



UNIVERSALITAS & PERVASIVITAS

il costituirsi e diffondersi della S.J. e suoi echi (1540 - 1773)

di A. Pisani

Schede di approfondimento di argomenti generali

PADROADO

Padroado Jurisdiction

Pope **Alexander VI** in 1493 divided the newly discovered world and entrusted the western region to Spain and the eastern region to Portugal for missionary activities. By a papal decree of 1497 the whole East was placed under the diocese of Lisbon.

A new era dawned on the religious horizon in India, by the discovery in 1498 of a new sea-route by the Portuguese Admiral **Vasco de Gama**. De Gama was followed by missionary priests, both secular and Franciscan. In 1500 they set up an Oratory in Calicut and began evangelisation. A fortress was built in Cochin in 1505, and it became the seat of the Portuguese Viceroy from 1505 to 1530 when it was shifted to Goa. In 1534 Goa became a suffragan see of the Funchal Archdiocese in the Madeira Island under the jurisdiction of *Padroado*.

The setting up of Goa as a diocese in 1534 with India and the other East Asian regions as its territory was the first step towards an autonomous Latin Church in India under the *Padroado*. This status received fuller expression in 1558 when Goa was raised to an archdiocese with Cochin (comprising the Dravidian South and Bengal) and Malacca as suffragan sees. Mylapur was added to these in 1606.

Goa's jurisdiction extended from the cape of Good Hope as far as China. All these were under the *Padroado* of the king of Portugal, which carried with it obligations and privileges. Among the privileges was the right to present to the Pope candidates for these sees.

The Portuguese came with a clear purpose of conquering the world for their "God, and King". With the capture of Goa in 1510, their cultural aggression also became decisive.

Having inherited the gloomy ideas of the Middle Ages about the non-Christian world that it was all under the sway of Satan to be conquered and converted to the Church, the only "saving boat", the "only citadel of salvation", they thought it was their mission to convert as many as possible and as quickly as possible. They ordered that all Hindus in their territory should become Christians. Or else,





UNIVERSALITAS & PERVASIVITAS

il costituirsi e diffondersi della S.J. e suoi echi (1540 - 1773)

di A. Pisani

Schede di approfondimento di argomenti generali

they should vacate their place. Temples were closed and their properties were confiscated. Conversions were forced. Gospel preaching was made compulsory.

When the slaves of Muslims or Hindus became Christians, their masters were obliged to sell them to Christians for a suitable sum. Official positions in India were to be given to Christians, and definitely, not to Brahmins. Christian converts in Goa enjoyed the same privileges as the Portuguese. The construction of temples, the worship of idols, and the practice of non-Christian ceremonies were strictly forbidden. Those who tried to hinder the conversion of others were given severe punishment. Banishment from Goa of Brahmins, who were considered harmful, was quite common.

The Latin Christian communities emerged from the 16th century onwards, initially along the coastal region, in and around the Portuguese trade centers and forts and in the Portuguese enclaves. It was with the **De Nobili** Movement that Christianity reached the interior. We shall discuss about this very soon.

The autonomy and the Indianness of the Latin Church in India were necessarily compromised first by the fact that the *Padroado* Christianity was built up with the protection of Portugal, the colonial power, and secondly by the fact that the Christians particularly in Portuguese enclaves, lived a privileged life. The Christian community was more equal than the other - Hindu and Muslim - communities.

During the 16th century, Christianity made great progress in the Portuguese trade centers and inside the Portuguese enclaves. But Christianity had made hardly any contact with the more respectable classes of the Hindus, especially outside Portuguese territories. Christianity presented itself as the religion of the "Parangis", the term used to denote the Portuguese in India. It was not a complementary term; it suggested meat-eating, wine-drinking, loose-living, arrogant persons whose manners were so far removed from Indian propriety that social intercourse with them was unthinkable. In a report sent to Rome in 1613, Fr. Robert de Nobili, an Italian Jesuit, wrote that the Portuguese not only endeavored to Christianize the Indians, but they tried to Latinize them. They wanted them to wear the same dress as theirs, and they often insisted that they should eat meat, which was abhorrent to the Indians.

Cutting off all the cultural ties of the converts was considered the best guarantee of the genuineness of their conversions. That is why while they christened the natives, they gave them Portuguese surnames, gave them a dress of European fashion, and forbade the wearing of Indian dress. Also, they taught them western eating habits, made them drink liquor, eat beef. They considered Latin as the sole language of the Church. Even if the natives wanted to use their own language - Konkani - they could do so only in Roman letters and not in *Devanagari* script. The Viceroy of Goa suppressed the Konkani language in Goa on June 27, 1684.

In those places where the Portuguese did not have direct control, but only their influence, they were more flexible in their approach. For instance, when the fishermen community of the East Coast became Christians they did not interfere with their traditional way of living except that fishing was forbidden on Sundays. However, their flexibility in approach was more out of practical diplomacy rather than a genuine appreciation of Indian culture. This is evident from the attitude they showed towards the ancient Christians of the Malabar Coast. With a basic conviction that the Western form of Christianity was alone perfect they tried to show that the Oriental Christianity was imperfect solely because of its divergence from the Western rites.

The achievement of **St. Francis Xavier**, who came to India in 1542 as a missionary, was phenomenal. Yet it must be admitted that he knew very little about the genius and wealth of the



BIBLIOTECA UNIVERSITARIA DI GENOVA – PERCORSI TEMATICI

UNIVERSALITAS & PERVASIVITAS

il costituirsi e diffondersi della S.J. e suoi echi (1540 - 1773)

di A. Pisani

Schede di approfondimento di argomenti generali

Indian culture. He even relied greatly on the power of the civil arm, and favored the Inquisition to promote faith. If this was the case with Xavier, it was worse with many who followed him.

The Inquisition for India was established in Goa in 1560. Many people were burned alive. The Christian God, in whose name these were done, was considered by many as a punitive God of vengeance and wrath. Only in 1812 was the inquisition abolished, and all religious cults allowed to enjoy equal toleration.

De Nobili Movement

It is remarkable to note that, in spite of the general trend of the period, certain western missionaries developed an appreciative response to Indian culture. **Fr. Stephen Thomas** (1549-1619), an English Jesuit was perhaps the first of such missionaries. He not only quickly learned Konkani, but also mastered it to such an extent that he composed a grammar and a manual of Christian doctrine in Konkani. Besides, he mastered Sanskrit and Marathi, and became a pioneer in the creation of Christian literature in Marathi. His **Krista Purana**, in the words of K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, "is more than a tour de force. It is a high poetic achievement that opens new vistas on the landscape of the spirit and demonstrates the singular flexibility of the modern evolved Indian languages to meet the impact of new themes and inspirations.

A greater luminary in the field of appreciative adaptation of Indian Culture was an Italian Jesuit, Robert de Nobili (1577-1656). He pointed out to his superiors that the "religious" faith should not be confused with "civil" customs. To be Christian does not imply to eat beef, to drink wine, to wear sandals made of leather, and as such become outcasts in Indian society. So he decided to live separately. He adopted the saffron dress and wooden clogs; abstained from meat, fish, eggs and wine; ate only vegetarian food; marked his brow with sandal paste and wore the sacred thread across the breast as the Brahmins did.

He also allowed his converts to retain their cultural mode of living such as marking brows with tilakam, growing a tuft of hair (kudumi), having the ceremonial ablutions. His appreciation of the Hindu style of life was so sincere that he took the trouble of learning Sanskrit, the Vedas and the Vedanta from a notable Pandit of Madurai, Sivadarma. Later, he wrote many treatises on the Christian faith in the Indian philosophical moulds and terms. He even held that there was no sacredness about the Christian names of the western terminology. He translated the Christian names and created Tamil versions of those names.

As a member of the Italian nobility, de Nobili declared himself a member of the raja caste (kshatriya). He was determined to penetrate into the ancient Aryanised Tamil culture of Madurai, the proud citadel of Hinduism in South India, not as a Parangi, but as a Brahmin sanyasi. Nobili set to work studying Tamil, Telugu and Sanskrit, India's cultural languages. Only then was he able to steep himself in the ancient wisdom of the land and to begin explaining, perhaps reformulating, Christianity in terms and thought-patterns more in accordance with the genius of the country.

From the very beginning de Nobili's work met with stiff opposition, both from the Hindus of Madurai and even more so, from the missionaries and many ecclesiastical authorities. But he was supported by his own religious superiors (Jesuits in Rome) and his bishop (Roz of Cranganore). Finally, **Pope Gregory XV** gave his approval to the movement, So it flourished and brought to



UNIVERSALITAS & PERVASIVITAS

il costituirsi e diffondersi della S.J. e suoi echi (1540 - 1773)

di A. Pisani

Schede di approfondimento di argomenti generali

Christianity thousands of high caste as well as low caste Hindus. The movement was later led by such great Tamil scholars as **Constant Beschi**, James de Rossi and others.

But the Church in India was not prepared to accept such bold steps. Most of the missionaries - a few enlightened Jesuits and one or two others were exceptions - were short-sighted and narrow-minded and so the movement was doomed to fail. In the 18th century the opposition hardened. Pressure was brought to bear on the Holy See and its representative to suppress the movement. Step by step Rome succumbed to the pressure, and from time to time the Popes or their representatives issued decrees against the various practices de Nobili had introduced. The death blow was administered by **Pope Benedict XIV** in 1744 by the bull, *Omnium Sollicitudinum*.

Propaganda Jurisdiction

It was on 6 January 1622 that Pope Gregory XV inaugurated the Congregation of Propaganda Fide. It represented in part, one of the last of the series of the follow-up actions of the reform programs of the council of Trent. But more than that, it was the fruit of the realization that the state of missions so far almost completely left under the control of the colonial powers, was not all that satisfactory, though it would be unjust to forget the magnificent work that had been accomplished by the toil and sacrifices of innumerable Spanish and Portuguese missionaries. But the Holy See felt that some urgent reform was needed.

Msgr. Ingoli, the first secretary of the newly established Propaganda Congregation, made three strong critical reports in 1625, 1628 and 1644 on the state of missions and listed no fewer than twelve causes of disorder and abuse. The partition of missionary zones between Spain and Portugal led to some bitter rivalry. Wherever the two nations met, as for example in East Asia, there was open hostility between the Spanish Patronato and the Portuguese *Padroado*. The missions were also tied to the government of kings who claimed rights and privileges that encroached upon the spiritual domain. Spanish and Portuguese missionaries were often regarded by the local people as mere agents of white penetration rather than as harbingers of Christ, so much so that in India conversion was described as "turning Parangi".

One of the steps the Propaganda envisaged to advance the cause of the missions independent of the colonial patronage was to promote indigenous vocations. The clergy who worked under the *Padroado*, even with the de Nobili Movement, were mostly foreigners. In the early decades recruitment of local vocations was not very much encouraged.

Not only were Indians to be promoted to priesthood but ecclesiastical power and responsibility were to be vested in them. The appointment of Indian vicars apostolic was the first step towards that end. So when Propaganda thought of starting an ecclesiastical unit under its full control in India, namely, the vicariate of Idalcan or Bijapur outside the Goan jurisdiction, the Congregation chose Matteo de Castro, a Brahmin Christian of Goa. This first attempt ended in disaster mainly because of opposition from the *Padroado* archbishop/ priests of Goa.

The relations between *Padroado* and the Propaganda became tense during the Matteo de Castro episode and continued to be so for a long time. In 1642 the Portuguese king forbade the entry of non-Portuguese missionaries and, in fact, in 1649 Father **Ephrem O.F.M. Cap.** was subjected to trial of the inquisition for having exercised apostolate in Madras, independently of Goa. In 1652 the Portuguese *cortes* (the general assembly) banned the acceptance of papal documents unless these were officially recognized by the realm. This meant in practice that papal letters appointing vicars apostolic were not to be acknowledged. In 1672 by another order of the *cortes* all the missionaries and bishops who had not passed through Lisbon were banned. Later on, a vow of fidelity to the royal patron was demanded from all missionaries.



UNIVERSALITAS & PERVASIVITAS

il costituirsi e diffondersi della S.J. e suoi echi (1540 - 1773)

di A. Pisani

Schede di approfondimento di argomenti generali

In spite of all these, the newly created vicariate of Idalcan continued to exist and even extended its jurisdiction to Golconda and the Great Mughal. Already in 1716 negotiations between Rome and London had begun with a view to transferring the jurisdiction over Bombay churches from the archbishop of Goa to the vicar apostolic.

The final decision was made in May 1720. The Portuguese priests were expelled from the city by the British governor, Charles Boone, and the existing four churches of Bombay were entrusted to the vicar apostolic and the five Carmelite missionaries who arrived soon after on the scene. The Goan priests were allowed to remain, but they had to come under the jurisdiction of the vicar apostolic. This change-over was not in keeping with the hierarchical conception of the *Padroado* and was accepted neither by the archbishop nor by the king.

A good number of the laity and even the priests were unable to reconcile themselves to this breaking off of contacts with the *Padroado*. This was one of the basic causes of some of the difficulties and conflicts, which have been plaguing the vicariate of Bombay from time to time, subsequently. At the end of the 18th century, a sort of "double jurisdiction" came into force in Bombay. The solution pleased no one, and did not remove the cause of unholy rivalries; on the contrary, it helped the laity to get more involved in the controversy. Similar conflicts occurred also in the Canara vicariate (1674 onwards).

The *Padroado*-Rome relations, were at a low ebb in the 19th century under Popes Gregory XVI and Pius IX, when Portugal was dominated by a secular and liberal regime. The *Padroado* interpreted the actions of these pontiffs as being instigated by the Propaganda partisans in India and the Propaganda Congregation in Rome. The Goan clergy and people rose to oppose these moves by Rome. Similar rebellions occurred in other dioceses, like Cochin and Mylapore under the *Padroado*. The rebellion is known, rightly or wrongly as the "Goan/*Padroado* schism". Pius IX by the brief Probe Nostis of 1853 condemned the schism. Though these disputes were subsequently settled through negotiations between the Holy See and Portugal, their repercussions continued to plague the Church in India in certain areas, particularly in Bombay, till the middle of this century. Many in this metropolitan city had to suffer the consequences of these acrimonious quarrels between the subjects of *Padroado* and those of Propaganda.

Indian Hierarchy

The report of the visitation made by **Bishops Bonnard** and Carbonneaux in 1858-60 on Propaganda's efforts is very revealing, though sad. It said: "In the extensive vicariates of Vishakapatnam, Hyderabad, Dacca, Calcutta, Patna and Agra there was not a single Indian priest.

The far-sighted Pope Leo XIII laid the foundations for an Indian Church when he constituted an Indian hierarchy through the promulgation of the Bull *Humanae Salutis* on October 1, 1886. As a result of this Papal Decree, six units were created as Archdioceses (Agra, Bombay, Calcutta Madras, Pondicherry and Verapoly), 10 units were created dioceses (Allahabad, Cochin, Coimbatore, Hyderabad, Krishnagar, Mysore, Pune, Quilon, Tiruchirapalli and Vishakapatnam), and Patna continued to function as a Vicariate. Thus, when the Hierarchy was constituted in 1886 there were 17 ecclesiastical units under Propaganda and two units-the Archdiocese Goa and the diocese of Mylapore-under *Padroado*.

The establishment in 1894 of a national seminary (the papal seminary) at Kandy (in the 1950's it was transferred to Pune) by the same pontiff was an important step towards indigenization of the Indian hierarchy. But, apart from the appointment of a few Goan Brahmins as vicars apostolic in the 17th century, the first Indian to be made head of a Latin Rite diocese was Bishop **Tiburtius Roche** S. J., of Tuticorin in Tamil Nadu in 1923. Since then more and more Indians began to be appointed;



UNIVERSALITAS & PERVASIVITAS

il costituirsi e diffondersi della S.J. e suoi echi (1540 - 1773)

di A. Pisani

Schede di approfondimento di argomenti generali

so too superiors of religious orders. The starting of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India in 1944 and the celebration of the national synod in 1950 were milestones in the process of indigenization. But what really quickened the process was the action of the Indian Government imposing restrictions on the entry of foreign missionaries. The indigenous vocations increased by leaps and bounds, and transfer of power to Indian hands was almost complete within the space of ten to twenty years.

Now there are 98 dioceses including 16 Archdioceses in the Latin Church in India.

Cfr.: *European Missionaries and the Latin Church in India. Padroado Jurisdiction*
<http://berchmans.tripod.com/latin.html>

Il Padroado (in italiano: "patronato") fu un complesso di privilegi accordato dalla Santa Sede al re di Portogallo a partire dal XV secolo. I principali privilegi furono sanciti da due bolle di papa Leone X: la *Dum fidei constantiam* del 4 giugno 1514 e la *Emmanueli Regi Portugalliae illustri* del 12 giugno dello stesso anno. Una situazione simile si ebbe anche per i re di Spagna, a cui nel 1493 papa **Alessandro VI** concesse gli stessi privilegi che in quel momento godevano i sovrani portoghesi.

La Santa Sede delegò ai sovrani l'amministrazione della Chiesa locale. I sovrani ordinarono la costruzione di chiese; e nominarono sacerdoti e vescovi. Così, la struttura del regno di Portogallo ebbe dimensioni religiose e politiche ad un tempo. Con tale trattato, molte delle tipiche attività della Chiesa divennero funzioni di potenti uomini politici. L'Inquisizione fungeva più nel determinare una politica secolare che la propria genuina funzione religiosa. Il Padroado venne modificato nel corso del tempo, ma le sue ultime vestigia non furono soppresse fino al **Concilio Vaticano II**. Per esempio, fino a questo concilio, era il capo di stato portoghese che conferiva la berretta cardinalizia al patriarca di Lisbona.

Nel XVII secolo si ebbe un periodo di crisi del Padroado in seguito alla rottura dei rapporti diplomatici tra Portogallo e Santa Sede, che si protrarrà anche dopo la Restaurazione del 1640.

Anche il pontificato di papa Gregorio XVI coincise con un momento di crisi del Padroado, culminato con il breve *Multa praeclare* del 24 aprile 1838, con cui privava le diocesi indiane soggetto al Padroado di una reale giurisdizione, che passava ai vicariati apostolici sotto il controllo della Santa Sede. La situazione portò alla soppressione di fatto delle tre diocesi di Cochin, di Cranganore e di São Tomé di Meliapore, che ebbe termine solo il 1° settembre 1886 con la bolla *Humanae salutis* di papa Leone XIII, con cui si ristabilirono le diocesi.

Cfr.: Wikipedia - <http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Padroado>