Manila, Islam became an “intercivilizational entity, not an autonomous ‘civilization.’”³³ Voll considers the Islamic world in terms of Wallerstein’s “social system . . . that has boundaries, structures, member groups, rules of legitimation, and coherence.”³⁴ He finds Islam’s essential identity and cohesion, however, not in material forces but in “the shared sources of the Islamic experience, which provide the basis for mutually intelligible discourse among all who identify themselves as Muslims within the Dar al-Islam.”³⁵

Could early-modern Catholicism also be a special world-system, perhaps a 'world church'? Arising in the late fifteenth century, the European world-economy “was not an empire yet it was as spacious as a grand empire and shared some features with it.”³⁶ Like Wallerstein’s world-economy, a world-church would be “larger than any juridically-defined political unit.” While the basic linkage between parts of the world-economy is economic, reinforced by cultural links, the basic linkage of the world-church would be cultural, specifically religious, and reinforced by economic links.

³³John Obert Voll, “Islam as a Special World-System,” *Journal of World History* 5 (1994), pp. 220, 217. For a globalization-theory approach to Islam see, Amira K. Bennison, “Muslim Universalism and Western Globalization,” in *Globalization in World History*, ed. A. G. Hopkins (London: Pimlico, 2002), pp. 74-97.

³⁴Quoted in Voll, p. 218.

³⁵Voll, p. 219.

³⁶Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (San Diego: Academic Press, 1974), p. 15.

Proposing an early-modern Catholic “world church” naturally raises many questions about its homologies with the “world system.” What was the missionary counterpart to the “ceaseless accumulation of capital”? To win souls was the goal, the prime motive force, and global religion pushed their acquisition beyond the perspective of local spiritual “economies.” Just as capital is used to acquire more capital, so too can converts themselves become missionaries and win even more converts.

We can also attempt to describe a division of the world church’s regions into core, semiperiphery, and periphery. The core area provided missionaries, direction, and financial support. The periphery’s salient feature was large numbers of potential converts. The mission semiperiphery must be treated differently from the economic semiperiphery, however. Whereas the world-economic semiperiphery actually displayed attributes of both core and periphery, the world-church semiperiphery might be characterized by its distinction of core from periphery as a matter of perspective. From Madrid, Mexico looked like a periphery; from Manila, it looked like a core. Indeed, making analytical identifications relative to location might be just as useful for identifying cores and peripheries as for the semiperiphery. In any case, not all missions took place in what we here call “peripheral” regions: interior missions brought the peripheral into the center. Membership in the core of the world-economy, after all, did not imply membership in the core of the world-church. In fact, the following table suggests a negative correlation, worthy of further exploration.

Two points must be underlined. First is the place of the Protestants. Does Holland belong to a Christian core, or should such a model assume that there

were two (or more) world churches? The second is to reiterate the gross simplification such assignments rest on. One might characterize Mexico as periphery and Italy as core, but in many ways Mexico City was far more central to the seventeenth-century Catholic church than were the wilds of Calabria.

World-Economy and the "World Church," ca. 1650

Region	World-Economy status ³⁷	World church status
England	Core	Periphery
Holland	Core	Periphery
N. France	Core	Semiperiphery?
S. France	Semiperiphery	Semiperiphery?
Italy	Semiperiphery	Core
Spain	Semiperiphery	Core
Portugal	Semiperiphery	Core
Germany	Semiperiphery?	Semiperiphery
E. Europe	Periphery	Periphery?
Mexico	Periphery	Semiperiphery?
China	External arena	Periphery

One key structural difference between world-systems and world churches lies in the fact that the world church was hardier than Wallerstein's world system. It could stretch its tendrils to span gaps innocent of the voluminous trade in non-luxury goods that characterized world-economic links. A single missionary could act as a beachhead for the world-church.³⁸ Taking the parallel further, the economic debates about modernization have clear analogues in the mission experience. Under what conditions could the peripheral areas targeted by missionaries themselves become core? This issue appears in numerous contemporary debates, from the rights of royal patronage vis-à-vis Rome to the possibility of an indigenous clergy. In fact, the absence of any clear-cut tension

³⁷Based on Wallerstein, "Rise," 407, and Stephen K. Sanderson and Thomas D. Hall, "World System Approaches to World-Historical Change," in Sanderson, ed., *Civilizations and World System*, p. 99.

³⁸Some proponents of world-systems suggest trade in luxury goods as possible sufficient criteria for inclusion in a world system, but even this concession does not match the flexibility of the world church.

between Rome and the peripheral missions emphasizes the importance of Lisbon and Madrid, as well as the complexity of the entire system. The papacy, in fact, typically championed native clergy.

The model of a world church I am developing here not only draws its theoretical inspiration from the world system, but also stands in clear causal relation to it. The world church certainly derived its potential for change in part from the ups and downs of the world economy. According to Wallerstein, Kondratieff cycles and hegemony cycles determine the chronology of the world-economy.³⁹ A world church might well also have felt the effects of Kondratieff cycles, if these existed. The hegemony cycles of the world-economy certainly played a role: Holland's period of dominance from 1625-1673 had devastating ramifications for the Portuguese missions in Asia.

This world church was perhaps never dominated by a single nation-state the way Wallerstein claims the Dutch, English, and Americans dominated the world-economy at various times. Certainly there were struggles between, and ascendant periods for, Rome, Spain, Portugal, and France. If hegemony ever was obtained, however, it was also qualified by the existence of horizontal connections, such those demonstrated by Mexican funds going to China. Alternatively, if we take the world church to include Protestant and Orthodox Christians as well, then a pronounced period of Catholic hegemony throughout the early-modern era does emerge, especially outside Europe.

The advantage of this kind of intellectual exercise is that it forces the historian to approach early-modern Catholicism from a truly world-historical

³⁹Kondratieff's own data rarely extends even back into the eighteenth century. See, for example, Nikolai Kondratieff, *The Long Wave Cycle* (New York: Richardson and Snyder, 1984), p. 101.

perspective. The difficulties in translating this mode of analysis beyond a purely economic sphere are suggested by the tentative way I have attempted to describe a cultural “world church.” In conclusion, therefore, I suggest two other possible frames, both more adaptable to religious phenomena than world-systems analysis: institutional world history and globalization.

In a 1996 article in the *Journal of World History* Lauren Benton proposed “institutional world history” as a path between two perspectives, each with their own strengths and flaws. “While Wallerstein overemphasizes the determinacy of larger structure,” Benton explains, “institutional analysis illuminates the dynamics of change internal to states and regions but leaves the system’s global structure out of focus.” In both of these “culture is represented as the medium of localities, a force that resides at the microscale.” In contrast, under Benton’s scheme global institutions would “include patterned interactions (not limited to exchange relations or formal organizations).” These are institutions that “themselves constitute elements of global structure.” Institutional world history thus reconnects global with local forces, and culture with economy.⁴⁰ In addition to Benton's own scholarship, Dauril Alden’s *The Making of an Enterprise* exemplifies this approach. That magisterial volume, immensely helpful to this research project, looks at the Jesuits’ Portuguese assistancy, an organizational unit that circled the world with the Portuguese empire.

My second alternative, globalization theory, at first looks even less promising as a way to approach the early Jesuit missionary network. First, globalization is often seen as a purely contemporary phenomenon; scholars have

⁴⁰Lauren Benton, “From the World-Systems Perspective to Institutional World History: Culture and Economy in Global Theory,” *Journal of World History* 7 (1996), pp. 261-95.

so drastically foreshortened it that it appears ahistorical at best and eschatological at worst.⁴¹ Only recently have historians seriously explored its historical roots.⁴² Even when historians find the origins of globalization in the early-modern world, moreover, they consider it in primarily economic terms.⁴³ If we push globalization not only back in time, but also out of a narrowly economic conceptualization, the Jesuit missionaries might be seen as agents of an early, religious form of globalization—the “golden age” of world Christianization.

Still, globalization appears to be a potentially useful organizing concept because it is not strictly married to economics, and because it already has a heuristic foil in religious studies—local religion. In recent years, the idea of local religion as an alternative to normative and universal religious practices has commanded considerable attention, perhaps most prominently through William Christian’s *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain*.⁴⁴ Especially in the minds of missionaries, however, the global often usurped the primacy of Christian’s local. Even if all religious customs are, as Christian suggests, “tied to a specific place,” global religion introduces some measure of distance between subject and practice, between observer and observed, or merely between coreligionists. Many of the global religious do think locally, but in terms of multiple, far-flung

⁴¹See A. G. Hopkins, “The History of Globalization—and the Globalization of History?” in A. G. Hopkins, ed., *Globalization in World History* (London: Pimlico, 2002), pp. 11-46; Mittelman, James H. “What is Critical Globalization Studies?” *International Studies Perspectives* 5, 3 (2004), pp. 219-230.

⁴²Ivan Strenski, “The Religion in Globalization,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 72.3 (2004), pp. 631-52.

⁴³See Dennis O. Flynn and Arturo Giráldez, “Path dependence, time lags and the birth of globalisation: A critique of O’Rourke and Williamson,” *European Review of Economic History* 8 (2004), pp. 81-108.

⁴⁴William A. Christian, Jr., *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981). See also Terrence Ranger, “The Local and the Global in Southern African Religious History,” *Conversion to Christianity: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives on a Great Transformation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 65-98.

locales: their homes, their patron's homes, Rome, their current workplaces. As a result, every place they have been to or heard of offered potential locales and local religions from which the missionaries could draw.

It is no easy thing to conclude so exploratory an essay. When drafting this paragraph I was grateful to be interrupted by a student looking for advice on graduate programs. With him (mostly) guiding the discussion's steering wheel, while I worked the gas pedal, we ended up parked overlooking a possible research area: the Baha'i faith as global phenomenon (famously, only Christianity is more widespread). The truer conclusion to this essay may eventually be the first paragraph of his dissertation, though seven years may seem a long wait for such an important result.

We are now witnessing first contacts between the new world history and religious studies, both fields with much to offer each other. It is far from clear whether the dominant theoretical approach will be an adaptation such as those presented here, or if the theory will remain implicit, or if religion as a new subject of global studies will demand some new scholarly apparatus. I hope the next years see scholarship so innovative that these early attempts to grapple with global religion look primitive, though not premature. May their many shortcomings, as well as any strengths, inspire scholars to improve upon them.