



European  
University  
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DEPARTMENT  
OF HISTORY  
AND  
CIVILIZATION

## The Elephant and the Ass

Jesuit Mission and Political Advice between Europe  
and Mughal India at the Turn of the Seventeenth  
Century

Uroš Emerik Zver

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to  
obtaining the degree of Doctor of History and Civilization  
of the European University Institute

Florence, 28 September 2018



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# Abstract

This thesis explores the history of cross-cultural political advice in India. Specifically, it deals with the encounter between Indo-Persian and Jesuit ideas of kingship at the court of the Mughal emperor at the turn of the seventeenth century.

The main question underlying this work concerns how political ideals were communicated in a globalising world. It takes as its starting point the entangled world of a Spanish Jesuit who was sent to convert the Mughal Emperor of India in 1595 and produced a political manual written in Persian, commissioned by his royal Muslim host. The thesis uses a contextual reading of that manuscript, left untranslated and unexamined for centuries in European libraries, to argue that more than religious rivalry, shared political language shaped the way empires interacted in the early modern period.

Underlying this research is also a critical intervention into questions about scales of historical analysis: how do micro-histories from early-modern empires help fabricate, or turn upside down, our ideas of long-term or wide-scale phenomena such as the gestation of political ideas and ideologies?

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Special thanks go to Professor Chander Shekhar, Head of the Persian Department at Delhi University. My reading of the *Directorio* was made possible by his dedicated help over the course of two extended stays at Delhi University during the winters of 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, as well as several weeks while we were both in Paris in the late spring of 2015.

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Amsterdam, 15 June 2018

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## Introduction: A Parallax View

The Jesuit missions to the Timurid Mughal court of India began in 1580 and flourished between 1595 and 1615 under Jerome Xavier (d. 1617), who headed the third mission at the courts of Akbar (r. 1556-1605) and his successor Jahangir (r.1605-1627). These encounters have been studied as the consummate example of a cultural, and primarily religious, Islamo-Christian confrontation – a collision of two worlds, and the competing interests of their attendant Mughal and Spanish-Portuguese Empires.<sup>1</sup> The encounter’s historical fate has been as it were sealed by the missions’ resounding failure to convert the population, an attempt which began by seeking to persuade the Muslim emperors of the superiority of Biblical divine law, inspired by a profound misreading of Mughal religious eclecticism as a serious interest in apostasy.<sup>2</sup> This failure was compounded by the gradual and irreversible eclipsing of the Portuguese-Spanish imperial fortunes on the subcontinent by the British. The Jesuit role in the missionary and imperial undulations of these two empires and religions, as manifested at the Mughal court in Agra, was often overtly political, with Fathers acting not only as representatives of the Viceroy in Goa but, on other occasions, as envoys of the Mughal Emperor. The political realities of the day, however, also shaped the missionary effort itself; the forms this effort took, and the light it cast on the figure of the missionary as

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<sup>1</sup> For a comprehensive account of the competing interests of the Mughal and Portuguese empires in India see Jorge Flores, *Nas Margens Do Hindustão: O Estado Da Índia e a Expansão Mongol ca. 1570-1640* (Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra / Coimbra University Press, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> On Jesuit misapprehensions and misreadings of Mughal motives see Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Frank Disputations: Catholics and Muslims in the Court of Jahangir (1608-11),” *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 46, no. 4 (2009): 457–511; and more recently Audrey Truschke, “Deceptive Familiarity: European Perceptions of Access at the Mughal Court,” in *The Key to Power? The Culture of Access in Princely Courts, 1400-1750*, ed. Sebastiaan Derks and Dries Raeymaekers, vol. 8, *Rulers & Elites: Comparative Studies in Governance* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016), 65–102; for a broader discussion of the possibility of cross-cultural and inter-imperial (mis)understanding see Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Par-Delà l’incommensurabilité: Pour Une Histoire Connectée Des Empires Aux Temps Modernes,” *Revue d’histoire Moderne et Contemporaine* 54, no. 5 (2007): 34–53.

a member of the courtly elite.

The Jesuits had relied on a wide range of strategies to make the proposition of ruling not as a Muslim, but as a Christian king, as attractive as possible. This famously included the provision of European Christian paintings, whose iconography resonated powerfully with the Mughal emperors' own pretensions to millenarian messianic rule. Mughal fascination with these images was such that paintings of Jesus and Mary came to surround Jahangir's imperial throne in order to underscore the king's prophetic nature, tracing his origins to the mythical, Mary-like virgin birth of the first Timurid (Akbar and Jahangir had given their mothers the titles *Maryam-Makānī* ('she who dwells with Mary') and *Maryam-uz-Zamānī* ('Mary of the age'), respectively).<sup>3</sup>

But there was another avenue of collaboration, which until recently had remained virtually unstudied. As patrons of elaborate translation projects, including the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*, Akbar and Jahangir commissioned the production of Christian religious literature in Persian, and assigned a trusted Mughal scholar and historian, Abdus Sattar ibn Qasim Lahori, to learn Latin and assist Jerome Xavier in the composition and translation of these. In line with the Jesuits' capacity as missionaries, that collaboration focused exclusively on religious literature, and in at least one case – a Life of Christ which Akbar entitled *Mir'āt al-quds* ('Holy Mirror') –

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<sup>3</sup> A general overview is provided in Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Jesuits and the Grand Mogul: Renaissance Art and the Imperial Court of India, 1580-1630*. (Washington D.C., 1998); for Mary and Jesus in service of Mughal messianic pretensions, see Azfar Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign: Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam* (Columbia University Press, 2012); and Azfar Moin, "Akbar's 'Jesus' and Marlowe's 'Tamburlaine': Strange Parallels of Early Modern Sacredness," *Fragments* 3 (2014 2013): 1–27; see also the seminal essay by Ebba Koch, "The Influence of the Jesuit Mission on Symbolic Representations of the Mughal Emperors," in *Islam in India*, ed. C.W. Troll (New Delhi: Vikas, 1982), 14–29; and its forthcoming revision in Ebba Koch, "Being like Jesus and Mary: The Influence of the Jesuit Missions on Symbolic Representations of the Mughal Emperors Revisited," in *Transcultural Imaginations of the Sacred*, ed. Margit Kern and Klaus Krüger, Berliner Schriften Zur Kunst (Berlin: Kunsthistorisches Institut der Freien Universität Berlin, 2016).

the efforts found great success, albeit not in the intended, strictly missionary sense.<sup>4</sup> Rather than being appreciated as revealed religious truth, this and other books were considered by the Mughals to be rather like edifying works of history, such as those often written by Muslim scholars, including clerics.<sup>5</sup> Not unlike the Jesuits' strategy in China, where acceptance at court was considered to depend on successfully assuming the role of China's most respected class, the scholar-literati, Xavier's literary projects – along with his astronomical objects, mathematical knowledge, and participation in courtly debates – worked as bridges among politics, religion and art. It is the apparently political subject and role, which Xavier appears to have proposed, and in some ways have consummated, that poses the most confounding problem.

As a book of political advice drawing on Christian, Muslim, even non-Abrahamic examples from Portugal and Greece to Iran and the Malabar coast, the final and least studied Persian literary project that Xavier produced for the Mughal emperor is strikingly different from those that preceded it. Despite its apparent allure – to my knowledge it is the only known example of a European work of advice literature for a Muslim king, at least for the so-called medieval and early-modern periods – the two known manuscripts of this work, entitled *Directorio de Reys*, and commonly referred to as *Adab al-saltanat*, have been languishing in European libraries for centuries, with only preliminary observations issued by a handful of scholars. Nonetheless, there has of late been a renewed interest in, and reconception of the Mughal-Jesuit encounter, including by some of the most innovative historians writing today on early-modern South Asia in a global context.

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<sup>4</sup> Pedro Moura Carvalho, *Mir'āt Al-Quds (Mirror of Holiness): A Life of Christ for Emperor Akbar: A Commentary on Father Jerome Xavier's Text and the Miniatures of Cleveland Museum of Art*, Acc. No. 2005.145, trans. Wheeler M. Thackston (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

<sup>5</sup> See Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, *Majalis-i Jahangiri: Report of Night Assemblies at the Court of Nur Al-Din Jahangir, From 24 Rajab 1017 to 19 Ramadan 1020 A.H. / 24 October 1608 to 15 November 1611 A.D.*, ed. Arif Naushahi and Mo'een Nizami (Tehran: Miras-i Maktub, 2006).

## Writing on Xavier and the *Directorio*

Early work on the Xavier's activity at the Mughal court was conducted by the Belgian Jesuit Historians Henry Hosten in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, followed by Arnulf Camps, who produced the first biographical work examining Xavier's life in 1957, entitled *Jerome Xavier S.J. and the Muslims of the Mogul Empire: Controversial Works and Missionary Activity*. This work included an overview of Xavier's works, but focused primarily on the polemic against Islam in his *Āīnāyi Haqq-numā* ('Truth-Showing Mirror') also known as the *Fuente de Vida* (1600-1609). Hosten's work was mostly documentary in nature, providing translations with limited commentary, while Camps also engages in exegetic analysis and contextualization of the work in the setting of the Mughal court.<sup>6</sup> Camps' biography remains, in many ways, the most comprehensive account on the subject of Xavier. It was almost immediately followed by a comparable volume in Spanish, *Jeronimo Javier S.J., Apostol Del Gran Mogol y Arzobispo Electo de Cranganor, En La India*. The author was a third Jesuit, Angel Santos Hernandez, who published this biographical work in 1958. In the decades that followed, little new work was undertaken to examine the relationship of Xavier with the Mughal court. Over the last twenty years, there has been a gradual increase in the interest in the subject. One reason for this are the advances in research on the cultural exchange that has focused on the circulation of European art in Mughal India, and its appropriation in Mughal Imperial art. A process in which the Xavier's mission played an important role.

Scholars like Gauvin Bailey, who has written on this exchange, took a renewed

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<sup>6</sup> H. Hosten, "Some Letters of Father Jerome Xavier, S.J. to His Family (1593-1612)," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, no. XXIII (1927): 131–36; Arnulf Camps, *Jerome Xavier S.J. and the Muslims of the Mogul Empire: Controversial Works and Missionary Activity* (Schöneck-Beckenried: Nouvelle Revue de Science Missionnaire, 1957); Angel Santos Hernandez S.J., *Jeronimo Javier S.J., Apostol Del Gran Mogol y Arzobispo Electo de Cranganor, En La India, 1549-1617* (Editorial Gómez, 1958).



interest in the role of the collaborative texts produced in an effort to provide a broader context for the artistic circulation.<sup>7</sup> Since then, Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam have written extensively about the Missions at the Mughal Court, and have approached the with a more complex reading of the encounter, drawing on Mughal as well as Jesuit and other sources and art-historical debates to address philosophical, political, and religious themes in the context of a broader project of connected history. Until recently, however, their work did not consider the *Directorio* in any detail.<sup>8</sup>

The first dedicated study of the *Directorio* was published in 2011 by Adel Sidarus in a relatively short article which made some preliminary observations on the SOAS manuscript and provides an outline of its contents but offered little analysis.<sup>9</sup> A more substantive engagement with a number of passages was provided by Corinne Lefèvre in two insightful articles published between 2012 and 2014. The *Directorio* was not the principal subject of these essays, but was discussed in some detail and some hypotheses were offered regarding its purpose – to which I will return below.<sup>10</sup> During

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<sup>7</sup> Gauvin Alexander Bailey, “The Truth-Showing Mirror: Jesuit Catechism and the Arts in Mughal India,” in *The Jesuits. Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540-1773*, ed. John W. O’Malley, S.J. et al., vol. 1, 2 vols. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 380–401.

<sup>8</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Frank Submissions: The Company and the Mughals between Sir Thomas Roe and Sir William Norris,” in *The Worlds of the East India Company*, ed. H.V. Bowen, Margarete Lincoln, and Nigel Rigby (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2002), 69–96; Alam and Subrahmanyam, “Frank Disputations: Catholics and Muslims in the Court of Jahangir (1608-11)”;

Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “A Roomful of Mirrors: The Artful Embrace of Mughals and Franks, 1550-1700,” *Ars Orientalis* 39 (2010): 39–83; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Mughals and Franks: Explorations in Connected History* (New Delhi, India: Oxford University Press, 2011); Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Courtly Encounters: Translating Courtliness and Violence in Early Modern Eurasia* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012).

<sup>9</sup> Adel Sidarus, “A Western Mirror of Princes for an Eastern Potentate: The Adab Al-Saltanat by Jerome Xavier SJ for the Mogul Emperor,” *Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 63, no. 1–2 (2011): 73–98.

<sup>10</sup> Corinne Lefèvre, “Europe–Mughal India–Muslim Asia: Circulation of Political Ideas and Instruments in Early Modern Times,” in *Structures on the Move: Technologies of Governance in Transcultural Encounter*, ed. Antje Flüchter and Susan Richter, Transcultural Research: Heidelberg Studies on Asia and Europe in a Global Context (Berlin and London: Springer, 2012), 127–45; Corinne Lefèvre, “Le Livre En Acte à La Cour Moghole: Le Cas Des Littératures Historique et Religieuse d’après Le Majālis-i Jahāngīrī (1608-1611),” ed. Nalini Balbir and Maria Szuppe, *Eurasian Studies* XII, no. Scribes and Readers in Iranian, Indian and Central Asian Manuscript Traditions (2014): 297–324.

final revisions for this dissertation, Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam published an article on the relationship of the *Directorio* with the work of Machiavelli.<sup>11</sup> This article focuses narrowly on the *Directorio* as it relates to themes of Machiavelli's role in Islam and the East, but it also summarizes previous insights and thus represents the state of the art on the subject of this text and its role at the Mughal court.

Alam and Subrahmanyam devote considerable attention to the question of authorship. While they recognize that Xavier and Sattar were no longer on good terms and the text was written in a simple and straightforward style unlike that of the other works where Sattar was involved, they contend that he nonetheless had an important hand in producing the *Directorio*. The reasons they provide are the rhetorical attention to concepts characteristic of contemporary Indo-Persian *topoi*, the likelihood that Xavier's Persian would have been insufficient to carry out the work alone, and what they suggest was probably no awareness at all of the advice literature already in existence in Mughal India. My own reading of Xavier's exposure and the likely role of Sattar is somewhat different as I hope to make clear through various discussions in Chapters 3 to 7.

More importantly, Alam and Subrahmanyam read a number of passages against the background of Machiavelli along themes of stratagems, trickery and deceit, to conclude that they lack any direct reference: 'Xavier did not introduce openly Machiavelli to Mughal India for the most obvious reasons: he could not for political reasons and he probably would not have wished to anyway.'<sup>12</sup> However, the article is most interesting from a methodological perspective. As is customary in their

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<sup>11</sup> Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Mediterranean Exemplars: Jesuit Political Lessons for a Mughal Emperor," in *Machiavelli, Islam and the East: Reorienting the Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, ed. Lucio Biasiori and Giuseppe Marcocci, 2018, 105–30.

<sup>12</sup> Alam and Subrahmanyam, 130.

collaborative projects, Alam and Subrahmanyam do not shy away from attempts to reconstruct likely contexts for texts of individuals beyond explicit references. This is done by creatively engaging with contemporary works that in some way resonate with the text at hand and have a historically relevant bearing on the circumstances under which it was produced. It allows for a speculative exploration of connections which are not strictly demonstrable, but can nonetheless help create a collage of temporally, thematically and geographically related actors and ideas that enhances our understanding of a particular work against the backdrop of an overall picture. This can be especially useful when, as is the case with the *Directorio*, there is virtually no discussion of the text in contemporary or later sources, and where the subject at hand has no direct equivalents.<sup>13</sup> It is by this method that Alam and Subrahmanyam are so often able to distil an otherwise inaudible echo. Their willingness to make the intellectual journey even where the reward may be no more than ‘some traces of [an] odour’ – as is the case in their essay on the *Directorio* – has broadened our field of vision and sharpened the contours of the Jesuit-Mughal encounter.

In this dissertation, I hope to follow their lead by mapping the literary, political and religious worlds that encircled Xavier and the *Directorio*, even if their meeting is merely plausible, not certain. In doing so, there may be a chance to make the puzzle of its composition slightly more intelligible and the life we might imagine it lead slightly more graspable, even if by virtue of faint traces of a distant odour.

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<sup>13</sup> The *Directorio*, to my knowledge, is the only mirror-for-princes written by a European author for a Muslim king in the East

# The Directorio

As an event, the *Directorio* has profound implications for our understanding of cross-cultural encounters at the Mughal court, and the Christian missionary's instrumentalization of the codification of broadly, cross-culturally shared rules of kingship.

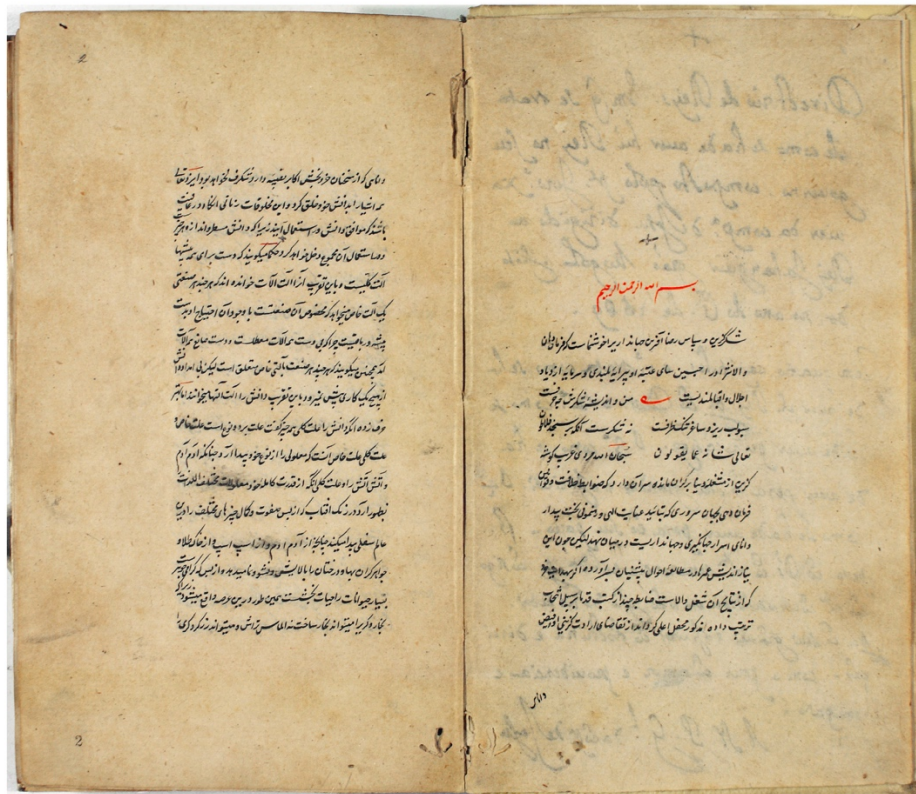


Figure 1: The the first two pages of the introduction to the *Directorio* (1609), with the Islamic invocation 'b-ismi-llāhi r-rahmāni r-rahīm' top right. Biblioteca Casanatense, Rome (Ms. 2015)

As such, it represents a meeting place for Mughal pretensions to universal imperial rule and a missionary's attempt to fashion himself as an authority on the rules of proper conduct for a Muslim king. Xavier did so with a work that appears to transcend the quagmire of that patent opposition between 'Islam' and 'Christianity' which had constrained the mission's playing field, and the efforts of contemporary scholarship to understand the historical encounter.

A central theme the *Directorio* shares with contemporary Mughal mirrors (both

in their nominal versions as works of *akhlāq* and in metaphoric varieties such as allegorical poems and paintings) is poverty and its imperial corollary, generosity, brought together under the broader umbrella of the king's dispensation of justice. Xavier's attention to poverty, generosity and justice in the *Directorio* made the work timelier and more topical. It deployed oblique admonishments regarding the emperor's response to poverty and rebellion, as well as his perceived lack of material and personal modesty – questions that spoke to wider ongoing debates among Jesuit and other European thinkers, as well as the Mughal counterparts, about the nature of good government and the role of good counsel. In the *Directorio* this served to expose a differential between the projected image of the Mughal emperor as messianic establisher of peace and prosperity, and the prevailing imperfection in his dispensation of universal justice. In so doing, the *Directorio* is placed squarely within the framework of extant conversations on problems of rulership that had been ongoing at the Mughal court for decades.

Understanding Mughal-Jesuit literary collaboration as merely a feat of cross-cultural connection, and reminder of bridges that once existed, would sell short the history of this encounter. In today's India, the history of the Mughal empire, and especially that of its emperors Akbar and his great-grandson Aurangzeb – who are respectively viewed as the most 'enlightened' and 'intolerant' embodiments of Mughal rule – has become a proxy in a contemporary battle raging among diverging, politically charged narratives of Muslim conquest and oppression, Hindu resurgence and national identity, and competing, often communal claims to an exemplary Golden Age of sectarian non-discrimination and harmony. Indeed, one can scarcely think of a more vivid example than the subcontinent's current 'WhatsApp history', of Benedetto Croce's old dictum that all history is, ultimately, contemporary.

The practical need that lies at the core of every historical judgment confers to each history the character of ‘contemporary history’, because, however remote the facts that arrive to us may seem chronologically, we are, in reality, always faced with history’s reference to the need and situation of the present, where those facts continue to spread their vibrations.<sup>14</sup>

It is difficult to dissociate academic debates over the Mughals’ religious and economic policies, indeed over their imperial ideology and practice generally, from the reverberations of their history – a Golden Age to some, a Dark Age to others – in today’s public discourse. It is telling that the recent books by Audrey Truschke on the Mughal court as the site of a fruitful encounter among Sanskrit and Persianate cultures under Akbar and Jahangir, and her latest revision of Aurangzeb’s one-dimensional reputation as a Hindu-oppressing zealot, have been flying off the shelves of bookstores across India and topping the lists of bestselling nonfiction titles. Needless to say, this is an exceedingly rare occurrence for academic works on any subject, let alone Mughal history.

Reflecting the rancorous tenor of the public conversation, the claims of these books have been met with both scornful vitriol and admiration, but it is in part thanks to the debate’s heated nature that a visible impact is felt in exchanges taking place in classrooms, streets, on the pages of India’s most popular English and vernacular dailies, and especially on social media platforms. However combative, and however instrumentalized politically, the result is that in some cases, these conversations are publicly disassembling some long-held popular misperceptions about the history of Mughal rule, rearticulating the historical significance of Muslim government for contemporary India in new, more complex ways.

Historical revisionism, in the positive, falsifying, and dispassionate sense of the

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<sup>14</sup> Benedetto Croce, *La Storia Come Pensiero e Come Azione* (Bari: Laterza, 1939), 5; translations of passages in various languages throughout the dissertation into English are my own, unless otherwise indicated.

term, should lie at the heart of historical research and writing. However, it comes with its own set of temptations, not least of which is overcorrection: vanquishing a myth, only to replace it with another. A tendentious narrative of oppression is replaced with an idealized image of harmony; the claim of widespread religious zealotry is effaced with anachronistic projections of secularism; the practice of spirituality and belief is intellectualized beyond recognition; the madness of history is imbued with a comforting method. In the case of the present study, the temptation has been to replace the Jesuit fiction of a Mughal emperor forever on the fevered verge of embracing Christ with one of a ruler who had only the most trivial, cursory interest in Christianity.<sup>15</sup> Alternatively, the facile image of a failed conversion has been rejected in favour of an untold story of profound interreligious and cultural connection.<sup>16</sup>

While the Indo-European aspect of the Mughals' activities is virtually absent from the abovementioned public controversy in India, this perspective has unsurprisingly been among the preferred angles for European and North-American historians interested in the Mughal empire. Yet, with the Jesuits, the 'needs of the present' exerting force on questions about these encounters, assume a much broader,

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<sup>15</sup> This is the thesis advanced in Alam and Subrahmanyam, "Frank Disputations: Catholics and Muslims in the Court of Jahangir (1608-11)."

<sup>16</sup> The idea of Mughal-Jesuit rapprochement emerged primarily from the history of their artistic exchange, especially the Mughal appropriation of European painting techniques and Christian subjects in allegorical paintings, for which see Ebba Koch, *Mughal Art and Imperial Ideology: Collected Essays* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001); Koch, "Being like Jesus and Mary: The Influence of the Jesuit Missions on Symbolic Representations of the Mughal Emperors Revisited"; more recently, this tendency has included interpretations of Mughal-Jesuit literary collaboration, especially that of the Mir'at al-quds ('The Holy Mirror') which features such paintings and thus far is the only published work among these Persian-language collaborations; see Carvalho, *Mir'at Al-Quds (Mirror of Holiness): A Life of Christ for Emperor Akbar: A Commentary on Father Jerome Xavier's Text and the Miniatures of Cleveland Museum of Art, Acc. No. 2005.145* while Alam and Subrahmanyam were among the first Mughal historians to seriously consider art-historical research, including the reciprocal exchange between Mughal India and Europe, their interpretation of the encounter can be read as a reaction against viewing material curiosity as indicative of deeper or broader intellectual and religious interests and objectives; more recently, Azfar Moin has put forward an account of the effective appropriation of Christian iconography for displays Mughal imperial ideology without suggesting an anterior affinity Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign*; for a look a juxtaposition of reciprocal flows, see Moin, "Akbar's 'Jesus' and Marlowe's 'Tamburlaine': Strange Parallels of Early Modern Sacredness"; for the specific angle of Portuguese-Mughal exchange, see Jorge Flores and Nuno Vassallo e Silva, eds., *Goa and the Great Mughal*, Museu Calouste Gulbenkian (London: Scala, 2004).

one might fairly say global context. The backdrop to the Mughal-Jesuit encounter features not only the rise of global empires, but the acceleration of global flows of ideas that ran through the Mughal court and its artists, divines and intellectuals, whose ideas they carry far beyond the Indo-Persian horizon. The ideas range from aesthetic models and technological inventions, to moral and political frameworks such as the Western notion of Oriental despotism. Meanwhile, the Jesuits' own geopolitical venture by that time had established a presence across Latin America, Africa, Europe and Asia. Thus, in the contours of this early globalization we inevitably recognize, for better or worse, the beginnings and previous lives of our own globalized present. Moreover, the 'needs of the present' have yet another source in the response demanded by today's dichotomous thought about 'Western Christianity' and the 'Islamic World' – pitted in popular discourse against each other as irreconcilable worldviews – the return of a repressed pattern that animated conceptions of the Mughal-Jesuits encounter four centuries ago.<sup>17</sup>

The historian's impetus to correct these shallow cultural and religious interpretations can verge on an imagined need to cure their social malignancy. What better way to do so, than to uncover further evidence that exposes the apparent opposition between these cultures as nothing more than a historical contingency, pale in comparison to centuries of deep collaboration, mutual learning, and hybridity? It is a redemptive history that is spoken with the spellbinding voice of certain knowledge, a siren song for the discontents of our own age. But its motive can come at the risk of making our history more global than it was, our globalization more dynamic than it was, our protagonists more ecumenical, tolerant, cross-cultural than they were, or to

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<sup>17</sup> For a recent global intellectual history of the idea of the Islamic World as the antithesis of Western Christian civilization, and its inflection by theories of white supremacy, as well as the envisioning of an idealized pan-Islamic society that refuted claims of Muslims' racial and civilizational inferiority, see Cemil Aydin, *The Idea of the Muslim World* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2017).



use them as a canvas on which to project our own notions about global academia's responsibility to correct its past myopias and epistemological violence, and the resulting asymmetries in power.

## Connected History

More than a century ago, the philosopher A.O. Lovejoy commented on a phenomenon that 'cannot be altogether obscure to anyone who has considered the history and psychology of philosophical and literary fashions,' and which any student of history will find applies in equal measure to the historical discipline. Lovejoy was referring to 'a very evident touch of mystification' about whatever philosophy happened to be in fashion.

The craving to be mystified is a perennial human craving, which it has, in the more highly civilized ages, been one of the functions of philosophy to gratify. What the public wants most from its philosophers is an experience of initiation; what it is initiated into is often a matter of secondary importance. Men delight in being ushered past the guardian portal, in finding themselves in the dim and awful precincts of thought unknown to the natural man, in experiencing the hushed moment of revelation ... the need for a new sort of philosophic Eleusinia is recurrent among the cultivated classes every generation or two; it is a phenomenon almost as periodic as commercial crises.<sup>18</sup>

There is perhaps no revelation more gratifying to the historian and his reader than the discovery of a previously unrecognized connection, and no historical event more consequential to historical narrative than the encounter. The global-historical project, which has set itself the vital task of recovering the agency of those individuals and worlds that had been silenced by the archive of European conquest, has, in its most lucid iterations, replaced a vision of competition among discreet societies with an image of organic connections, evidenced by a myriad of individual histories that have

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<sup>18</sup> Arthur O. Lovejoy, "Practical Tendencies of Bergsonism," *International Journal of Ethics* 23, no. 3 (April 1913): 254; quoted in Samuel Moyn, *Origins of the Other: Emmanuel Levinas between Revelation and Ethics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005), 6.

transformed our understanding of long-term historical change. The importance of this achievement for our understanding of how and why the world has developed as it has can hardly be overstated. Nonetheless, if history can be considered a collective Popperian exercise in conjecture and refutation, our debt to these advances can only be repaid with the most dispassionate consideration of their discontents.

The delightful power of connected history's argument – of being ushered past the blinding portal of Eurocentrism, of entering the darkness of the unknown and infinitely more complex histories of human interaction, and of hearing them speak from the silence of the archives – has been buoyed by the mystification of its central tenet: historical connectedness. What, after all, is more likely to give an encounter its psychological validation than the positive and lasting consequence of connection? Is not the failure to connect with others the most compelling image of human failure *tout court*? If so, and to the extent that redefining history as connectedness has been essential to the advances of recent historiography, its 'hushed moment of revelation' has coincided with the powerful demands of human psychology.

Whatever the shadow cast by this conjunction, the confluence of the critical and psychological impulse of course neither validates nor taints the fruits of connected history. It does however expose the double-edged sword which the method wields; and should therefore serve as a warning sign. After all, for all the appeal of the secret-revealing rites of connectedness, the fate of historical connections is more likely than not to disappoint. Once unearthed, connections as a rule are uneven, short-circuited, broken, or even wholly imagined. It is a view of connectedness that can be reproached for its bleakness, but while it leaves the penchant for historical redemption ungratified, it leads to fertile analytical soil.

The tendency to see connectedness as the intrinsic state of histories, undone only by the failures of historiography, imputes to today's historian the somewhat

daunting, if not messianic task of restoring histories to a presumed accurate, interconnected order. ‘They have to be made to communicate,’ Serge Gruzinski urges, ‘a bit like an electrician who comes to repair what time and historians have disconnected.’<sup>19</sup> Yet, the crucially important drive to rehabilitate neglected literary, political, artistic and other geographies by allowing them to communicate not only to the modern historian, but to each other, requires as much boldness as it does caution – if historical discoveries are to be made without supplanting their narrative with our own, contemporary one. Unlike the electrician, the historian cannot presume the loose ends in his hands were ever connected, even if they look compatible.

This is not to say that we should revert to a notion of cultural incommensurability of the 1970s and 1980s. But there seems to be a gap between treating cultures as inaccessible, impermeable zones, and asserting a parallel morphology. On occasion that gap has been filled by acknowledging, on the one hand, that historical actors have not always seen eye to eye, and at the same time dismissing the notion of a semiotic incommensurability between the parties involved.<sup>20</sup> This view allows, implicitly, for an incommensurability of a non-semiotic kind: autonomous human agents with irreconcilable aims, their actions struggling for something beyond, or against, connectedness.<sup>21</sup>

The methodological nuance of connected history over the last two decades notwithstanding, the penchant for connectedness and parallels can be seen both in choice of subject matter and its interpretation. Understandably so, given the inherited task of refuting an entrenched historiography of exaggerated difference and of a

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<sup>19</sup> Serge Gruzinski, *Les Quatre Parties Du Monde: Histoire d'une Mondialisation* (Paris: Les éditions de La Martinière, 2004), 35.

<sup>20</sup> Subrahmanyam, *Courtly Encounters*, xiv.

<sup>21</sup> This kind of agency can be accommodated in Subrahmanyam’s focus on the micro-biographies of individuals who cross the frontiers of empires to inhabit multiple worlds, and allows us to reject alternative notions like ‘hybridity’ as a kind of cultural predisposition.

European enlightenment of a world living off-grid. In its place we have seen introduced the compelling image of a fragmented global history of vernacular histories, connected by an inexhaustible web of travelling ideas and goods, cast by a net of individuals of all continents spreading out in all directions, beyond their old horizons. Suddenly, connections were omnipresent and perennial, if only one cared to look.

In its most naïve sense, connected history resolved the traditional problem for the Hegelian dialectic – of two incompatible or irreducibly different ways of seeing something – by bringing together a cultural thesis and antithesis (typically a self and other) in the historical event of a synthetic cross-cultural encounter. In a more sophisticated description of this process, Sanjay Subrahmanyam has recognized ‘approximation, improvisation, and eventually a shift in the relative positions of all concerned.’<sup>22</sup> Hegel, on the other hand, had never sought to overcome the division or difference, but rather asserted it as such. Indeed, the Hegelian synthesis – whatever else we may think of his philosophy of history – is precisely the recognition of the insurmountable gap between two positions, and as such helps demarcate the critical position within connected history.

The phenomenon is best illustrated with the commonly observable, apparent motion of an object when it is seen from different perspectives, also known as a parallax shift. Just like the space that separates two historical perspectives between which no synthesis or mediation is possible, both positions viewing the object are completely incompatible and irreducible ways of seeing something. To the historian, the space that separates them, the parallax gap, can reveal something about the impossible short circuits of cross-cultural fields of vision – fields which can never meet. It is my

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<sup>22</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Connected Histories: Notes TOwards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia,” *Modern Asian Studies* 3, no. 31 (1997): 735–62.

contention in this dissertation that this much-maligned gap, rather than its imagined absence, is what harbours the greatest heuristic potential for connected history.

It is easy, and perhaps even necessary, to dismiss this device, and its fanciful talk of ‘impossible short circuits’ as nothing more than the latest Mysteries of Eleusis; another semantic permutation, needless and, in the end, idle. But the reading and thinking it encourages against the grain of connectedness may nonetheless be valuable, if only to leave us with a vision that is as attuned to the failure of communication in a globalising world, as it is to its triumph. As always, the test of its merit lies not in its ability to answer a human craving to be mystified, but its effect in peeling away at the endless onion of historical inquiry.

Romain Bertrand has recently put forward an approach that is more open to embracing potential incommensurabilities, or rather of exploiting the absence, breakdown, or opposition to connection in encounters.<sup>23</sup> His ‘history of equal parts’ operates on a straightforward but challenging maxim that can be applied in response to Gruzinski’s *métissage*: ‘do not hold to be self-evident or universal any intuitive analytical category.’<sup>24</sup> It concerns not only the very idea of connectedness, but ‘modes of measuring time, notions of near and far, conceptions of intimacy and individuality, the grammar of affection and belonging, the very idea of what is a ‘culture’ and a ‘nature’, the relationship to the dead: nothing in the world of our actors should be taken for granted if we are to avoid the risk of anachronism and Eurocentrism.’ What Bertrand proposed was ‘a joint and parallel thematic exploration, not a structural item-by-item comparison within a situation created by contingency.’ For Bertrand, incommensurability was not merely a historical construct or myopia, but an important

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<sup>23</sup> Romain Bertrand, *L'Histoire à Parts Égales: Récits d'une Rencontre, Orient-Occident (XVIe-XVIIe Siècle)* (Paris: Seuil, 2011).

<sup>24</sup> Bertrand, 21.

heuristic tool. Its ‘edge’, as he calls it, lies at the doorstep of the actors’ ‘differing regimes of reality’.<sup>25</sup>

Without using the term, Bertrand himself alludes to a version of the parallax gap, when he suggests that in a sense the encounter between the Dutch and the Javanese *did not take place* – at least not in the form of a shared consciousness of an act that can be narrated. An event can only be considered an event, Bertrand argues, if the vantage points of the actors are aimed at the same domain of objects. If, however, they do not have a ‘narrative zone of confluence’, if they do not support one another except in their divergence, it is because there does not exist, properly speaking, a place of the event: *Au centre, rien* (‘At the centre, nothing.’). ‘That,’ he concludes, ‘is what we have to admit to guarantee a symmetric treatment, that is an understanding of strictly equal parts, of the historicities that are present.’ A clear danger of this view is bringing back the old bedbug of postmodern relativism: different actors, different stories. Indeed, the parallax gap of connected history, should not be taken as a problem to be solved, but as a historical constraint to be exploited in considering questions of narrative and agency. What is to be avoided is a kind of moderation where ‘truth is a matter of perspective’. The task, in other words, is to sharpen the incommensurability, rather than dull or obscure its edge.

Considering the *Directorio* as a parallax object allows us to reverse the roles between the active author or patron working on or perceiving a passive object: in stead, our actors can be defined by a fundamental passivity, and it is the book – the parallax object – from which the movement comes, and which tickles the imagination. The chapters of this dissertation only partially correspond to the physical movements of our human protagonists: the rulers, historians and divines assembling at the court of

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<sup>25</sup> Bertrand, 168.

the Mughal emperor. Instead, it is the book which travels. First, returning to the world of Islamo-Christian Spain from which it emerged, then running across the educational and political itinerary of its author, the world of political advice that sprang into existence as the *Directorio* was conceived, its reverberations in the political language of the Mughal court, and the miles it travelled on its incessant journeys between the worlds of Hellenic, Biblical, Indo-Persian, Pre-Islamic, and other worlds.

## Outline

The Chapters can be divided into four sections, which together form a circle. In Chapters 1 and 2, we leave the Mughal court to explore the Orient in Spain and debates on kingship within the Society of Jesus in Europe. Chapter 3 is transitional and provides a brief biography of Jerome Xavier's time in Spain, his passage to India, and his career in Goa. Chapters 4 to 6 look at his role at the Mughal court, the substance of the *Directorio*, and the some of the tensions between this work, Mughal ideals of kingship, and ideas of Oriental despotism. Finally, Chapters 7 and 8 reflect on a connected history of books and the shared mythology of Alexander as a backdrop to Xavier's project, before returning to the Mughal court to re-evaluate the encounter with new eyes.

Using Cervantes' Don Quixote as a point of entry into the hybrid cultural world of contemporary Spain, Chapter One reconstructs the intellectual climate of Jerome Xavier's Spain, a world of forged histories, Oriental languages and manuscripts, Islamo-Christian messianism, Jesus cloaked in mystic Sufism, and Muslim mirrors-for-princes in service of the greater glory of Spain. It radically compresses the geography between his Spanish and Mughal worlds. The purpose here is to explore potential points of reference for Xavier prior to his departure for India, which may have

informed his future work as an Orientalist *avant la lettre* at the Mughal court. The chapter shows that circulation of Islamic knowledge and of Oriental books and language was in no way the exclusive domain of the native Morisco population and follows the historiographical integration of Spanish and Oriental worlds in the activities of authors, translators and teachers in the service of the Escorial imperial library and the University of Alcalá de Henares. It places the circulation of Xavier's own books as well as ancient Persian-language Bibles he sent from the Mughal empire to Rome, France, Lisbon and Spain, in this wider context. The chapter further shows the common motifs of illumination philosophy and millenarian movements and messianic kingship in Mughal India and Catholic Spain, and the unique position of Spain as Western Europe's intellectual and literary gateway to the East, and to Muslim systems of knowledge in particular.

The second chapter explores the place of Jesuit political thought during the post-Machiavellian sixteenth and turn of the seventeenth century, by focusing on four of its major exponents: De Mariana, Botero, Ribadeneira, and Xavier's uncle, Azpilcueta. Some of the most influential works of an emerging 'political science' came from the pens of these, mostly Jesuit authors, some of them *conversos* who were either Spanish themselves, or specifically directed their work to the Spanish context. With these works, Jerome Xavier's Spain stood at the nexus of articulation of contemporary political ideas, and of political advice in the form of mirrors-for-princes in particular. The chapter further shows the Jesuits' internal struggle, during this period, to reconcile their spiritual mission with the worldly demands of their growing courtly roles, and doctrinal loopholes which allowed members of the society to advise kings, in their capacity as confessors, on all matters weighing on the royal conscience – and thus to act effectively as political counsellors. It compares Xavier's position and views promoted in the *Directorio* relative to other Jesuits in the Spanish context and their



views on religious tolerance as a political question, on political pragmatism, on piety as a political instrument, the role of clergy in government, as well as the use of ancient and sacred histories of the East to fabricate a providential narrative of a glorious future for Spain, an exercise that reappears in the work of Philip II's own Orientalist advisers. While it is not possible to prove direct influences, I argue that Xavier's thinking intersects, at times quite emphatically, with these political theorists. Moreover, the various contradictions within the thought advanced by these authors – on the subjects of religious intolerance, absolute rule, the nature of kingly virtue, or the notion of a social contract – did not prevent Jesuits from engaging with Muslim culture in Arabic Spain any more than it stood in the way of Xavier's immersion in the world of his Mughal hosts.

The third chapter traces Jerome Xavier's itinerary and circumstances as he makes his way from his native Navarre to the Mughal court, including his education and exposure to individuals and ideas at the Universities in Alcalá de Henares and Toledo. It also provides the context of the internal ideological turmoil of the Society at the centre in Rome, as well as the political jostling for power in Goa. I suggest that Xavier, obsessed with venturing East, was likely exposed to some combination of the factors discussed in the preceding chapter, which included the wide circulation of translations of Persian, Arabic, and Indian mirrors-for-princes in the Spain of his time (a subject revisited in the next chapter), that he arrived in India as a protégé of Father-General Acquaviva, and soon obtained the favour of the principal advocate of 'accommodation' in Asia, Alessandro Valignano; that he ended up at the Mughal court as a result of a conspiracy to prevent him from becoming Provincial of Goa and possibly the most important Jesuit in the East; that Valignano played a decisive role in this affair as well as the formation of Xavier's approach to the Mughal mission. A substantial part of the chapter is then dedicated to the court of Jahangir as the final station of this

trajectory, a place where Xavier joins and competes with other courtiers engaged in advising the king on his duties.

After taking stock of Emperor Jahangir as thinker and ruler, Chapter Four argues that a range of mirrors-for-princes and mirror-like texts and other media were the subject of considerable attention at the Mughal court and examines the place of Xavier and his activities in this light, as well as ongoing religious debates and conflicts at court. I show that Xavier in many ways performed the role of a Mughal courtier, and developed a keen understanding of the most popular, especially Persian works in circulation at court. Finally, I argue that the failure of his religious mission's various strategies, including that of his Persian translations of Christian religious works, as well as the popularity of the idea of Oriental despotism in contemporary European accounts of Eastern forms of government, inspired the unique attempt at a book of political counsel for the Muslim emperor.

Chapter Five focuses more closely at the text of the *Directorio*. Given the sheer size of the manuscript, it is limited to discussing a set of themes shared with its contemporary Mughal mirrors (both in their nominal versions as works of *akhlāq* and in metaphoric varieties such as allegorical poems and paintings): poverty and its imperial corollary, generosity, brought together under the broader umbrella of the king's dispensation of justice, as well as Xavier's strategies of self-fashioning. The attention to poverty, generosity and justice in the *Directorio* made the work timelier and more topical. It deployed oblique admonishments regarding the emperor's response to poverty and rebellion, as well as his perceived lack of material and personal modesty. The implied result was a problematic differential between the projected image of the Mughal emperor as messianic establisher of peace and prosperity, and the prevailing imperfection in the dispensation of universal justice. In so doing, the *Directorio* was placed squarely within the framework of extant conversations on

problems of rulership that had been ongoing at the Mughal court for decades.

Chapter Six examines the particular emphasis of the *Directorio* on the role of justice and the figure of Xavier as the harbinger of ‘new knowledge.’ The Chapter shows that much of the precepts contained in the work were neither wholly foreign, nor new. A closer look is taken at the strategy of echoing on the one hand Mughal ideals of kingship and their attendant anxieties and on the other hand the projection of Xavier’s advice on a familiar canvas that casts the Mughal Emperor as an Oriental despot *par excellence*. Not only do Xavier’s appeals for popular sovereignty seem exaggerated compared to the conduct even of exemplary Christian kings but stand at odds with the Jesuit promotion of absolutist government. Finally, it becomes clear that Xavier is constructing a moral system where the wisdom of scholars such as himself is indispensable for good government, and their lavish patronage the obligation of any just king.

Chapter Seven traces the entangled traditions of advice literature in the Mughal and Spanish contexts. I argue that the Eastern origins of Western mirrors are typically ignored, as are the Hellenic roots of comparable Muslim works. In addition to the Mughal mirrors contemporary to Xavier’s *Directorio*, some of which are introduced in the preceding chapter, this section explores a set of Arabic, Persian, and in one case Sanskrit texts, which were widely diffused in various forms and translations in Spain as well as Mughal India. This includes the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Kitab Sirr al-Asrar* (‘Book of the Secret of Secrets’) which was translated into Persian and had an enormous influence on Muslim, including Mughal mirrors, but in the thirteenth century had already found its way into Spanish as *Poridat de Prodades*, counterpart to the famous Latin translation known as *Secretum Secretorum*, which includes a fictional epistolary

dialogue between Aristotle and Alexander on how to rule the newly conquered Persia.<sup>26</sup> Another example is Nizami's *Khamse* or *Panj Ganj* ('Five Jewels'), the source of a number of tropes of ideal kingship for the Mughal emperors, including an *Eskandar-nameh* ('Book of Alexander'), which draws on Perso-Hellenic lore to recount Alexander's transformation into the ideal ruler. I argue that the *Alexander Romance* loomed large in the Mughal as well as the Spanish contexts, where works such as the *Libro de Alexandre* exerted an influence on subsequent works of history and moral philosophy.<sup>27</sup> A further example considered in this chapter will be the Spanish *Calyla e Dymna*, a translation of the Arabic version of the Indian *Panchatantra*.<sup>28</sup> The analogous Latin translation, John of Capua's *Directorium Humanae Vitae*, inspired a slew of key works in the European canon before and after Xavier, from *Conde Lucanor* and *Don Quixote*, to the *Canterbury Tales*, *Decameron* and La Fontaine's *Fables*. Meanwhile, at the Mughal court under Jahangir and his father Akbar, several copies were produced of the Persian reworking of the same book under the title *Anwar-i Suhayli*. A Famous copy was completed for Jahangir just one year after Xavier's presented him with the *Directorio*. Akbar even had his own abridged version of the work composed by his ideologue Abu'l-Fazl, entitled *Iyar-i Danish*.<sup>29</sup>

Finally, Chapter Eight provides an Epilogue where the Mughal-Jesuit encounter is reconsidered in light of the itinerary covered in the preceding chapters. It revisits the

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<sup>26</sup> Pseudo-Aristotle, *Poridat de Las Poridades*, ed. Lloyd A. Kasten (Madrid: Seminario de Estudios Medievales Españoles de la Universidad de Wisconsin, 1957); Rafael Ramón Guerrero, "El Pseudo-Aristóteles Árabe y La Literatura Didáctico-Moral Hispana: Del Sirr Al-Asrār a La Poridat de Las Poridades," in *Pensamiento Medieval Hispano: Homenaje a Horacio Santiago-Otero*, vol. II, II vols. (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Consejería de Educación y Cultura da la Junta de Castilla y León, Diputación de Zamora, 1998), 1037–51.

<sup>27</sup> J. Cañas, ed., *Libro de Alexandre* (Madrid: Catédra, 1988).

<sup>28</sup> François De Blois, *Burzoy's Voyage to India and the Origin of the Book of Kalilah Wa Dimnah* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1990); Regula Forster, "Fabel Und Exempel, Sprichwort Und Gnome. Das Prozesskapital von Kalila Wa Dimna," in *Tradition Des Proverbes et Des Exempla Dans l'Occident Médiéval*, ed. Hugo Bizzarri and Martin Rhode (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 191–218.

<sup>29</sup> Ernst J. Grube, ed., *A Mirror for Princes from India: Illustrated Versions of the Kalilah WaDimnah, Anvar-i Suhayli, Iyar-i Danish, and Humayun Nameh* (Bombay: Marg Publications, 1991).

nature of *adab* in the context of this exchange, of missionary strategy and political survival, as well as the predicament of the historian in negotiating these unstable categories.



# 1. The Islamo-Christian Culture of Spain

To come as close as possible to understanding what the *Directorio* is, we need to peer into the irreducible gap between its different lines of sight: the Spanish-Jesuit and Perso-Mughal points of view. Paradoxically, we might in the process realise that the gap is much smaller than presumed, but this, if anything, makes the work of discerning and defining the ontological shifts of the *Directorio* more difficult. In the mind of the Navarrese missionary, what is the difference between the Islamic worlds of Iberia and those of the Gangetic plain? What shift is required of Xavier for those differences to be in effect? What, in other words, is the itinerary of his epistemological journeys? To understand something of the intercontinental movement involved, and of the shape-shifting object itself, a book that inhabits multiple worlds, we need to take another look at the Spanish world, which from the vantage point of Agra was the Islamo-Christian of the West, but in the study of Indo-European encounters is often reduced to the Catholic pole of a religious and geographic binary.

Following Marc Bloch's dictum that major works of literature fashion how their readers think and feel, and Roger Chartier's observation that the presence which fiction can give to the past has often been stronger 'than the one that history books could provide,'<sup>30</sup> we turn to a work of fiction that transports us from the scene of Agra, to that of contemporary Spain at the turn of the seventeenth century. A global best-seller of the time, the first part of Cervantes' *Don Quixote* was published in 1605, the year of Jahangir's accession to the Mughal throne.<sup>31</sup> Within the first year of its publication,

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<sup>30</sup> Roger Chartier, *The Author's Hand and the Printer's Mind* (Cambridge: Polity, 2014), vii.

<sup>31</sup> Jorge Flores explored possible connections between Cervantes and Mughal "stories" in circulation in: Jorge Flores, "Distant Wonders: The Strange and the Marvelous between Mughal India and Habsburg Iberia in the Early Seventeenth Century," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 49, no. 3 (2007): 553–81.

multiple pirated editions sprung up in Madrid, Lisbon and Valencia, and in Brussels a year later. Nor was its reach limited to Europe. Serge Gruzinski has pointed out that similar Romanesque best-sellers of the period quickly found readers across the world, from Salvador de Bahia to the Spanish Philippines. Cervantes' novel appears to have had a similar fate, with book merchants looking to make a buck across the Atlantic and making sure part of the first edition of *Don Quixote* ended up in the Andes, where 'creole and mestizo elites, functionaries, merchants, and Spanish priests plunged into it with delight.'<sup>32</sup>

The perspective of Cervantes' novel was defined by the religious and ethnic tensions in Spain circa 1605, which served as a lens for a book that has been described as a 'multi-racial trans-Mediterranean lesson of shame and humility.'<sup>33</sup> It begs the question not only of whether that lesson had a wider application than the Mediterranean, but through which line of sight we might observe Xavier's *Directorio* in its primordial home. The answer leads down a road of forged histories, Oriental languages and manuscripts in the imperial library of El Escorial, Persian-language translators and interpreters, Islamo-Christian messianism, a Jesus cloaked in mystic Sufism, and Islamic mirrors-for-princes in service of the greater glory of Spain. The narrator of *Don Quixote* himself gives us an apt introduction to the world of Toledo, where Xavier completed a significant portion of his education.<sup>34</sup>

One day when I was in Alcaná market in Toledo, a boy came by to sell some notebooks and old papers to a silk merchant; as I am very fond of reading, even torn papers in the streets, I was moved by my natural inclinations to pick up one of the volumes the boy was selling, and I say that it was written in characters I knew to be Arabic. And since I recognized but could not read it, I looked around to see if

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<sup>32</sup> Serge Gruzinski, "Une Mondialisation Venue d'Espagne," *L'Histoire* 322, no. Amérique Latine (July 2007): 28.

<sup>33</sup> Eric Clifford Graf, *Cervantes and Modernity* (Bucknell University Press, 2007), 84.

<sup>34</sup> For an overview of Spanish attempts to come to terms with its own Moorishness by simultaneously repressing Muslim subjects and appropriating their rich cultural heritage in the early modern construction of Spanish national identity, see Barbara Fuchs, *Exotic Nation: Maurophilia and the Construction of Early Modern Spain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).



some Morisco who knew Castilian, and could read it for me, was in the vicinity, and it was not very difficult to find this kind of interpreter, for even if I had sought a speaker of a better and older language, I would have found him.<sup>35</sup>

The narrator is of course referring to the Arabic manuscript that contains the history of Don Quixote, written by a certain Cide Hamete Benengeli, a supposed Arab historian. The passage evokes a world of Toledo's Alcaná, where Spanish-speaking Morisco interpreters are aplenty, where an ancient chronicle written by a supposed Arab historian can easily be found. Could it be that Miguel de Cervantes was referring to a real-life story that was already making the rounds, reflective of a composite culture that was better known at the time than it now seems to us? A history that is made present by this fiction?

Recent scholarship has shown that Cervantes was very likely aware of a specific Morisco individual, of his role as translator and author of false discoveries, and of his relationship with the Archbishop of Granada, Pedro de Castro, in whose house the Morisco had worked on his translations.<sup>36</sup> Both men drew on the tradition influenced by Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo, author of the greatest Spanish novel of chivalry, *Amadís de Gaula*. Moreover, García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, on whom I draw at length in this chapter, have shown that Cervantes not only knew of the discoveries of the so-called Lead Books in Granada, which this man had forged, but had also read a book of his, a best-selling fictional history from which he appropriated the use of the 'hairy mole' motif in *Don Quixote*. From the Morisco's history, Cervantes transplanted Mohammad's birthmark, the symbol of his identity as the Seal of the Prophets, from his shoulder blade, to that of Don Quixote. In what must have served as an inspiration

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<sup>35</sup> Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quijote*, trans. Edith Grossman (New York, 2003), 67.

<sup>36</sup> Mercedes García-Arenal and Fernando Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, trans. Consuelo López-Morillas, *Studies in the History of Religions* 142 (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

to Cervantes, our Morisco had equipped his protagonist Tariq, the conqueror of Spain, with a hairy mole the size of a chickpea on his left shoulder blade; it fulfilled the prophecy that a man of extraordinary courage and strength would subdue the Iberian Peninsula, and that he would be known by that mole. As García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano note, this hairy birthmark was also present in the Lead Books' description of someone other than Mohammed; and that someone was Jesus. Cervantes must have been inspired by this claim while writing *Don Quixote*.<sup>37</sup>

And how about Cervantes' elderly doctor, who possessed a lead box that had appeared during the demolition of a church –containing a parchment written in an illegible script, whose meaning the doctor could only guess at – could he likewise be our Morisco, the forger of the Turpiana Tower Parchments? After all, these forged Parchments were discovered only a few years prior when the old minaret of the great mosque of Granada was torn down. They contained a prophecy attributed to Saint John in Arabic, Latin, and Spanish, and were placed within a leaden box together with a handkerchief said to have been the Virgin's, and a relic of Saint Stephen.

The more famous of the so-called Sacromonte finds, which occurred in the late sixteenth century in Granada, was the appearance under 'miraculous and providential circumstances,' a set of leaves of lead with unusual, archaic Arabic inscriptions reminiscent of magical formulas. It was claimed that the leaves contained Christian texts, which spoke of certain Arab disciples who had come to the Iberian Peninsula in the company of Saint James the Greater.

The affair came to be known as that of the Sacromonte Lead Books, or as the *Láminas Granatenses* (Granadan leaves) when the Vatican decided to study them, in 1682, a century after they appeared, it declared them false and anathema. But the Church in Granada and its Archbishop Pedro de Castro, and the Spanish Crown, both defended the books' authenticity with passion; thus, the Lead Books gave rise to a tremendous debate and to a

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<sup>37</sup> François Delpech, "Les Marques de Naissance: Physiognomie, Signature Magique et Charisme Souverain," in *Le Corps Dans La Société Espagnole Des XVI et XVII Siècles*, ed. A. Redondo (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1990), 22–23.

long and varied series of translations and linguistic studies. The matter went far beyond the confines of Granada's local history and of the Morisco problem in the region. It would trouble the Spanish Church and Crown, the Vatican, the bishops and their struggles with Rome, and the scholars and humanists of half of Europe.<sup>38</sup>

We know that Cervantes was in Granada in 1594, and that he is very likely providing an ironic commentary on the Sacromonte forgeries and their author, Miguel de Luna.<sup>39</sup> Who is Miguel de Luna, and what can he tell us about shifting notions of fiction and history, Islam and Christianity, of Spain and the Orient?

A year junior to Jerome Xavier, the Morisco Miguel de Luna was born in Granada in 1550 and trained in medicine, before going on to become Philip II's Arabic interpreter. In a parallel to Xavier's own career trajectory, culminating in the Jesuit's appointment as Vice-Provincial of Goa in 1592, Luna's activity reaches peak during the same year, just as an ideological debate about forms of government was surging across Europe (see Chapter Two). 1592 is also the year in which Luna published the *Historia verdadera del Rey Don Rodrigo* ("True History of King Rodrigo"). The book was a false chronicle, halfway between a history and a novel of chivalry, allegedly translated from an Arabic manuscript by a fictitious historian called Tarif Abentarique that Luna claimed he had found in the royal library of the Escorial. It is an account of the Muslim conquest of the Peninsula in which the land is redeemed from evil and corruption.<sup>40</sup>

While the first part was a history, not only of the Muslim taking of Spain, but also of several Muslim rulers and kingdoms, across the Maghreb and in the East, the second part of the *Historia*, entitled *Segunda parte de la Historia de la pérdida de*

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<sup>38</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 1.

<sup>39</sup> Cervantes, *Don Quijote*, 45, 49; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 193.

<sup>40</sup> Mercedes García-Arenal and Fernando Rodríguez Mediano, "Médico, Traductor, Inventor. Miguel de Luna, Cristiano Árabe de Granada," *Chronica Nova* 36 (2006): 187–231; Mercedes García-Arenal and Fernando Rodríguez Mediano, "Miguel de Luna, Cristiano Árabe de Granada," in *¿La Historia Inventada? Los Libros Plúmeos y El Legado Sacromontano*, ed. M. Barrios and Mercedes García-Arenal (Granada, 2008), 83–136; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 156.

*España y Vida del Rey Iacob Almançor: en la qual el autor Tarif Abentarique prosigue la Primera parte* ('Second Part of the Lost History of Spain and Life of King Jacob Almançor, in which the Author Tarif Abentarique Continues the First Part') is a mirror-for-princes that encourages the Spanish king to distinguish between his good and bad subjects irrespective of their, or rather their ancestors' religion. And although a few chapters are devoted to the praise of Spain, the real purpose is to prove that Chaldean-speaking people from the East – there are references to Noah and his descendants, among whom was the founder of Spain, Shem, son of Japheth – arrived in Spain in ancient times. According to the supposed chronicler Tarif Abentarique, when Musa Tufayl had entered the city of Mérida he found, near the main gate, a fallen stone bearing the Chaldean inscription that told of this migration of peoples from the East: 'And in order to read and understand the text I brought three interpreters who were experienced in that language and in it I found this whole story set down.' García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano observe that what we see here are similar inventions to those by Annius of Viterbo, but with an Oriental overlay.

The exemplary king put forward by Luna in this mirror-for-princes is the imaginary Muslim monarch Iacob Almançor, king of Arabia, who is so tolerant toward Christians that he almost seems to be one himself: he shows the exemplary course that the Spain of Luna's patron Philip II refuses to follow.<sup>41</sup> Apparently Almançor had not been the first to exhibit this wisdom and magnanimity. His predecessors had acted similarly upon arriving on the Iberian Peninsula. Thus, when Abdelaziz first disembarked in Algeciras, he promised noble rank to all those who would join him, on the model of the Catholic Monarchs. In line with Luna's series of inversions, visions

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<sup>41</sup> Francisco Márquez Villanueva, "La Voluntad de Leyenda de Miguel de Luna," in *El Problema Morisco (Desde Otras Laderas)* (Madrid, 1991), 80; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 161.

and revisions of exemplars, not properly Catholic, nor Muslim, but always for the greater glory of Spain, Abdelaziz's supporters are granted the privilege 'to be held and considered from that day forward *hidalgos*, and to enjoy all the pre-eminence, freedoms, and liberties enjoyed by that rank.'<sup>42</sup>

Thus while the Jesuits were sending reports to Europe about the Mughal monarch's commissioning of translations of Sanskrit epic texts into Persian, produced by the authors and scribes of his workshops,<sup>43</sup> and of the Muslim emperor's appropriation of Hindu tradition in an effort to rule over a vast empire, Luna's *Historia Verdadera* adduced, for the benefit of Spanish dominion, the traditional narrative device of an occult, Oriental volume that is discovered and that requires an expert translator who is also an author. Luna's urging of the king toward sectarian non-discrimination is mirrored by a letter, drafted a decade earlier on behalf of the Mughal Emperor Akbar to be sent to Philip II. Although that letter never reached its destination, its contents, expounding Akbar's rejection of tradition in favour of an enlightened pursuit of truth through reason and observation, resulting in a policy of religious non-discrimination called *sulh-i-kul* ('universal peace'), painted a stark contrast to the religious wars raging under his European counterpart, and the persistent Islamo-Christian tensions, religious and cultural, in Spain at the end of the sixteenth century. In the letter Akbar, like the ideal *Almançor*, is held up as an example of legitimate kingship on the strength of religious tolerance.<sup>44</sup>

Miguel de Luna's strategy and objectives vis-à-vis Christian society and the

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<sup>42</sup> Miguel De Luna, *Historia Verdadera Del Rey Don Rodrigo*, ed. Luis Bernabé Pons, facsimile ed. and study of the first ed. published by René Rabut in Granada in 1592 (Granada: Archivum, 2001), fol. 27v.

<sup>43</sup> Rajeev Kinra, "Master and Munshi: A Brahman Secretary's Guide to Mughal Governance," *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 47, no. 4 (2010): 527–61.

<sup>44</sup> The "Letter of Akbar to Philip II of Spain, Fatehpur Sikri, c. March 25-April 23, 1582," can be found in Jorge Flores and Antonio Vasconcelos de Saldanha, eds., *Os Firangis Na Chancelaria Mogol: Copias Portuguesas de Documentos de Akbar, 1572-1604*, trans. Richard Trewinnard and Mário Semião (New Delhi: Embaixada de Portugal, 2003), 87.

Christian authorities were precisely to defend and preserve Morisco cultural identity independently of the religion of Islam, most particularly in regard to the Arabic language. He thought himself an ‘Arabic Christian.’ But at the same time, like many other members of the Christianized Morisco elite, Luna maintained ties and obligations to his own community that may not be far removed from an adherence to Islam.<sup>45</sup>

The book was phenomenally successful: first published in 1592 by René Rabut in Granada, it was the second part – the mirror-for-princes – that made it a sensation and had a series of reprints in Granada and Saragossa in 1600 and 1603.<sup>46</sup> The unusually successful history played a unique role: ambiguous in status, it appeared at a moment when a debate was underway in Spain about the use of Arabic sources in writing the nation's history. In the larger framework, there had begun to be a general interest in Spanish antiquities that provoked even more falsifications and various other kinds of ancient chronicles, on which more below.

Luna must have been keenly aware of the providential strategies employed earlier in the century by another Spaniard, Florián de Ocampo (1495-1558), whose *Crónica general de España*, dedicated to the Emperor Charles V, defined the role of Imperial Spain as a people chosen by God, equated with the original Chosen People, along with their Ark of the Covenant and their Temple. From this time onward, it would be proposed that the Tower of Babel, Noah's Ark, and the restored Temple were the three pillars on which human history in general, and Spanish history in particular was built, thus legitimizing the Spanish as the Chosen People of the modern age. The work's very title, *Historia verdadera*, harks back to another long tradition, famously

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<sup>45</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 156–57.

<sup>46</sup> Luis F. Barnabé Pons, “Estudio Preliminar,” in *Historia Verdadera Del Rey Don Rodrigo*, by Miguel De Luna (Granada, 2001), xxxiv–xxxvii.

influenced by Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo, author of the Spain's most important chivalry novel, *Amadís de Gaula*,<sup>47</sup> but also other important models like Pedro de Corral's *Crónica del rey don Rodrigo*, and the much disputed and much criticised *Crónica del Moro Rasis*. As Esteban de Garibay (1525-1590) put it, these were 'well-made poetic fictions,' and in that sense they resembled novels of chivalry, in which the poetic, the supposedly historic, and the exemplary, are melded together.'

To this can be added the disorienting factor of the chivalric novel's recourse to another motif, that of an old Oriental manuscript as the basis for its narrative. The fifteenth-century *El caballero Zifar* was claimed to be a translation from Chaldean; Alonso de Salazar's *Crónica de Lepolelmo, llamado el caballero de la Cruz* (1521) was said to have originated with a Muslim chronicler named *Xartón*; and Palmerín de Oliva (1515) had a certain *Muça Belín* as its supposed author.<sup>48</sup> Such were, in the decades before Father Jerome's birth, the chivalric roots that nourished the trunk of contemporary and future Spanish novels, false histories and mirrors-for-princes. If Luna acted as the Spanish king's uniquely positioned source for sacred political knowledge in a Providential East, Xavier would similarly cast himself as the unique and privileged harbinger of previously unavailable knowledge on the sacred science of rulership from the West, translated and made available for the benefit of the emperor of Mughal India.

While the Oriental volume allegedly dug up from the interior of El Escorial by Luna is a fabrication, this type of book as such had a very real and important place in the Spanish royal library. Besides the literary and scientific networks of cultured

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<sup>47</sup> James D. Folgelquist, *El Amadís y El Género de La Historia Fingida* (Madrid, 1982); García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 158.

<sup>48</sup> Francisco Márquez Villanueva, *Moros, Moriscos y Turcos de Cervantes. Ensayos Críticos* (Barcelona: Bellaterra, 2010), 128–29; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 158.

Moriscos such as Luna, and others like El Chapiz, López Tamarid, or Castillo, there is an intricate, intensive and far-reaching circulation of erudites, Orientalists, authors and translators, some of them Jesuits who dabble in history-writing, and the emerging science of politics.<sup>49</sup> It is a craft which in Spain appears to be perennially shape-shifting, so that a Morisco doctor could be at the same time Philip II's librarian and Persian interpreter, and Jesuits could instruct young Orientalists in languages that would allow them to appropriate Islamic mirrors-for-princes for the benefit of Christian kings.

## **Moriscos in Spanish Literary Culture**

A century earlier, in 1492, the Kingdom of Granada was conquered, and subjected to conversion and expulsion of Muslims and Jews. The Reconquista of the last Islamic holdout, along with the coincidental discovery of America, gave rise to the belief that Spain was the beneficiary of Divine Providence, that the Spanish monarchy had been handpicked by God to play a special metaphysical role, and that it was predestined for unprecedented political success. Islam, meanwhile, was seen as a growing threat as Spain became embroiled in skirmishes with the Ottomans and Barbary pirates off its coasts and its routs to the Indies.<sup>50</sup> But dealing with Islam was not merely facing an external factor. As García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano note,

[Spanish society] faced the problem of integrating the converted and confronting their respective sacred texts as well as their prophets, lineages, languages, and hygienic and culinary practices. The entire history of Early Modern Spain is marked by this trauma, which gave rise to long-lasting, multi-faceted effects, including the emergence of shifting identities and new religious attitudes;

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<sup>49</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 191.

<sup>50</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, 3–4.



including forms of overlapping and redefinition of religious beliefs.<sup>51</sup>

As well as being a party to a fertile cultural exchange, the Morisco population was perceived as a source of substantial unease. In 1568, as Jerome Xavier was entering the Society of Jesus at the University of Alcalá at Henares, tensions culminated in a two-year rebellion, the War of the Alpujarras, in response to the outlawing of Arabic language, books and names. The social reality of Morisco culture and the Arabic language, indeed its potential, had long been apparent to purveyors of Catholic doctrine themselves. In mid-sixteenth century, dioceses with the largest substantial Morisco populations would routinely request the emperor to send them ‘Arabic Theologians’ who could hear confessions, and Arabic catechisms were commissioned that used Islamic terms like *mihrāb*, *faqih* and *salat* for common words like altar, priest and mass.<sup>52</sup>

Perhaps the emperor had taken a page from the Hieronymite Pedro Alcalá (a Morisco born under Muslim rule Granada) who had composed two works that were published in Granada in 1505: an Arabic-Romance glossary, *Vocabulista in Arabico*, and a grammar or method for learning the language, *Arte para ligeramente saber la lengua arábiga*.<sup>53</sup> The *Arte* consisted of a transliterated Arab catechism to facilitate the conversion of Muslims. The *Vocabulista*, on the other hand, was a dictionary of the spoken Arabic of Granada that could be equally useful for Muslims and Christians. In compiling it, Alcalá received help from the educated Granadan Arabs who moved in

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<sup>51</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, 3.

<sup>52</sup> C.J. Garrido García, “El Use de La Lengua Árabe Como Medio de Evangelización-Represión de Los Moriscos Del Reino de Granada: Nuevos Datos Sobre Bartolomé Dorador, Intérprete y Traductor de Martín de Ayala, Obispo de Guadix,” *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos* 57 (2008): 123–37; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 43.

<sup>53</sup> A. Lonnet, ed., *Les Textes de Pedro de Alcalá. Édition Critique* (Paris-Louvain, 2002); García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 39.

the archbishop's circle.<sup>54</sup> Tellingly, Alcalá translated 'Dios' as 'Allah' when in works meant to evangelize Native Americans, for example in Nahuatl, 'Dios' was never rendered as 'Theotl' but simply as 'Dios'. But other terms also demonstrate the difficulty of the task, as when Alcalá renders 'el sacerdote, porque él es vicario de Dios' ('the priest because he is the vicar of God') as 'al-faqih li-annahu khalifat Allah.' As García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano observe, 'one could hardly find a translation that had clearer Islamic overtones.'<sup>55</sup>

The Jesuits had an ambivalent attitude to the Moriscos. Important Jesuit thinkers were Jewish converts, and among the religious orders, the Society in Spain was the only one to freely admit Jews and Muslims. However, in 1593, at the Fifth General Congregation of the Society, taking in 'New Christians' was restricted to cases with the general's express permission.<sup>56</sup> On the other hand, the Society, shortly after its founding in 1540, had created a bilingual school in Gandía for Morisco children. The school failed, however, both through a lack of Arabic-speaking teachers and because the Moriscos resisted sending their children there. In 1559 the Society created a broader enterprise, the House of Doctrine (*Casa de la Doctrina*), in the Albaicín neighbourhood of Granada. Jesuits of Morisco origin, like Juan de Albotodo and Ignacio de las Casas – a Morisco who had studied in Rome – were among its collaborators.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> G. Drost, "El Arte de Pedro Alcalá y Su Vocabulista: De Tolerancia a Represión," in *Los Prácticas Musulmanas de Los Moriscos Andaluces (1492-1609)*, ed. A. Temimi (Zaghouan, 1989), 57–69; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 39–40.

<sup>55</sup> R. Ricard, "Remarques Sur l'Arte et Le Vocabulista de Fr. Pedro de Alcalá," in *Études et Documents Pour l'histoire Missionnaire de l'Espagne et Du Portugal* (Louvain, 1930), 223–24; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 40.

<sup>56</sup> Harro Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c. 1540-1630*, Ideas in Context (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 73.

<sup>57</sup> F. de Borja de Medina, "La Compañía de Jesús y La Minoría Morisca (1545-1614)," *Archivum Historicum Societatis Jesu* 57 (1988): 4–137; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 42.

Prefiguring Jesuit linguistic strategies in India and Asia generally (See Chapter Three), a letter from Pedro de Deza to the Jesuit Francisco de Borja, dated May 1561, suggests an understanding of language as the absolute key to missionary success:

Further, many means have been sought by which, with love and gentleness, these people may abandon their former customs and bow to the observance of our holy faith. Special care has been taken in the matter of language, that being the most difficult and most important thing... And since this city is the head whose example all other places in the kingdom must follow, it is right that the greatest effort should be made here.<sup>58</sup>

From 1571, and over the course of Xavier's final decade in Spain, the Moriscos were scattered throughout Castile after the defeat they had suffered in the War of the Alpujarras and the subsequent expulsion from the Kingdom of Granada. As a consequence, institutions like the Granadan faculty of medicine suffered a genuine collapse, and a flood of Granadan Moriscos entered the faculties of Toledo and Alcalá, the foremost Jesuit intellectual strongholds in Spain, where Xavier spend the better part of the period obtaining degrees in philosophy and theology.<sup>59</sup> Indeed, in the person of Father Albotodo, the Jesuits themselves took an active part in resolving the rebellion and the negotiations to end it, just as they had previously warned that such a conflict was on the cards in the face of repression.<sup>60</sup> Nonetheless, a considerable number of Moriscos either escaped expulsion or returned to the kingdom in the following years, so that by 1580 Granada's Morisco population was around 10.000.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> A. García Pedraza, *Actitudes Ante La Muerte En La Grenada Del Siglo XVI. Los Moriscos Que Quisieron Salvarse* (Granada, 2002), 465; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 48.

<sup>59</sup> L. García Ballester, "Academism versus Empiricism in Practical Medicine in Sixteenth-Century Spain with Regard to Morisco Practitioners," in *Medicine in a Multicultural Society: Christian, Jewish, and Muslim Practitioners in the Spanish Kingdoms, 1222-1610*, Variorum Collected Studies Series 702 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 262; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 104.

<sup>60</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 128.

<sup>61</sup> B. Vincent, "Los Moriscos En El Reino de Granada Después de La Expulsión de 1570," in *Andalucía En La Edad Moderna: Economía y Sociedad* (Granada, 1985), 269; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 62.

Just how enmeshed Islamic and Christian culture was in Granada at the turn of the seventeenth century is perhaps best illustrated by the 1603 episode of an exorcism, in which the Archbishop Pedro de Castro used a recently discovered Lead Book to make the sign of a cross over the sufferer, and pronounced the Arabic words of the prayer: '*le y lehe yle Alahu, Jesuu, Ruhu Alahi*,' which the witness account translated as 'There is no God but the true God. Jesus [is] the spirit of God.' The witness wondered sarcastically if the Devil was a 'Spanish Arab', since the words spoken were 'in the dialect that the Moriscos use' and seemed to include 'a verse of the Koran'.<sup>62</sup>

Granada, however, did not operate in a vacuum. While people like Cisneros, the founder of the University of Alcalá, would travel there to collect Arabic books on scientific subjects,<sup>63</sup> and booksellers in Granada offered works by every imaginable Catholic theological and spiritual author of the day.<sup>64</sup> More importantly, following the Alpujarras War, many Granadan Moriscos themselves circulated widely throughout Spain. Take for example the Morisco doctor Alonso del Castillo, who moved to Philip II's royal library at Escorial in 1573, having been put in charge of cataloguing its Arabic holdings, an important portion of which were scientific and medical manuscripts. While at Philip II's court, he also practiced medicine.<sup>65</sup> Castillo had acted as a translator and interpreter during the Alpujarras war, and would go on to become Philip II's interpreter, in charge of the correspondence between the king and the Moroccan Sultan Ahmad al-Mansur between 1579-1587.<sup>66</sup> Another example is Diego Marín, Morisco

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<sup>62</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 270.

<sup>63</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, 41.

<sup>64</sup> D. Coleman, *Creating Christian Granada* (Ithaca, 2004), 94; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 57.

<sup>65</sup> García Ballester, "Academism versus Empiricism in Practical Medicine in Sixteenth-Century Spain with Regard to Morisco Practitioners," 54; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 106.

<sup>66</sup> Mercedes García-Arenal, Fernando Rodríguez Mediano, and R. El Hour, *Cartas Marruecas. Documentos de Marruecos En Archivos Españoles (Siglos XVI-XVII)* (Madrid, 2002); García-Arenal

priest and highly regarded diplomatic agent and interpreter to both Philip II and Abd al-Malik, the sultan who came to power in 1576 thanks to the help of the Turks from Algiers.<sup>67</sup>

## Nascent Spanish Orientalism

The circulation of Islamic knowledge and of Oriental books and language was in no way the exclusive domain of the native Morisco population. Two examples may serve to illustrate the point. Diego de Urrea and Marcos Dobelio are exemplary of the historiographical integration of Spanish and Oriental worlds in the period preceding the *Directorio*, in their activities as authors, translators and teachers in the service of Philip III at the Escorial imperial library and the University of Alcalá de Henares.

Their Eastern background and their complex and cosmopolitan intellectual horizons gave them a singular profile in the Spanish medium in which they came to work. A field of knowledge was gradually created in which Arabic detached itself from its use as an instrument of proselytizing or diplomacy. García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano note that this shift ‘occurred through the translation and citation of Arabic sources, the cataloguing of Arabic manuscripts of El Escorial, and the (precarious) effort to institutionalize the teaching of Arabic at the University of Alcalá de Henares.’<sup>68</sup> Crucially, it saw the integration of Muslim culture into a coherent narrative of the Spanish past. What was increasingly at stake, was no longer a simple matter of writing the history of Spanish cities, but of something different: of allowing the integration of

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and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 108.

<sup>67</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 133–37.

<sup>68</sup> On the co-fabrication of the archive of European Orientalism by individuals from the Muslim world, see also John-Paul Ghobrial, “The Archive of Orientalism and Its Keepers: Re-Imagining the Histories of Arabic Manuscripts in Early Modern Europe,” *Past & Present* 230 (February 2, 2016): 90–111.

Oriental worlds, with their immense literature and the extensive, complex and unimaginably ancient histories of their peoples, into the authorized apparatus of European history.<sup>69</sup>

Marco Dobelio was an Eastern Christian who had passed through Rome and become a professor of Arabic. The search for experts that was launched in Spain was an operation on a truly grand scale, which came to touch such renowned individuals as Thomas van Erpen (Erpenius), the Dutch Arabist, and the founder of an Arabic press that produced some of the fundamental works of European scholarship. Erpenius, who had studied Arabic with Ahmad al-Hajari, among others, had been on the verge of traveling to Granada at Pedro de Castro's invitation to translate the Lead Books.<sup>70</sup> The categories of religious and historical books owned by Dobelio included seventy-two volumes of Christian theology. His Islamic works included, first of all, a Koran, and also a copy of the most important collection of traditional sayings (*ahadith*) of the Prophet, the *Sahih* of al-Bukhari. A third work was '*de vita et moribus Mahometis*,' that is, a biography of Muhammad, probably the *Sira* of Ibn Ishaq.<sup>71</sup> There are several biographies on Dobelio's list: of Avicenna, al-Razi, Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, and Apollonius of Perga, a *Vita Euclides et omnia opera ab illis composita sententia* and a *Vita et mores virorum Doctorum Grecorum Arabum et aliarum nationum*, perhaps referring to the *Tabaqat al-umam* by the *qadi* Sa'id of Toledo, a celebrated Andalusian author of the eleventh century.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 10–11.

<sup>70</sup> J. Martínez Ruiz, "Cartas de Thomas van Erpen (Thomas Erpenius) En Un Archivo de Granada (1623-24)," *Boletín de La Real Academia Española* 55 (1975): 267–306; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 245.

<sup>71</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 257–58.

<sup>72</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, 258.

A few interesting volumes on history and geography were also included in Dobelio's collection. One that seems in principle to be significant was *Liber geographiae et corographiaem auctore Abi Zacharia Benamolia quo describuntur habitus, ritus, mores diversarum gentium et res mirabilis fontium fluminum, arburum, animalium et multa alia elegantissimo sermone*, which corresponds to a work by the famous thirteenth-century Persian astronomer, Abu Yahya Zakariyya al-Qazwini. Dobelio describes three histories of the Umayyad caliphs of Damascus and the Abbasid caliphs of Baghdad: *Historia Regnum Persarum*, *Historia Regum Dimasci*, and *Historia Regum Babiloniae qui fuerunt triginta sex*.<sup>73</sup> Finally, Dobelio's books included a copy of al-Turtushi's *Siraj al-muluk*, one of the most important mirrors-for-princes in Arabic literature.

Dobelio's library was unquestionably of great importance, especially given the circumstances of the time. It was a crucial moment in the development of Arabic studies in Europe, one that coincided with the assembling and cataloguing of the first great collections of Oriental manuscripts in Italy, Spain, the Low Countries, and England. As García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano show, European Arabists like Bedwell and Erpenius were forever on the hunt for Arabic and Persian books; in Rome, in the circle of individuals like the Arabist and Persianist Giovanni Battista Raimondi – of whom more below – a valuable collection of manuscripts was taking shape thanks to the activities of travellers like the Vecchietti brothers, at least one of whom met with Jerome Xavier in Agra and brought copies of his Persian works from India to Europe, and Pietro della Valle, another famous visitor of the Mughal empire. News of newly discovered manuscripts circulated throughout Europe, and specialists often journeyed

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<sup>73</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, 258.

to obtain access to a copy of one book or another, and exchanged both texts and ideas.<sup>74</sup>

Between 1603 and 1605 Giovanni Battista Vecchietti visited India including stays in Delhi and Agra, where he arrived from Persia, having been sent to recover various Persian (and Hebrew) manuscripts. His brother, Girolamo, who was on a similar mission, joined Giovanni in January 1605 before heading back to Hormuz together in 1606, where Giovanni had a central role in a diplomatic mission between the Church in Rome and the Safavid Empire, which included sending back a Persian translation of the Bible. While in Agra, Giovanni and Jerome Xavier consulted with each other on their ongoing philological projects. Vecchietti was overseeing and dictating to Daulatkhan Tarzi (son of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Wahhab of Gwalior)<sup>75</sup> a transcription dedicated to Pope Clement VIII, of a Judeo-Persian version of sections of the Old Testaments – including the Proverbs of Solomon in Hebrew and Persian (later illuminated in Isfahan).<sup>76</sup> Giovanni showed this work to Xavier, who in turn showed him his edition of a Persian translation of the Psalms based on the Vulgate.<sup>77</sup>

Vecchietti had begun his Orientalist career thanks to Raimondi the abovementioned Raimondi, who oversaw the Stamperia Orientale Medicea established in 1584, along with a vast library of manuscripts under the patronage of Pope Gregorio XIII Boncompagni. It is in these years that Rome became the European centre of Persian studies, not least because of the good relations with the Safavids, allies against the Ottoman Empire. Raimondi assembled a group collecting and studying manuscripts from the East. The group was composed of a recent Jewish convert Paolo Orsino di Sontantinopoli, the Dominican friar Tommaso da Terracina, and the

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<sup>74</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, 259.

<sup>75</sup> “Ahd-i ‘Atiq” (Agra, 1604), fol. 152, Suppl. persan 2, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

<sup>76</sup> “Ahd-i ‘Atiq,” fols. 1v-74v.

<sup>77</sup> Camps, *Jerome Xavier S.J. and the Muslims of the Mogul Empire: Controversial Works and Missionary Activity*, 194.



brothers Gerolamo and Giovanni Battista Vecchietti.<sup>78</sup> By 1584, Vecchietti had already mastered Arabic and as part of his preparation for his mission to the Safavid court had begun to study Persian.<sup>79</sup> Before his return, the Pope in 1588 ordered him to travel to Madrid to report to the king. At one point in 1593, Raimondi proposed to Pope Clement VIII Aldobrandini to print a Bible exclusively in Persian, because it was considered ‘the oldest, most celebrated and most beautiful of all the languages we have thus far come to know.’<sup>80</sup> In 1593, Vecchietti was again sent to Madrid, trying to persuade Philip II to buy the press, but without any success.<sup>81</sup> Thus Vecchietti as liaison between the Persianate world, including Mughal India, and Rome, was a regular presence at the Escorial.

Xavier’s correspondence in part followed these links. In 1603, he sent a Persian copy of the Gospels to the Professed House in Rome (now at the Casanatense Library) and a duplicate to the Roman College in 1605 (now at the Gregoriana University). Xavier noted that copies had been made in 1388 from an original written in 1378.<sup>82</sup> In 1604 he writes he...

... gave him [Giambattista Vecchietti] the book of the four Gospels in Persian, which he greatly desired, for he said that they had the Gospel of St. Matthew in Persian at Rome but would like very much to have the other three. Last year we sent to Rome another book of the Gospels in Persian, the translation of which is more than 300 years old.<sup>83</sup>

Indeed, Xavier appears to have been sending Persian translations to a number of European royal courts. His letters tell us that ‘a very old book of the Gospels in Persian’

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<sup>78</sup> Angelo Michele Piemontese, “G.B. Vecchietti e La Letteratura Giudeo-Cristiana,” *Materia Giudaica. Rivista Dell’Associazione Italiana per Lo Studio Del Giudaismo* xv–xvi (2011): 483–84.

<sup>79</sup> Giovanni Battista Vecchietti, “Della Sua Peregrinatione d’Oriente” n.d., 162–63, Fondo Pio, Archivum Secretum Apostolicum Vaticanum.

<sup>80</sup> G.E. Saltini, “Della Stamperia Orientale Medicea Di Giovan Battista Raimondi, Memoria Compilata Sui Documenti Dell’Archivio Centrale Di Stato,” *Giornale Storico Degli Archivi Toscani*, Archivio Storico Italiano, IV, no. IV (1860): 278.

<sup>81</sup> Vecchietti, “Della Sua Peregrinatione d’Oriente,” 165.

<sup>82</sup> Xavier, S.J., Jerome, n.d., fols. 53v, 125v, 86, APUG.

<sup>83</sup> Xavier, S.J., Jerome, September 6, 1604, fol. 15v, Add. MSS 9854, BM.

was also sent to the king of France (1607),<sup>84</sup> but a copy was also received by Philip III (1610) and deposited in the Escorial. A certificate in Xavier's hand, dated Lahore December 21, 1607 – identical to the date of the aforementioned letters – stated that the translation was written in 828, and was bought from Jerusalem by an Armenian padre who died traveling to India.<sup>85</sup> Some of the multiple copies Xavier made of this Armenian Persian Bible are now preserved in Rome, Lisbon, St. Petersburg, London, Brussels and, possibly, Oxford.<sup>86</sup>

In the same year, Xavier writes a letter to the General, asking about the original, apparently intended for the Pope himself, of the copies sent to Spain and France.

I do not know if the letters we wrote to Your Paternity from Lahore last year have arrived and with them a book of the Gospels in Persian, that we sent to Your Paternity in order that it might be presented to His Holiness in the name of the Fathers of this mission, because it is the original copy and very ancient, being at least 300 years old, and according to one computation probably more than 800 years old.<sup>87</sup>

The flow of ancient Eastern books was also in evidence in the writings of the abovementioned Dobelio. In his magnificent treatise on falsity of the Lead Books, the three authors Dobelio most frequently quotes are al-Ghazzali, the author of the principal Islamic mirror-for-princes, Qadi Iyad (the author of *Kitab al-Shifa*), and al-Bakri (the author of *Kitab al-Anwar*); on the basis of these he shows how the stories about Jesus contained in the Lead Books were no more than reworkings of tales about the Prophet Mohammed. The books of ‘necromancy, spells, and superstitions’ that

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<sup>84</sup> Jerome Xavier, S.J., December 21, 1607, fols. 69–70, Goa 46, I, ARSI.

<sup>85</sup> Edward Maclagan, *The Jesuits and the Great Mogul*, by Sir Edward Maclagan. (New York, Octagon Books, 1972), 214–15.

<sup>86</sup> Kenneth J. Thomas, “Bible Iii. Chronology of Translations,” *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (London, 1989), <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bible-iii-orig>; see also Carlos Sommervogel, S.J., *Bibliothèque de La Compagnie de Jésus. Première Partie: Bibliographie. Par Les Pères Augustin et Aloys de Backer. Seconde Partie: Histoire Par Le Père Auguste Carayon. Nouvelle Édition Par Carlos Sommervogel, S.J., Strasbourgeois, Publié Par La Province de Belgique*, vol. Bibliographie, Book VIII (Brussels and Paris, 1898).

<sup>87</sup> Xavier, S.J., Jerome, September 24, 1607, fol. 64, Goa 46, I, ARSI.

dealt with seals and with planets ‘where the seal of the Moon appears as a hexagonal figure, just as in the lead sheet,’ served to identify the provenance, script, and signs of those same sheets; one source was the *Kitab al-asrar* (‘Book of Secrets’). He relies above all on al-Tha'alibi's *Qisas al-Anbiya* (‘Stories of the Prophets’), juxtaposing them with the account of Solomon's Seal in the Lead Books, and can prove that the latter is the Islamic legend of Solomon and the ring that gave him power over demons and granted him esoteric knowledge.<sup>88</sup>

Dobelio analyses in details the parallels between some of the Lead Books' texts and *Kitab al-Anwar* by al-Bakri, whose book he found in the Pastrana collection. In the Lead Book called *Libro de los actos de nuestro Senor Jesus y de sus milagros y de su madre Maria la Virgen* (‘Book of the acts of our Lord Jesus and of his miracles and of his mother the Virgin Mary’) – which Dobelio claimed to possess and to have read many times<sup>89</sup> – in the ‘Chapter of his birth and of the marvels that occurred at the time,’ the following story is told about Jesus: when the shepherds approached to see the newborn babe, the angel Gabriel wrote on the child's back, with a beam of brilliant light that existed before the beginning of the world, the phrase ‘There is no God but God.’ As Dobelio points out, this episode is identical to the one in the *Kitab al-Anwar* (‘The Book of Lights’)<sup>90</sup> of al-Bakri, a thirteenth-century Arab writer, in which the coming of Muhammad is heralded by a light which proceeds directly from the divine Light that predated the Creation; it has passed through all the prophets from Adam onward. On Mohammed's back, the phrase written in divine light was ‘there is no God but God and

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<sup>88</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 280–81.

<sup>89</sup> U. Rubin, “Pre-Existence and Light: Aspects of the Concept of Nur Muhammad,” *Israel Oriental Studies* 5 (1975): 62–119; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 288.

<sup>90</sup> M. L. Lugo Acevedo, ed., *EL Libro de Las Luces. Leyenda Aljamiada Sobre La Genealogía de Mahoma* (Madrid, 2008); García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 285.

Muhammad is the messenger of God.’ Therefore, the Lead Book transposed onto Jesus one of the most important themes of Islamic mystical prophetology, the *nur muhammadi* (‘light of Muhammad’). Originating before Eternity, this luminous mass of primordial adoration, in the form of a transparent column, made Muhammad into the first being created by God.

This motif, together with those of Solomon's esoteric knowledge and the names of Mohammad and Jesus, connected the Lead Books to central tenets of Sufi mysticism that ran across sixteenth-century Morocco<sup>91</sup> to concepts of divine illumination set forth by the Iranian philosopher and mystic Shihab al-Din Yaya Suhrawardi in the twelfth century, and introduced to the Mughal court by Persian scholars some two decades before Jerome Xavier's arrival there. Akbar's private sect, referred to as the *Din-i-Illahi* (‘Religion of God’) fused sun-worship and symbolism of Sufi saints with Jain, Zoroastrian and Hindu concepts of worship, especially *darshan* (‘auspicious sight’). In the words of the most influential among the intellectuals – often Indian-born but of Iranian heritage – who brought these ideas to the Mughal court was Abu'l-Fazl, Akbar's chief ideologue:

Royalty is a light emanating from God, and a ray from the sun, the illuminator of the universe. Modern language calls this light *farr-i izard-i* [‘the divine light’], and the tongue of antiquity called it *kiyan khura* [‘the sublime halo’]. It is communicated by God to kings without the intermediate assistance of anyone, and men, in the presence of it, bend the forehead of praise towards the ground of submission.<sup>92</sup>

These qualities augmented the sacred nature of Mughal sovereignty, which adopted prophethood and Solomonic kingship as its symbols. Similarly, in Spain, ‘magic, esoteric knowledge, and mystical brotherhoods coincided in the worship of the Prophet

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<sup>91</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 288.

<sup>92</sup> Abu'l Fazl, *The Ain-i Akbari*, trans. Henry Blochmann, 1871st, repr. ed., vol. 1 (New Delhi: Orient Books, 1968), 3.

and of Solomon, a hero steeped in magical powers,' who, as García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano point out, 'was a superhuman figure in the popular mind and who must have been a consolatory symbol to the Moriscos.'<sup>93</sup>

## Islamic Literary Sources in Rome and Spain

Literary activity either by Spaniards or in the Spanish language, and intended for Spanish audiences, included a population of figures with a plethora of geographic origins, varied connections to the Spanish crown, and with Rome and the Vatican as important places of activity outside the Iberian Peninsula. This 'Iberian world', for lack of a better term, drew on roots far beyond its confines, as individuals with extraordinary geographical curricula made their contribution.

Take for example Diego de Urrea, who was among the figures who were called in by the Archbishop to discuss the Lead Books. Urrea was an Italian renegade who, after spending years in the service of the Ottoman rulers Uluj Ali and Hasan Aga came to Spain and acted as interpreter of Arabic, Turkish, and Persian for Philip II and Philip III. At the express wish of the Spanish crown, he held the chair in Arabic at Jerome Xavier's *alma mater*, the University of Alcalá de Henares.<sup>94</sup> Given that he was tasked with preparing short reports on Oriental books – like the one he wrote about al-Buni's volume on magic, which the king of Spain had received from the ruler of Cuco (i.e. Kabilia in the north of Algeria) – he may very well have been the person who would have been in charge of interpreting the precious Persian Gospels Philip III received

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<sup>93</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 288–89; Ebba Koch, "The Mughal Emperor as Solomon, Majnun, and Orpheus, or the Album as a Think Tank for Allegory," *Muqarnas* 27 (2010): 277–311; Laura E. Parodi, "Salomon, the Messenger and the Throne - Themes from a Mughal Tomb," *East and West*, no. 51 (2001): 127–42.

<sup>94</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 27–28.

from Jerome Xavier.

Urrea had expressed an interest in translating an Islamic mirror-for-princes, but apparently never got around to completing the task. It would be Francisco de Gurmendi – a student Urrea and Dobelio shared with the Jesuits who taught him Latin – that would eventually complete and publish a modified translation of Arabic examples under the title *Doctrina física y moral de príncipes*, most likely drawn from al-Turtushi's *Siraj al-muluk* ('The Lamp of Kings'), of which, as was noted, Dobelio possessed a copy.<sup>95</sup>

Philip II must have seen Urrea as a substantial asset. Whereas the efforts and ideas of the Jesuit Ignacio de las Casas did not result in the creation of a similar chair in Arabic in Valencia, in 1596 Philip II wished for Urrea to continue in the chair he had created for him at the University of Alcalá, saying that...

... from his dedication to teaching from the said Chair there results great benefit and usefulness for service to God and to me [Philip II] and to all Christendom, particularly now that many books of saints have appeared in Granada that will help extirpate the Mohammedan sect.<sup>96</sup>

Urrea himself recounted in a report to Philip II's successor Philip III that he had left the University of Alcalá in 1597 at the urging of Philip II, in order to go to the Escorial with the task of training a group of theologians who would be conversant in Arabic and could assist the king in matters arising concerning 'this vast, elegant, and ingenious language' and would enable him to bring Muslims into the knowledge of the Holy Catholic Faith.<sup>97</sup> While this apology for Arabic would eventually become a commonplace of European Orientalism, García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano wryly

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<sup>95</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, 259.

<sup>96</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, 227.

<sup>97</sup> N. Morata, ed., "Un Catálogo de Los Fondos Árabes Primitivos de El Escorial," *Al-Andalus* 2 (1934): 102–3; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 228–29.

observe how curious it is to see it attributed to Philip II.

Francisco de Gurmendi – the student shared by Dobelio, Urrea and the Jesuits – hailed from Guipúzcoa, adjacent to Xavier’s Navarre. He must have begun learning Arabic with Urrea, and have continued with Dobelio, before entering the service of Philip III as a translator. Like his teachers, he undertook to translate the Lead Books, and concluded they were falsifications. Gurmendi was a Basque from Guipúzcoa, born in Zarauz and a relative of Juan de Idiáquez, one of the most prominent members of Philip III's court. Juan de Pastrana dedicated a sonnet to Gurmendi as a preface to his most important book, the *Doctrina física y moral de príncipes*, in which De Pastrana wonders at the strange phenomenon:

It seems like magic, or a miracle, or a dream / that a man from Guipúzcoa, whose home is Zarauz... should be skilled in the Arabic language / and understand the African, the Asian, and the islander.<sup>98</sup>

As we know, the *Doctrina física y moral de príncipes* was a mirror-for-princes translated from Arabic; not literally, but with modifications of style to make it acceptable to Christian tastes. Another of the prefatory verses to the volume, this one by Beatriz de Villanueva, tried to clarify this concept using the metaphor of a bee that turns the bitter broom-flower into sweet nectar; in just this way, De Villanueva apostrophizes Gurmendi,

Your philosophy transposed  
from its Arabic origin to Castile,  
makes the barbarous language courteous,  
a bitter flower transformed into purest honey.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Francisco Gurmendi de, *Doctrina Física y Moral de Príncipes. Dirigido a Don Francisco Gómez Sandoval y Roxas, Duque de Lerma [...] Traduízido de Árábigo En Castellano, Por Francisco de Gurmendi, Criado de Su Magestad, Natural de La Providencia de Guipúzcoa* (Madrid: Andrés de Parra y Gaspar García, 1615); García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 242.

<sup>99</sup> Gurmendi, *Doctrina Física y Moral de Príncipes. Dirigido a Don Francisco Gómez Sandoval y Roxas, Duque de Lerma [...] Traduízido de Árábigo En Castellano, Por Francisco de Gurmendi, Criado de Su Magestad, Natural de La Providencia de Guipúzcoa*.

Like the Mughal historians and the cross-cultural political counsellors discussed in the coming chapters, Gurmendi has the inverse tasks of making the familiar strange, the 'barbarous ... courteous', and of bringing political knowledge from afar. In effect, Gurmendi presents a Christian re-creation of multiple Islamic mirror-for-princes, and thus gives readers access to the hidden treasures of the Arabic language.<sup>100</sup> Gurmendi does not mention what books he is translating, but in spite of the changes he introduces, the Islamic origin of his sources is clear from the characters he cites; they occur in well-known Arabic and Persian examples of the same literary genre, like al-Turtushi's mirror-for-princes, *Siraj al-muluk*, to which his teacher Dobelio also frequently referred.

In the late sixteenth century, Rome assumed a central role in the study of Oriental languages, as well as the collection and production of Oriental books. This was buttressed by the founding of the Manorite College of Rome in 1584, which took on a leading role in the translation of Eastern Christian culture.<sup>101</sup> Jerome Xavier would himself make an appearance in a religious controversy unfolding in Rome surrounding his *Āṣṅayī Haqq-numā* ('Truth-Showing Mirror') presented to Jahangir, like the *Directorio*, in 1609. The Persian *Āṣṅayī Haqq-numā* was based on Xavier's Spanish original *Fuente de Vida* (ca. 1600) and was essentially a refutation of Islam in dialogue form. Like Xavier's Persian *Mir'āt al-quds* ('Mirror of Holiness', a *vitae christi*), which Jahangir sent as a gift to his Safavid rival Abbas I, a copy of the *Āṣṅayī Haqq-numā* ended up in Persia, where a man by the name of Ahmad Zayn al-Abidin wrote a polemic

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<sup>100</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 243.

<sup>101</sup> N. Gemayel, *Les Échanges Culturels Entre Les Maronites et l'Europe. Du Collège de Rome (1584) Au Collège de Ayn-Warqa (1789)*, 2 vols. (Beirut, 1984); P. Raphael, *Le Rôle Du Collège Manorite Dans l'orientalisme Au XVIIe et XVIIIe Siècles* (Beirut, 1950); García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 298.



response that refuted Christianity; he sent it to Rome in hopes that his argument would convince the Pope. Scholars in Rome, among them the Oriental scholar of Arabic and Persian, Guadagnoli, studied the Safavid text and prepared another refutation, which was published in the Roman presses of the Congregation in 1631; soon afterward there would be two Arabic translations made by Guadagnoli himself.<sup>102</sup> This last work enjoyed wide circulation and reached the Muslim East: we know that it found its way back to India and was wielded as a tool of religious propaganda at the Mughal court, and that years later, in the eighteenth century, an occasional Christian missionary would study it as a valuable resource for religious disputation with Muslims.<sup>103</sup>

## Millenarian Waves from Agra to the Escorial

When Jerome Xavier arrived at the Mughal court shortly after the turn of the religiously charged moment of the end of the Islamic Millennium (1591-1592), he encountered on the throne an emperor who styled himself as a messianic king and Renewer of a new golden age.<sup>104</sup> Over the course of Xavier's stay, the visual language of this propaganda would evolve into practices that included the use of Christian iconography to cast emperor Jahangir as a Messiah by showing him 'on allegorical

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<sup>102</sup> Filippo Guadagnoli, *Apologia pro Cristiana Religione qua a R. P. Philippo Guadagnolo Malleanensi, Clericorum Regul. Minorum S. Theologiae & Arabicae Linguae Professore, Respondetur Ad Objectiones Ahmed Filii Zin Alabedin, Persae Asphahensis, Contentas in Libro Inscripto Politor Speculi* (Rome: Typ. Sac. Congreg. de Prop. Fide, 1631); Filippo Guadagnoli, *Ljabat Al-Qasis Al-Haqir Filibus Kuwadanulus Al-Rahib Min Ruhbaniyya Yuqal Laha Bi-Lughat Al-Faranji Klarikus Minur Ila Ahmad Al-Sharif b. Zayn Al-Abidin Al-Farisi Al-Isbahani* (Rome: Typ. Sac. Congreg. de Prop. Fide, 1637); Filippo Guadagnoli, *Taba'a Hadha 'Kitab Al-Mubarak Al-Haqir Yusuf Min Jabal Lubnan Al-Mubarak Min Qaryat Basluqit Fi Rumiyya Al-Uzma Fi Sanat Alf Wa-Sittami'a Wa-Thalathina Li-Rabbina* (Rome: Typ. Sac. Congreg. de Prop. Fide, 1637); Camps, *Jerome Xavier S.J. and the Muslims of the Mogul Empire: Controversial Works and Missionary Activity*, 176.

<sup>103</sup> Camps, *Jerome Xavier S.J. and the Muslims of the Mogul Empire: Controversial Works and Missionary Activity*, 177.

<sup>104</sup> Ali Anooshahr, "Dialogue and Territoriality in a Mughal History of the Millennium," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 55, no. 2–3 (2012): 220–54; Tattavi, Qazi Ahmad and Asif Khan Qazvini, *Tarikh-i Alfi*, ed. Ghulam Riza Tabatabai Majd (Tehran: Shirkat-i Intisharat-i 'Ilmi va Faranghi, 2004); Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign*.

portraits standing on globes populated with pacified animals, surrounded by Christian paraphernalia such as haloes<sup>105</sup> or holding the globe in the style of a Salvator Mundi. Sufis in the Mughal India, like Shaykh Ghaus, would themselves attempt to draw universal sacred authority from a skilful fusion of a variety of sacred traditions including Arabic and subcontinental astrology and claimed that by enlisting the favour of the planets, they could make a person ‘the guide and messiah of his age.’<sup>106</sup> Another example is the Mehdavi Shaykh Alai, leader of an influential and militant messianic cult in the Gujarat of Akbar's time.<sup>107</sup>

In his court biography, Akbar was portrayed as the final manifestation of the unchanging divine light which had impregnated the mythical mother of the Timurids (and therefore Mughal's) original ancestor ‘in the same way it had [impregnated] Mary.’ After being transmitted through the holy bodies of Akbar's successive Timurid ancestors, ‘in order to arrive at perfection,’ the divine light came forth – or rather returned! – in the form of Akbar, at the moment of an auspicious planetary conjunction, sanctified by the climactic arrival of the millennium.<sup>108</sup> Akbar minted imperial millennial coins, debated the concept of Messianism with local and even European counterparts,<sup>109</sup> and commissioned a monumental Millennial History (*Tarikh-i Alfi*). Its account begins with the death of the Prophet and thus ‘sets up an expectation of a new beginning and a new being, that is, a new cycle of time.’<sup>110</sup> Since the chronicle ended with Akbar, one can surmise that it was the Mughal emperor who

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<sup>105</sup> Koch, “The Mughal Emperor as Solomon, Majnun, and Orpheus, or the Album as a Think Tank for Allegory.”

<sup>106</sup> Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign*, 109.

<sup>107</sup> For a study of millenarianism's continuities from Spain to India, see Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Turning the Stones Over: Sixteenth-Century Millenarianism from the Tagus to the Ganges,” *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 40, no. 2 (2003): 129–61.

<sup>108</sup> Abu'l Fazl, *The Akbarnama of Abu-l-Fazl*, trans. Henry Beveridge (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1897), 1:508–517.

<sup>109</sup> Subrahmanyam, “Connected Histories: Notes TOwards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia,” 748–49.

<sup>110</sup> Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign*, 134.

had filled this absence and fulfilled this expectation by inaugurating the new millennium. This observation is supported by the fact that in this work Akbar received the imprint of the Renewer of the Second Millennium (*Mujaddid-i Alf-i Thani*).<sup>111</sup>

Akbar's millennial ideology was taken up by his son Jahangir, who preferred a visual medium for his messianic claims. In a famous painting of Jahangir preferring a Sufi *pir* (spiritual guide) over the worldly rulers of the Ottoman empire and England, the millennial sovereign sits enthroned upon a giant hourglass. The inscription on the hourglass marks the Mughal emperor as the heir to Akbar in a dynastic succession of *pirs*, addressing him with the talismanic salutation of Akbar's Din-i Ilahi, '*Allah-u Akbar!*' It is this sacred inheritance that provides the basis for the wish 'may [your] reign endure a thousand years!'<sup>112</sup> Elsewhere, Jahangir is depicted with a lamb and lion resting calmly at his feet, an image which had adorned the Polyglot Bible that arrived at the Mughal court with the Jesuits, and which represented peace among living beings under the rule of the Messiah.<sup>113</sup> This messianic cult was finally elevated to a monumental dynastic level with Jahangir's building of the imperial tomb for Akbar at Sikandra in 1605, where the Mughal emperor as Sufi and Messiah was represented in the architectural program of the mausoleum.<sup>114</sup>

Further West, at the rival court of the Safavids, the Sufi order of the Nimatullahis was able to prove that their founder had foretold 'the rise of the Safavids as the expected messianic order,' which allowed the order to maintain control of their major shrine complex, its members to be promoted to high-ranking positions within the imperial religious administration, marry into the imperial household, and even

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<sup>111</sup> Tattavi, Qazi Ahmad and Qazvini, *Tarikh-i Alfi*, 1:241; Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign*, 134.

<sup>112</sup> Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign*, 208; Uroš Zver, "King, Sufi and Messiah: The Tomb of Mughal Emperor Akbar (r.1556-1605)" (University of Vienna, 2013), 77.

<sup>113</sup> Koch, *Mughal Art and Imperial Ideology: Collected Essays*, 2–5.

<sup>114</sup> Zver, "King, Sufi and Messiah: The Tomb of Mughal Emperor Akbar (r.1556-1605)."

obtain influence over dynastic politics.<sup>115</sup>

The *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk* ('The History of Prophets and Kings') of the great Persian historian al-Tabari, emphasised the prophetic quality of Islamic history, and the focus of history on recurring prophethood. As such, the book formed part of a wider apocalyptic and eschatological tradition in the Muslim world, which drew on an eclectic mix of the Messianism of David, Syrian and Byzantine motifs, and would have been all too familiar to Philip II's contemporary and neighbour, the Moroccan sultan al-Mansur, who acceded to the Moroccan throne in 1578, around the time Xavier commenced his probation at the College of Villarejo de Fuentes in La Mancha, before being sent off to India.

Al-Mansur's officials and literati produced page upon page of court panegyrics, and strategically projected a state propaganda which styled the Sultan as a sacred and more importantly messianic king. As in the case of the Mughals, the purpose here was to use a sanctified genealogy to unite in the Sultan both sacred and profane authority, to show him as the Renewer of the new Millennium, and to legitimise his pretensions to unfettered rule as the Universal Caliph as a matter of divine providence.<sup>116</sup> Al-Mansur and Philip II were in each other's hair from the get-go. Al-Mansur's very accession was a result of having defeated an alliance of his nephew al-Mutawakkil and Philip II's nephew, the Portuguese king Dom Sebastian. Al-Mansur thanked Philip II for refusing to participate in Dom Sebastian's interference, a move that ended up giving al-Mansur increased standing and left European ambassadors, including Philip's – remember the aforementioned Moriscos Alonso del Castillo and Diego Marín –

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<sup>115</sup> Jean Aubin, *Majmu'ah Dar Tarjumah-i Ahval-i Shah Ni-Matullah [Materiaux Pour La Biographie De Shah Ni'matullah Wali Kermani]* (Tehran: Anjuman-i Iranshinasi-'i Faransah dar Tihiran, 1982), 7–8.

<sup>116</sup> Al-Mansur's Messianic propaganda is discussed in detail in Mercedes García-Arenal, *Messianism and Puritanical Reform: Mahdīs of the Muslim West*, trans. Martin Beagles, *The Medieval and Early Modern Iberian World (Formerly Medieval Iberian Peninsula)* 29 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2006), 269.

scurrying to his court. Meanwhile, however, Philip II now held hostage al-Mansur's uncle and nephew who had escaped to the Spanish court in hope of military support for a renewed attempt to seize the Moroccan throne and was able to leverage them as a threat of potential Spanish alternatives to al-Mansur. Al-Mansur too conspired against the interests of the Spanish king, and not only wanted to retake Andalusia, but even proposed to Queen Elizabeth an Anglo-Moroccan conquest of Philip's American territories.<sup>117</sup> The mutual obsession, however, extended to the more benign interest in each other's strategies for their respective public projections of universal kingship. Al-Mansur, while constructing his own palace at Dar al-Makhzan, was fascinated by Philip's building project at the Escorial as a monument of dynastic commemoration and a symbol of the Catholic Monarchy's power.<sup>118</sup> It is hardly surprising that such an interlocking relationship should produce on both sides a great deal of prophetism, providentialism, and messianic visions with which to feed the desire for liberation and revenge. This was even more likely when one considers that messianic prophetism was also a marked characteristic of the political and religious life of contemporary Christian Spain, the society in which the Moriscos found themselves immersed.

With the end of the Reconquista and the discovery of America at the end of the fifteenth century, Spanish monarchy believed it had been granted a special function of metaphysical origin, making it the nation chosen by God for the realisation of the highest political and spiritual undertakings. This near-simultaneous pair of achievements were both attributed to a divine providence which would bring with it the conversion of all humanity to the Christian faith and a reestablishment of the early church. One of Philip's most ostentatious titles was that of 'King of Jerusalem',

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<sup>117</sup> G. Paniel, "Le Maroc à La Recherche d'une Conquête: L'Espagne Ou Les Indes?," *Hespéris* 40 (1953): 511–21.

<sup>118</sup> Antonio Saldanha de, *Crónica de Almançor, Sultão de Marrocos (1578-1603)*, ed. A. Dias Farinha, trans. Léon Bourdon (Lisbon, 1997), 162.

implying the Spanish crown's intention to rule over all holy places, not unlike a Caliph. Philip, styling himself as a messianic 'new Solomon', thought of the Escorial as representing the recovery and incorporation of the Hebrew monarchy of the Old Testament, and the building was planned in accordance with Biblical descriptions of the Temple of Solomon, regarded as a model of construction for Christians, as divinely revealed architecture inspired by God.<sup>119</sup>

Thus, Jerome Xavier was not the only Spanish Jesuit penning political advice to a Messianic king. Philip II provided all the ostentatious pretensions of an imagined Oriental despot, in a vocabulary that shifted freely between the irreconcilable Islamic and Christian visions of Messianic rule, divine providence rooted in an ancient, Eastern past, and religious renewal that would usher in a new Golden Age. Xavier's Jesuit colleagues in Spain wrote in service of just such a vision of glorious and everlasting government, without ever leaving home turf, and it is to them and their political thought that we now turn.

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<sup>119</sup> García-Arenal, *Messianism and Puritanical Reform: Mahdīs of the Muslim West*, 277.

## 2. Jesuit Political Thought in Spain and Europe

In the decade before Jerome Xavier's entry into the Society of Jesus at the University of Alcalá, a mirror-for-princes was dedicated to the young king Philip II as part of a large, as yet unfinished work on princely education. Fadrique Furió Ceriol, a humanist at the fringes of heterodoxy from the University of Louvain, where orthodox Catholics still rubbed shoulders with disciples of Erasmus and protestants, published his *El concejo y consejeros del príncipe* for Philip II in Antwerp in 1559. The work was enough for Henri Méchoulan – rediscoverer, translator and publisher of the text – to place it on par with the most original political reflections of the century by Machiavelli, Jean Bodin and Montaigne.<sup>120</sup> Ceriol addressed both systemic question of government, as well as the sensitive issue of staffing. Its popularity saw an Italian edition appear in Venice the following year (1560), then one in Latin (1563), and soon in English (1570) and other languages, quickly spreading throughout Europe.

Moments of succession, or change in rulership, were especially propitious for the hatching of reformist or utopian texts; a windfall for the intellectuals who wanted to make their ideas triumph while gaining the favour of the young king. And so it is at the inception of his reign that several other works were addressed to Philip II: in addition to Furió's *El concejo*, these included the *Memorial* of Luis Ortiz, and the *Institución de un Rey Cristiano*, a treatise on the education of the prince from another Spanish humanist at Louvain, Feline de la Torre.<sup>121</sup>

The work of Niccoló Machiavelli, who had published his *Prince* in 1532,

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<sup>120</sup> Fadrique Furió Ceriol, *El concejo y consejeros del príncipe* (Madrid: Tecnos, 1993); Fadrique Furió Ceriol, *Raison et Altérité chez Fadrique Furió Ceriol: philosophe politique espagnol du XVIe siècle*, ed. and trans. Henri Méchoulan (Paris & The Hague: Mouton, 1973); Alain Milhou, *Pouvoir Royal et Absolutisme Dans l'Espagne Du XVIe Siècle*, Anejos de Criticón 13 (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 1999), 80.

<sup>121</sup> Milhou, *Pouvoir Royal et Absolutisme Dans l'Espagne Du XVIe Siècle*, 62.

continued to cast a long shadow – Jesuits at the end of the sixteenth would still quote him from elegant Spanish translations – even though the Catholic Church had placed the book on its List of Forbidden Books the very year Furió's *El concejo* was published. Machiavelli's essential idea, a secular reflection on the State, liberated from any providentialism or religious morality, instead based on experience, was partly preserved in Furió Ceriol's mirror-for-princes dedicated to Philip II. What Furió distances himself from is Machiavelli's pragmatic reliance on deception and dissimulation. In this sense, Philip II's first mirror-for-princes does inherit the political science established by Machiavelli, but at the same time prefigures two important fixtures of the century's final years. One was the willingness to make the king the absolute arbiter above all the political and religious factions, a view most famously associated with Jean Bodin, but also with the Jesuit promotion of absolute rule. The other, somewhat more daring suggestion, is to see in *El concejo* a prefiguring of the tolerance, though religious in nature, of Montaigne.<sup>122</sup>

To the extent that it is considered universal and radically new, the model elaborated by Furió is utopian, even if he makes references to the multinational Spanish monarchy. Moved by a scientific willingness to analyse the State, in a way that is reminiscent of Machiavelli, Furió tries to construct an ideal republic like those of Erasmus, Thomas More, and Alfonso de Valdes, which represented a striking reconciliation of two opposite sides of the Renaissance political philosophy: empirical realism, and utopian-irenist idealism.<sup>123</sup> This, as we shall see, is a dichotomy that will haunt our Jesuit political theorists.

Secularisation of political thought, specificity of the political, and the need for

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<sup>122</sup> Milhou, 80–81.

<sup>123</sup> Milhou, 82.



the Prince to learn the science of government; those are the main traits of Furió prologue. Departing from the old medieval idea of the two bodies of the king – the physical and symbolic body<sup>124</sup> – Furió refashions it completely in the light diffused by Machiavelli, by distinguishing the prince's private person from his public. In drawing out this distinction and applying it to his education, Furió believes he is proposing something completely new, with all the pride of a 'modern' as opposed to the 'ancients' (*'han errado todos ellos hasta día de hoy'*). What is the point of giving the prince a perfect education that is both modern (natural philosophy, mathematics, medicine), as well as traditional (theology, moral philosophy) if one does not teach him what concerns his 'profession': the science of government?<sup>125</sup>

The initial Spanish reaction to Machiavelli's use of a Spanish monarch in his book was a polemical attitude to demonstrate that the Spanish king Fernando II is not a Machiavellian politician, and that he is in fact completely different from Machiavelli's Cesar Borgia. This attitude should be seen as part of a wider conceptual mosaic constructed with the intention of showing that Spanish had a rightful claim to the New World and that Spain's hand in Asia was ensured not by ingenious theology, but by a messianic conception of its own political thought. It is this tradition of 'governmental wisdom', which grants the Catholic king the historic role of liberator of the Church from the militant Babylonia and the realiser of the 'prophetic divine law.'<sup>126</sup>

These moralistic Spanish responses to Machiavelli's extraordinarily influential and widely circulated work, nonetheless clearly show that it was not considered enough to refute, no matter how skilfully, Machiavelli's political argument. One had to invent

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<sup>124</sup> Ernst Hartwig Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton University Press, 1997).

<sup>125</sup> Milhou, *Pouvoir Royal et Absolutisme Dans l'Espagne Du XVIe Siècle*, 82.

<sup>126</sup> A. Panichi, "La Presenza de Machiavelli Nel Discorso Delle Ragioni Che Ha Il Re Cattolico Sopra Il Nuovo Emisfero Di Tommaso Campanella," *Bruniana & Campanelliana* 16, no. 1 (n.d.): 263.

an alternative capable not only of confronting the demands of political practice, but also to maintain the moral supremacy of religion over politics.<sup>127</sup> In spite of Society's professed ban on engaging in secular or political affairs, and an environment of continuous and painstaking struggle over the precise delimitations of sacred and profane activities, the Jesuits in the late sixteenth century would produce a series of enormously influential political philosophers and authors of mirrors-for-princes. These authors would elaborate, and invert, Furió's themes of monarchic religious arbitration and tolerance by articulating a vision of government where men of religion stand closer to power, and religious tolerance is increasingly seen as an impediment to successful rule.

## Religious Tolerance

The Jesuit Giovanni Botero (who was discharged from the Society in 1580) is most famous for being the first, in 1589, to use the Machiavellian term of 'Reason of State' as a book title.<sup>128</sup> That the matter lay close to Philip II's heart is clear if we consider that the king ordered a Spanish translation of the *Della ragion di Stato* be made as soon as it was published in Venice.<sup>129</sup>

In the early 1580s, writers had begun to insist – whether from a theological or a political perspective – that it was impossible for peoples of different religions to live together in the same country, and no one represented this approach to minorities within a community better than Botero, who in his treatise reminded the prince that nothing made men more opposed and hostile than religion. Most empires declined

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<sup>127</sup> J.A. Fernández Santamaría, *Razón de Estado y Política En El Pensamiento Español Del Barroco (1596-1640)* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, 1986), 15.

<sup>128</sup> Machiavelli had never used the term.

<sup>129</sup> Giovanni Botero, *Della Ragion Di State e Delle Cause Della Grandezza e Magnificenza Delle Città* (Venice: Gioliti, 1589); Giovanni Botero, *Los Diez Libros de La Razón de Estado*, trans. Antonio Herrera y Tordesillas de (Madrid: Luys Sanchez, 1613).

because of confrontations between their subjects, so the prince must do everything possible to avoid them. From the Christian perspective, destruction of his monarchy by 'unbelievers' had to be prevented by converting them, using a serious process of religious and civil education.<sup>130</sup> Those unbelievers, especially Muslims, could be difficult to convert, so the monarch should make every effort to control them by various means; depriving them of any source of unity and spiritual strength; barring them from holding public office; treating them as slaves; and 'feminizing' their sons, so as to turn them into powerless and hollow subjects incapable of resistance or rebellion.<sup>131</sup> Should this approach be ineffective they would have to be cast out altogether.<sup>132</sup>

Behind all this analysis and advice – and no one doubted that Botero's 'general' principles were formulated for the particular case of Spain – was the notion that while the Morisco problem was one of religion and integration, it was also a matter of state, and therefore the debate should take into account the long-term situation of a minority that in the eyes of many was seeking to destabilise the kingdom.<sup>133</sup> In other words, especially since the revolt of the Granadan Moriscos in 1568-71 -- Xavier's first years at the University of Alcalá – many inhabitants of the peninsula and especially the monarchy considered the threat of the Moriscos as both religious and political, and thus the discussion of what to do in the long term became no longer exclusively ecclesiastical but increasingly political.<sup>134</sup>

Although Jesuits like Ignacio de las Casas, and many others continued to argue

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<sup>130</sup> Botero, *Los Diez Libros de La Razón de Estado*, fols. 91v-92v.

<sup>131</sup> Botero, fols. 94r-95v.

<sup>132</sup> Botero, fols. 102r-102v.

<sup>133</sup> Xavier Gil Pujol, "Las Fuerzas Del Rey. La Generación Que Leyó a Botero," in *Le Forze Del Principe. Recursos, Instrumentos y Límites En La Práctica Del Poder Soberano En Los Territorios de La Monarquía Hispánica* (Murcia: Universidad de Murcia, 2004), 969–1022.

<sup>134</sup> Antonio Feros, "Rhetorics of Expulsion," in *The Expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain: A Mediterranean Diaspora*, ed. Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wiegers, trans. Consuelo López-Morillas and Martin Beagles, *The Medieval and Early Modern Iberian World (Formerly Medieval Iberian Peninsula)* 56 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014), 71–72.

that in spite of the need to eviscerate the Morisco identity it was active assimilation, even accommodation to some extent, that was needed to accomplish this end, from 1582 onwards official discussions surrounding Philip II all seemed to come down to the uncompromising opinion that only expelling, or else enslaving or killing them would work, though Philip II never enacted such a policy.<sup>135</sup> Antonio Possevino's *Bibliotheca selecta*, which laid the groundwork for the Jesuit curriculum, the *Ratio studiorum*, set the anti-Machiavellian tone that became the Society's standard position. In the proses, he and Botero turned the meaning of Machiavellianism inside out: it was no longer associated with intolerance and persecution, but with religious tolerance and accommodation, identifying it with the pragmatism of amoral politics.<sup>136</sup>

Thus, we see that from 1598 onward the voices of those who pleaded for humane treatment of the Moriscos – for using *medios blandos* ('soft methods') in the parlance of the day – grew ever fainter in the institutional debate about the Morisco question. In February 1599 – a crucial moment in Philip III's reign, when policies toward England, France and especially the Netherlands were being formed – his Council of State proposed extremely repressive measures. It discussed a combination of actions that included sending to prison, or to the galleys, all Moriscos between the ages of 15 and 60, and expelling all those older than 60, while re-educating all their children. Many people shared and expressed these opinions in the early years of Philip III's reign – the Moriscos were internal enemies and ought to be treated as such. That was also the advice of given by one of the most influential thinkers of the day, Baltasar Álamos de Barrientos, in his *Discurso político al rey Felipe III al comienzo de su reinado* ('Political Address to King Philip III at the Outset of his Reign'), composed between

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<sup>135</sup> Feros, 72.

<sup>136</sup> Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c. 1540-1630*, 103.

1598 and 1600.<sup>137</sup>

Meanwhile in India, 1599 was the year in which Xavier completed the Spanish version of his *Fuente de Vida* ('Fountain of Life') of which the Persian translation by the title *Āīnāyi Haqq-numā* ('Truth-Showing Mirror') would be presented to Jahangir, like the *Directorio*, in 1609. The *Āīnāyi Haqq-numā* is a philosophical dialogue between a Christian and Muslim sage, presided over by a philosopher-king, presumably a representation of the religiously eclectic Mughal emperor Akbar. This work, intended for the Mughal emperor himself, while ultimately translated into Persian and displaying Koranic erudition, was otherwise an unapologetic attempt to demonstrate the truth of Christianity and outright falsity of Islam. Its polemical tone was struck in spite of the fact that Loyola had stipulated that the central challenge and task of Jesuit Fathers who worked at the court of non-Christian kings and lived 'among the Gentiles' was to obtain the 'love and respect' of those rulers.<sup>138</sup> Not that Xavier was oblivious to the virtue of tolerance, a policy he would later ascribe to the Mughal emperor Jahangir. Xavier says the ruler would wonder...

.... how [he] could... possibly deny freedom to those who seek his protection, him being Lord of the world? As soon as he began his reign he immediately decreed that all who came to his lands were free of any tributes and taxes.<sup>139</sup>

It is interesting that this sentiment of pastoral protection echoes one of Xavier's own letters, written in the very year of the publication of Botero's *Reason* (1589), where in an irenist reference to the words of Pope Gregorio XIII, the missionary highlights the importance of preserving the Chaldean language for the apostolate among the

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<sup>137</sup> Baltasar Álamos de Barrientos, *Discurso Político Al Rey Felipe III Al Comienzo de Su Reinado* (Barcelona: Anthropos, 1990).

<sup>138</sup> Ines G. Županov, *Disputed Mission: Jesuit Experiments and Brahmanical Knowledge in Seventeenth-Century India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), 38.

<sup>139</sup> Jorge Flores, *The Mughal Padshah: A Jesuit Treatise on Emperor Jahangir's Court and Household*, vol. 6, Rulers & Elites: Comparative Studies in Governance (Leiden: Brill, 2016), para. 47.

‘aberrant’ Malabar Christians, saying: ‘who could possibly deny them not only their customs but their language?’<sup>140</sup>

Works like Botero's mirror-for-princes circulated at an impressive rate throughout Europe, often being furnished with translations into other major languages like Latin, Italian, Spanish or French within a year or two from the date of publication. In the case of Botero's *Reason*, rendered into Spanish only months after its original publication, the crossing into Spain would have been relatively easy given its particularly Spanish-oriented subject-matter. However, such works could at times successfully bridge much greater cultural distances, and even confessional boundaries.

## The problem of Jesuit Counsel

The distinction between the religious and temporal matters had been in use in the Society since its inception, and with the question of political counsel brought out the tension between spiritual and political pursuits.<sup>141</sup> The issue did not lack for doctrinal clarity, since the fundamental Jesuit doctrine laid down in De Loyola's *Constitutions* already forbade in no uncertain terms any involvement in ‘worldly business,’ *negotia secularia*<sup>142</sup>:

It is especially important to preserve the benevolence of the Apostolic See, and next that of secular princes, magnates and men of high position, for their favour or alienation [from us] is of great significance.<sup>143</sup>

In his letters, Ignatius further insists that, in keeping with the Society's spirit of

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<sup>140</sup> Jerome Xavier, S.J., “Letter to Aquaviva from Cochin,” January 1, 1589, fol. 338v, Goa 13, II, ARSI.

<sup>141</sup> Harald E. Braun, ed., *Jesuits as Counsellors in the Early Modern World*, Special Issue of the Journal of Jesuit Studies, 4, 2017; Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c. 1540-1630*, 54.

<sup>142</sup> Ignatius Loyola de, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, trans. George E. Ganss, S.J. (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1970), 263.

<sup>143</sup> Loyola, 824.

humility and modesty, Jesuits were never to receive favours, honours or posts from the from temporal rulers, were forbidden from accessing their dwellings, in short were to avoid any and all 'secular matters'.<sup>144</sup> In this light, Xavier's exploits at the Mughal court, indeed that of his colleagues across royal courts in various parts of the world, appear completely unconscionable. However, Ignatius' letters are also ambiguous. In some places, they advise members that 'in dealing with men of position and influence, if you are to win their affection for the greater glory of our Lord God, look first to their disposition and accommodate yourselves to it.' Loyola then added an uncharacteristically pragmatic, and somewhat sinister appeal:

Whenever we wish to win someone over and engage him in the greater service of our Lord God, we should use the same stratagem for good which the Enemy employed to draw the soul to evil: he enters through the other's door and leaves through his own.<sup>145</sup>

This may already evoke the moral loopholes of the Jesuit strategies of accommodation, brought to fame in Japan, China and India, and of which Xavier has turned out to be such an extraordinary and underestimated exponent. The question of the Jesuit's geopolitical activities will be revisited in the next chapter but suffice it to say here that what was being claimed by those who invoked Ignatius' warnings was that members should keep out of politics altogether. Of course, this did not always correspond to what was done in practice.<sup>146</sup> Nonetheless, in 1592-1593, just as mirrors-for-princes were sprouting like daisies on the lawn of Jesuit Europe, the Fifth Congregation mandated that...

... no Jesuit was for any reason to become in the public and secular affairs of princes which have to do with, as they say, reason of state, nor were they to venture or presume to take the responsibility of dealing with political matters of this kind, no

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<sup>144</sup> William J. Young, ed., *Letters of St Ignatius of Loyola* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1959), 383.

<sup>145</sup> Young, 51.

<sup>146</sup> Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c. 1540-1630*, 60.

matter how insistently of by whom they might be required or directed to do so.<sup>147</sup>

Those who violated this injunction were to be declared ineligible to hold office in the Society, and they were to be deprived of the right to vote in the Society's elections. The reality, as we know, was somewhat different, as some were not afraid to make clear. Possevino, for instance, drew up a list of more than twenty examples that proved that the decree departed from Jesuit practice.<sup>148</sup> Nonetheless, in the course of the second half of the sixteenth century, many Jesuits including Acquaviva himself had grown uneasy about the involvement of some of their number in politics. A few Jesuits played a role in the French Religious Wars, and others including Robert Parsons ardently supported an invasion of England or Scotland that would, it was hoped, result in the overthrow of Queen Elizabeth and the restoration of Catholicism in England.<sup>149</sup>

In 1602, the year in which Xavier completed the *Mir'āt al-quds*, the Life of Christ for Emperor Akbar, the Superior General Acquaviva issued an *Instruction for Confessors of Princes*, and in 1608, just a year before the completion of Xavier's *Directorio*, the Sixth General Congregation of the Society formally ratified it. This action by the Society's highest legislative body gave it the character of law for those Jesuits to whom was entrusted the responsibility of guiding the conscience of a prince.<sup>150</sup> Acquaviva's *Instructions* were intended as much for confessors as for princes themselves, and while repeating the mantra of abstention from 'external and political matters', complicated and in a sense equivocated the prescription.

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<sup>147</sup> J.W. Padberg, S.J., M.D. O'Keefe, S.J., and J.L. McCarthy, S.J., eds., *For Matters of Greater Moment: The First Thirty General Congregations. A Brief History and a Translation of the Decrees* (St. Louis, 1994), 201, 214; Robert Bireley, S.J., "Acquaviva's 'Instruction for Confessors of Princes' (1602/1608): A Document and Its Interpretation," 2015, 47; Giovanni Argenti, *Apologeticus Pro Societate Iesu* (Cologne: J. Kinckius, 1616), 33.

<sup>148</sup> "Dubii Proposti Dal P. Possevino l'anno 1594 circa Il Decreto Del Non Trattare Cose Di Stato" n.d., fols. 342–344, Congregationes 20b, ARSI.

<sup>149</sup> Bireley, S.J., "Acquaviva's 'Instruction for Confessors of Princes' (1602/1608): A Document and Its Interpretation," 46.

<sup>150</sup> Bireley, S.J., 45.



The Prince must hear patiently and dispassionately whatever the Confessor shall think it right to propound to him at the suggestion of [the Confessor's] conscience...; it is right that he should have the liberty of a [spiritual] Father to declare what he judges to be his and the prince's duty to God. A confessor often comes to know of evils [which] arise against the Prince's will and intention through the fault of his servants; but the duty to remove them falls on the Prince and his conscience.<sup>151</sup>

The intentions of the Father General and those before him to discourage members from engaging in political activity were sincere, but they were no less constrained by the hard reality of disconcerting courtly scenarios in France and Spain, including looming risks of heresy, which the Jesuits could allow to unfold unfettered. Especially if the risk constituted losing the support of their royal hosts needed for survival.<sup>152</sup> Naturally this also applied to Jesuit missions at imperial courts in Asia, where the Fathers were forced to walk a tight political rope, with the survival of their mission at the discretion of their heretic hosts. In the face of criticism against men of faith meddling in affairs which were better understood by, and left to other, men like Adam Contzen went on the offensive:

Nor did Christian kings ever lack instruction from devout theologians ... And I am not neglecting either my spiritual duties or my office when I discuss worldly government and secular matters, because the temporal republic must be ordered in such a way that terrestrial good and happiness conduce to the spiritual and celestial. The purview and end of my teaching is to show how all human matter both private and public are to be directed towards the highest good and the ultimate object.<sup>153</sup>

In a notorious passage, Aquaviva's instruction had revealed a crucial ambiguity when it first used the word *conscience*. The confessor, it read,

... should be careful lest he become involved in external and political matters, mindful of what the Fifth General Congregation had severely prohibited in canons 12 and 13; he should deal only with those affairs which pertain to the conscience of the prince or are related to it, or to certain pious works.

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<sup>151</sup> Claudio Aquaviva, *Pro Confesariis Principum* (Rome: Roman College, 1602), para. 4; Quoted in Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State*, c. 1540-1630, 60.

<sup>152</sup> Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State*, c. 1540-1630, 61.

<sup>153</sup> Adam Contzen, *Politicorum Libri Decem* (Mainz: J. Kinckius, 1621), 1-4.

But how could one withdraw from the domain of conscience ‘all external and political matters?’ The text seemed to prescribe this here but subsequently to modify its stance. The prince was expected to listen ‘patiently’ to whatever the confessor, as his conscience dictated, deemed ought to be proposed to the prince as a ‘public person’ as ‘more for the service of God and of the prince himself.’ In this respect he might rely not only on what he heard from the prince as his penitent but also on what he might learn from others at court. So, the confessor should enjoy a ‘religious liberty’ to bring to the attention of the ruler instances of oppression or of scandal of which the prince himself might be oblivious.<sup>154</sup>

As was the case with the mirror-for-princes genre generally, the specific debate on the political aspect of the role of confessors to kings – and the nature of good counsel – had been particularly lively in Spain.<sup>155</sup> One of the things the debate sought to resolve was the usefulness of Christian ethics to politics, a matter drawn into doubt since Machiavelli.<sup>156</sup> Moreover, there was now a concern about the suspicion a confessor’s involvement in ‘the murky arena of politics’ would cast on his character.<sup>157</sup> The Botero-lead anti-Machiavellian effort to define a corrected version of the Reason of State, one in accordance with Christian ethics, had tried to repair the connection between conscience and politics – a connection Machiavelli, Bodin and Tacitus had sought to dismantle. This effort formed the basis for Acquaviva’s implicit opening to politics by through the king’s conscience.<sup>158</sup> Indeed, in his emphasis on the inner virtue of the prince as a necessary condition for successful politics, Xavier would be following in the

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<sup>154</sup> Bireley, S.J., “Acquaviva’s ‘Instruction for Confessors of Princes’ (1602/1608): A Document and Its Interpretation,” 48.

<sup>155</sup> “State Affairs and Moral Dilemma: The Ministry of the Royal Confessor in Spain under Philippe III,” *Revue d’histoire moderne et contemporaine* No 53-3, no. 3 (2009): 7–28.

<sup>156</sup> Nicole Reinhardt, *Counsel and Councillors* (Oxford University Press, 2016).

<sup>157</sup> Edward Surtz and J.H. Hexter, eds., *The Complete Works of St Thomas More, Vol. IV: Utopia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), 55–9; see Reinhardt, *Counsel and Councillors*, 37.

<sup>158</sup> Reinhardt, *Counsel and Councillors*, 38.

footsteps of Botero.

Botero had argued for a reason of state that allowed for the concentration of power while retaining Christian morality – ‘prudence, procured through counsel, and valour, based on strength (*forze*)’.<sup>159</sup> While advocating that the king required a level of consent from the republic, Botero’s school – including authors such as Ribadeneira, and Possevino – ultimately distrusted ‘the people’, whose agency it regarded as always prone to sedition and rebellion.<sup>160</sup> Indeed, the ‘art of power’ as the subject of Xavier’s *Directorio*, resonated with Botero’s preoccupation with religiously guided ‘political domination’. Muslim *adab*’s search for proper practical means of government, rather than the articulation of a general theory of sovereignty, mirrored Botero’s conception of Reason of State as simply the ‘apt means to found, maintain, and extend domination,’ and his relative disinterest in the state as a mechanism of rule.<sup>161</sup> Like Botero, Xavier used ‘the people’ as a check on the arbitrariness of monarchical power, that is a moral safety. For Xavier, the risk ‘the people’ could present to royal power was to be sought in the king’s inadequate government – illustrated by poverty, rebellion and lack of justice – which was always at the root of popular dissent.

The project of restoration of Christian values to political ethics implied royal virtues which were divinely ordained, and therefore was disinclined to religious tolerance.<sup>162</sup> In this respect, Xavier departed from the dominant Jesuit line, in his repeated insistence on the importance of addressing the diverse needs of different groups throughout a king’s realm – in the Mughal context this necessarily meant

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<sup>159</sup> Botero, *Della Ragion Di State e Delle Cause Della Grandeza e Magnificenza Delle Città*, book 2, 152; see also Gil Pujol, “Las Fuerzas Del Rey. La Generación Que Leyó a Botero.”

<sup>160</sup> Reinhardt, *Counsel and Councillors*, 38.

<sup>161</sup> Reinhardt, 39.

<sup>162</sup> Pedro de Ribadeneira, *Tratado de La Religión y Virtudes Que Debe Tener El Príncipe Cristiano Para Gobernar y Conservar Sus Estados, Contra Lo Que Maquiavelo y Los Políticos de Este Tiempo Enseñan* (Antwerp: Plantin-Moret, 1597); on Possevino see Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c. 1540-1630*, 104.

different religious groups – and to treat conquered people with kindness and generosity. This made sense given the reality of the Mughal empire, and the necessity of the Mughal policy of religious tolerance as a condition for good government. It is not difficult to imagine why his royal Muslim host would have been spared the sort of attack on religious tolerance that was levelled at Christian kings in Europe. Akbar’s religious ecumenism was what had brought about and sustained the Jesuit mission in the first place.

Moreover, there is a religious tolerance implicit in the substance of Xavier’s counsel: it allows for an ideal system of princely virtues which, at least on the surface, are not exclusively Christian. Is it therefore any surprise that the *Directorio* was met in Europe with history’s most damning verdict: silence? However, it would be a grave misapprehension to take Xavier’s advice as secular or based on a kind of Machiavellian religious relativism. On the contrary, the deeply devout Xavier was at pains to avoid being perceived as ‘political’. The religious tolerance of Xavier’s *Directorio* is not one where moral truth is sacrificed for political power, but one where the ‘true’ Reason of State requires gentle mission rather than violent extirpation. The ideal of sectarian non-discrimination it hints at does not advocate for a divorce of religion and politics, but for rigid religious ethics asserted in service of a culturally diverse commonwealth. As such, the argument is a suitable echo of the Mughal imperial ideology of *sulh-i-kul*, carefully couched by Xavier in a historicised system of religious virtue, appropriated for his European-Christian examples.<sup>163</sup> In spite of its heavily Aristotelian and Ciceronian rhetoric, and its relative adherence to the anti-Machiavellian line, the *Directorio* is partly imbued with what Nicole Reinhardt describes as the Tacitist vision of ‘the dark and arcane side of power, the anarchic force of men’s “interests”, and the

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<sup>163</sup> Reinhardt, *Counsel and Councillors*, 40.

story of decaying states and civil wars'.<sup>164</sup> In this sense it is not unlike Justus Lipsius's *Politica* (1589). However, Xavier reproduced Botero's rejection of Tacitism's contention that infringement on accepted laws of justice was necessary for a prince's success. The solution was to be sought in spiritual elevation with the help of a suitable guide.

Nasir al-Din Tusi, the political philosopher most influential at the early Mughal court, advanced a vision of the king, and of his counsellor as the source of the king's knowledge, as both distinguished primarily by their wisdom, virtue, and care for the wider public, as well as the notion that an infidel but just king was preferable to a Muslim but unjust one. This is not an idea that would have been novel to Jerome Xavier. The allowance for the use of non-Christian moral virtue in politics, rejected in Botero and other Jesuit authors of the turn of the seventeenth century, had been alive in the earlier, fundamental Spanish work on political counsel: the aforementioned *Concejo y Consejeros del Príncipe*. In this work, Furió Ceriol had argued these qualities were there in 'in all good [men], be they Jews, Moors, gentiles, Christians, or of any other sect.'<sup>165</sup> Prefiguring Xavier's model of the self-fashioned Jesuit advisor, Ceriol also laid out the ideal of the counsellor as a scholar of history, well-travelled, linguistically versatile, interested in the new and different and, if possible, conversant in Oriental languages.<sup>166</sup>

The idea that it was confessors to kings who were best positioned to counsel the monarchs, was ascribed to their possessing a moral fortitude, which flatterers and other courtiers did not.<sup>167</sup> Xavier was conscious of the danger of compromising his religious virtue by dabbling in dubious activities at the Mughal court and had to retain

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<sup>164</sup> Reinhardt, 42.

<sup>165</sup> Furió Ceriol, *El concejo y consejeros del príncipe*, part IV, pp. 183–5; part II, pp. 152–3.

<sup>166</sup> Furió Ceriol, 127; this aspect of Ceriol's work is discussed in Reinhardt, *Counsel and Councillors*, 44.

<sup>167</sup> Reinhardt, *Counsel and Councillors*, 67.

his pious status even as he waded into the treacherous waters of courtly politics. Indeed, the *Directorio*'s entire project can be understood as a missionary's complex moulding into a source of good counsel, while struggling to avoid the role of a common flatterer consumed with courtly politics and manipulation. As we shall see in Chapter Six, this preoccupation corroborated Xavier's unusual refusal to pursue astronomy and mathematics – both of which were inextricably associated with Mughal courtly astrology and soothsaying – as missionary tools beyond his private conversations, and to keep even those modest conversations unaddressed in his detailed reports to Goa and Rome.

The *Duties of a Christian Prince*, published by Cardinal Robert Bellarmine in 1619, two years after Xavier's death, gives an extensive account of the role of royal confessors.<sup>168</sup> Bellarmine's well-known understanding of the prince's dual personas as a public and private individual, an elaboration of the idea already present in Botero, is reflected in Xavier's treatment of his patron's outward manifestation as a consequence of his private virtuousness or lack thereof, which was to be forever scrutinised and subjected to self-improvement, and was laid out at length in the second, longest chapter of the *Directorio*. As in Xavier, the ideal public persona of Bellarmine's prince flows from the ruler's interior virtue, which is its necessary condition.<sup>169</sup>

Xavier's willingness to level criticism, however implicit, at Jahangir, was in no way a feature unique to his mirror. While the Mughal mirrors, especially those directly addressed to Jahangir, were certainly far more circumspect in exposing gaps between ideal behaviour and the current dispensation, those addressing the court from the

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<sup>168</sup> Robert Bellarmine, "De Officio Principis Christiani," in *Scritti Spirituali*, ed. Pasquale Giustiniani and Gustavo Galeota, vol. 3 (Brescia: Morcelliana, 1997), 24–238; Robert Bireley, S.J., *Religion and Politics in the Age of the Counterreformation: Emperor Ferdinand II, William Lamormaini, S.J. and the Formation of Imperial Policy* (Chapel Hill, 1981), 24–44.

<sup>169</sup> Bellarmine, "De Officio Principis Christiani," 82, 84, 88.

outside, such as Keshavdas in his satirical panegyric (see Chapter Four), did not always aim to please.<sup>170</sup> Mirroring the simple, matter-of-fact language of the *Directorio*, its rejection of a more ornate Indo-Persian literary style, and Xavier's scepticism toward equivocation, Bellarmine described the confessor as the 'anti-courtier', retaining distance from 'court cabals' and excessive dependence on other courtiers, and contrasting with the 'world of pomp' that surrounded him, using simple language, free of 'worldly ambition, vanity, and courtly dissimulation.'<sup>171</sup>

Nicole Reinhardt has shown that 'this imposed a conduct, and ways of speaking, diametrically opposed to those of normal members of court society, but it assimilated the confessor to the ideal councillor, who always spoke frankly and without flattery.' The antagonism between Xavier and his Mughal rivals, including the historians Abdus Sattar and Naqib Khan, thus mirrored the long-held tension between courtiers and clergymen in the referential world of European courts. The urgency of this topic, not only for Jerome Xavier, but for Jesuits generally, had to do with the controversy concerning the fear of corruption experienced by confessors struggling to remain afloat in the worldly waters of courtly politics.

While it reflected various positions taken by his Jesuit contemporaries in Europe, Xavier's conception of royal virtue in the *Directorio* remained ambiguous. On the one hand, and in line with the idea of the king's interior virtue as the *a priori* test of good government, Xavier held the king's self-questioning and improvement – attention to his human vs. his kingly persona – as paramount. But this view, shared by Botero, Possevino, Ribadeneira, as well as Bellarmine, was contradicted in Xavier's parallel insistence on the king's virtue as dependent on its outward manifestation, i.e. his public

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<sup>170</sup> Reinhardt, *Counsel and Councillors*, 71.

<sup>171</sup> Bellarmine, "De Officio Principis Christiani," 86; discussed in Reinhardt, *Counsel and Councillors*, 71.

persona. Avoiding an explicit demand of an inner Christian morality, Xavier made allowance for a pragmatic difference between outward, possibly pragmatically motivated virtue, and private intentions; a stance that marks a clear departure from Botero's school. Whence might Xavier have derived his thinking?

In 1552, when Jerome Xavier was only a little boy, his uncle, Martín de Azpilcueta, an Augustinian canon known as Doctor Navarro (1492–1586), wrote a 'ground-breaking manual' in Portuguese with 'the first and most extensive list of sins princes committed ... as public personae.'<sup>172</sup> Azpilcueta had argued that as long as the king's public persona projects an image of virtue, we need not worry about his internal motivation. Indeed, outwardly virtue, separated from private whim, was the only meaningful measure of ethical conduct.<sup>173</sup>

If he dispenses divine or natural laws without just cause: or his own laws with some notable damage, or scandal for the republic as a result; or if he pardons crimes, which the divine or natural laws command be punished, and which might lead to reoffending; or if he suspends debts or payments without justification. We say, 'without just cause,' because to do it with just cause, and without notable scandal to his republic, is permitted.<sup>174</sup>

To act in this way, [Azpilcueta adds,] is to dispense justice according to partial knowledge and private opinion. It is to confuse the government of his republic. It is to bewilder the good and learned literati, who advise him on the content of his public laws, and now see him giving in to the contrary, a private whim. It is to put aside that which is considered preferable by many, and for many reasons, in favour of that which is preferred by the few, with little reason. Finally, it is to act in the heat of the moment, when the willingness is fond, and the judgement somewhat obscured, instead of deferring to that which was decided with the benefit of distance, without affection, and with great serenity, with the doctrine of Aristotle and St. Thomas. It even gives occasion to that which the soothsayers say: "Oh what work of justice never before heard or seen. Oh, what marvellous equity!" – but in effect they are the ones who reject [equity] the most, and without warning, and claim there is no justice unless the law bends to the will of the king.<sup>175</sup>

We will see further on that this diatribe on the importance of conducting the affairs of

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<sup>172</sup> Reinhardt, *Counsel and Councillors*, 86.

<sup>173</sup> Reinhardt, 87.

<sup>174</sup> Martín de Azpilcueta, *Manual de Confesores y Penitentes Que Clara y Brevemente Contiene La Universal y Particular Decision de Quasi Todas Las Dudas En Las Confesiones Suelen Ocurrir de Los Pecados, Absoluciones, Restituciones, Censuras e Irregularidades* (Salamanca: Casa de Andrea de Portonariis, 1572), 520–21.

<sup>175</sup> Azpilcueta, 520–21.



government not in the private, but the public interest, is loudly echoed in the advice and warnings issued twenty years later by Xavier to Jahangir. Xavier would agree with Azpilcueta's claim that it is not for the king to bestow justice to a people who are entitled to just law by God. After all, the king is but a temporary occupant of an office, in service of the public good, and therefore must 'permit people to freely defend the public good and their liberties, which are generally in effect by virtue of divine right of human law, and thus belong to them.'<sup>176</sup>

Along with a Bible, Azpilcueta's *Manual de Penitentes* and Aquinas' *Summa contra Gentiles* were present in virtually every Jesuit community, including in India.<sup>177</sup> Azpilcueta himself had been plugged into the growing geopolitical project of the Jesuits on the ground. He would receive letters from Jesuits in Africa and Brazil on matters large and small (including that of selling horses to Muslims in India). Echoing his uncle, Xavier's manual can be read as a catalogue of mainly cautionary tales in which kings had allowed their private vices get the better of their royal judgement, thus causing the ruin of the commonwealth. Ideal kings, on the other hand, were those who had managed to isolate the conduct of their public persona from the all too human private predations of greed, vanity, lasciviousness, and arrogance. It is not difficult to see the appeal of this scheme for a project that argued for public conduct in accordance with an ostensibly 'Western' brand of political ethics without making the ruler's admission of the Christian God into his heart a necessary condition for good government. The king's vices are only relevant if, and in as far as, they compromise the common good.

This leads us to a second way in which Xavier's work is connected to

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<sup>176</sup> Azpilcueta, 520–21.

<sup>177</sup> Mariano Saldanha, "A Primeira Imprensa Em Goa," *BIVG*, no. 73 (1956): 102–3.

Azpilcueta's. Xavier accurately reproduces his uncle's exhortations for the king to abandon all partiality and nepotism, to institute administrative meritocracy, to avoid the gratuitous accumulation of wealth beyond the needs of peace and security, and most importantly to view kingship not as something that is his property, but a divine treasure entrusted to him for safekeeping.<sup>178</sup> This is to be particularly observed in the dispensation of justice, the backbone of Xavier's system of good government. Jahangir was to hear testimonies of the accused, and tend toward the ennobling act of forgiveness, as Xavier's exemplary kings did time and again. The vision stood in stark contrast to Jesuit criticism of the reality of Jahangir's ruthless and whimsical sentences and executions, such as the ambush and murder of Abu'l Fazl, his father's closest adviser and 'great friend' of the Jesuits, during Prince Selim's rebellion.

Among Azpilcueta's main sources were works by at least three other European writers that had also found their way into the Mughal imperial library: Thomas Aquinas, Cajetan, and the Dominican friar Antonino of Florence – one of the main sources for Abdus Sattar's *Samarat al-falasafa* or *Ahwal-i Farangistan* (1603). Azpilcueta emphasized characteristics that would be of interest for Xavier's experience at the Mughal court, and indeed would feature prominently in future accounts of Oriental despotism: unjust war, exploitative taxation, and lack of distributive justice.

Azpilcueta's system of royal sins and critical appraisal of the Spanish monarchy owe much to the influence of Aquinas among Spain's second scholastic theologians. Even though the focus in subsequent mirrors was to shift to the religious virtue of the prince, Xavier emulated Azpilcueta's strikingly contractualist framework – an emphasis not just on the need for popular consent, but the notion of a reciprocal responsibility between the ruler and his subjects. Xavier's prince is failing to act

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<sup>178</sup> Reinhardt, *Counsel and Councillors*, 91.

virtuously in as far as he is reneging on his responsibility to the public good. The conception of the ruler's public duty as a reciprocal responsibility corresponded to the articulation of a Mughal social contract, the breach of which was among the subjects of Xavier's criticism in the *Directorio*, by Abu'l Fazl, Akbar's chief ideologue.

Xavier ultimately affirms that all vices are important, not just those that imply negligence of public duties. The importance of public optics notwithstanding, he repeatedly suggests that inner vices might cause damage to the realm, simply because they will incur the wrath of God. Here Xavier's vision come close to that of a lesser-known contemporary, Martino Fornari (1547–1612). This teacher of moral theology at the College in Rome, the heart of the Jesuit education system, presented a distinctly absolutist framework. But – in contrast to the Thomist contractualism of Azpilcueta, where power was held through consensus of the republic – Fornari emphasized the sins of avarice and pride, using biblical references. In his tailor-made counsel for Jahangir, Xavier appears to be putting forward an amalgam of Azpilcueta's and Fornari's views, where the king derives his mandate directly from God, but where God may rescind that mandate if the king breaches his contract with the general public. Fornari's idea that the king's lack of religious virtue can have grave consequences as God might take vengeance on the kingdom as a whole, are echoed in Xavier's many examples, which like Fornari's are often biblical.

Moreover, Fornari's emphasis on avarice and pride under the heading of what he calls *acceptio personarum* (undue preference or partiality) resonate powerfully with Xavier's appeals for generosity and humility, as well as impartiality, as the principal conditions for good government. As Reinhardt observes, Fornari's *acceptio personarum* 'indicated not only unjust preference given to individuals, or making distinctions between people as sinful, but a variety of offences against distributive justice, like the creation of monopolies, the unjust distribution of offices, and venality

of offices linked to jurisdiction, as well as corruption of counsellors and judges.<sup>179</sup> Xavier's explicit emphasis on the inversion of the king's preferences to elevate the interest of the general public over his or his circle's private interests is interesting in light of the importance attached to *acceptio personarum* in another work: Aquinas's *Summa contra Gentiles*.<sup>180</sup> As we know the *Summa* was one of the books Akbar held in the imperial library and which he had put at Xavier's disposal in Agra.

While he was clearly intimately familiar with Aquinas opus, it is difficult to say whether Xavier knew Fornari's work, though the commonalities at any rate reflect something of what was at stake in Jesuit debates on the relation between good counsel and good kingship at the turn of the seventeenth century. As much as Fornari insisted on Divine Right of kingship, he also recalled De Mariana's indispensability of good spiritual counsel for good government. To this he added the emphasis on internal, self-improving checks on the king's actions as well. Compare this to Xavier's treatment of *eslāh* ('self-improvement') in Chapter Two of the *Directorio*, which was in full accordance with Fornari's appeal for 'spiritual counsel that aimed at attaining virtues through the cultivation of the inner self'. Fornari contained the potentially dangerous effects that the lack of contractual limitations on rulers might cause, by demands on interior discipline as well as on exterior counselling. To the extent that Xavier's project required a self-fashioning as a spiritual guide, that is one concerned with emperor's interior moral enhancement, his role presupposes a more comprehensive understanding of spiritual guidance than Azpilcueta's, but one which Acquaviva, prefigured by works such as Fornari's, eventually provided to the missionary counsellor.

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<sup>179</sup> Reinhardt, 103.

<sup>180</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Contra Gentiles of Saint Thomas Aquinas* (London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1923), IIa, IIae, q.63.

## Jesuit Mirrors for Princes in Spain

As Xavier was completing the *Āṣṇayī Haqq-numā* for the Muslim emperor, back home Philip III's council was debating a clampdown on the Moriscos. In the thick of these discussions, a new Jesuit work was published for the king's first tutor, the archbishop of Toledo, García de Loaysa. Its author, Father Juan de Mariana (1535-1621), was one of the most controversial<sup>181</sup> political thinkers and authors on political virtue in Spain.<sup>182</sup> A humanist theologian and historian who had associated with Botero during their time in Rome, his ultimate contribution to European political and moral thought was his mirror-for-princes for Philip III, *De rege et regis institutione libri tres*.<sup>183</sup> Not unlike Xavier's *Directorio* in intention, the Mariana's was framed to remind Philip III the relevant history lessons while deepening his understanding of the practice and ethic of government, and thus helping the young prince to negotiate the treacherous waters of the recent confessional politics at the beginning of modernity.<sup>184</sup>

*De Rege* was written for a Spanish audience, for the benefit of the Spanish monarchy and the clergy of Castile. De Mariana tried to redefine the terms of the contemporary debate about the Reason of State, by putting forward a highly pragmatic view where the ends justify the means.<sup>185</sup> *De rege*'s historical examples are replete with

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<sup>181</sup> This text was classified in the anthology La "Monarquía Católica" de Felipe II y los españoles under the rubric of "Voces discrepantes". See Milhou, *Pouvoir Royal et Absolutisme Dans l'Espagne Du XVIe Siècle*, 62.

<sup>182</sup> Harald E. Braun, "Juan de Mariana En Las Encrucijadas de La Moral Política," in *Virtudes Políticas En El Siglo de Oro*, ed. María Idoya Zorroza, Colección de Pensamiento Medieval y Renacentista 136 (Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 2013), 145.

<sup>183</sup> See also: H.E. Braun. *Juan de Mariana and Early Modern Spanish Political Thought*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2007. R.W. Truman, *Spanish Treatises on Government, Society and Religions in the Time of Philip II, The "de regimine principum" and associated traditions*. Brill, Leiden, 1999. H.E. Braun. *Conscience, Counsel, and Theocracy at the Spanish Habsburg Court*. In H.E. Braun / E. Vallance (eds.) *Contexts of Conscience in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1700*, Basingstoke, Palgrave-Macmillan, 2004, pp. 56-66.

<sup>184</sup> Braun, "Juan de Mariana En Las Encrucijadas de La Moral Política," 145-46.

<sup>185</sup> Ribadeneira, *Tratado de La Religión y Virtudes Que Debe Tener El Príncipe Cristiano Para Gobernar y Conservar Sus Estados, Contra Lo Que Maquiavelo y Los Políticos de Este Tiempo Enseñan*.

illustrations of the way in which monarchs as well their subjects are in effect complicit in manipulating the law in accordance with their own interests. A certain realism about this self-interested human nature leads him to the conclusion that ‘history shows that there is no general law better than that of well-armed kings.’<sup>186</sup>

In a rather grim vision of government, De Mariana then gives specific examples of political ends justifying means, including the bloody campaign of Sancho IV of Castile (1284-1285) to gain and retain the crown of Castile.<sup>187</sup> According to De Mariana, Sancho had the military power and political network to defy the wishes of his father and to deprive his nephew of his legitimate right to the throne. The same logic is applied to Enrique of Castile (1369-1379) who takes the crown (and life) of Don Pedro, his brother and legitimate king.<sup>188</sup> Although De Mariana does not try to minimise the cruelty and illegality of these and other exemplary kings, he makes a point of showing how each of them went on to become a great monarch. King Juan, for example, after routing the legitimate pretender to the Portuguese throne at Aljuzarrota, went on to establish a lineage ‘that enjoys a manifest happiness and all kinds of goods.’<sup>189</sup>

The ways in which Sancho and Juan, Enrique and Fernando (III of Castile) seize power show one of the most distinct principles of political life that Mariana tries to explore and confirm in his work, to wit: ‘It is necessary that there be something unjust about every great example. And although one may repent privately, these private flaws are compensated by the public good.’<sup>190</sup> In the end, though, De Mariana does see the danger of tyranny praying on the prince who takes himself for an absolute monarch. Without forgetting to remind us of the limits put by God on the prince’s power and

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<sup>186</sup> Juan De Mariana, *Historiae de Rebus Hispaniae Libri XX* (Toledo: Pedro Rodríguez, 1592), 17.

<sup>187</sup> Juan de Mariana, *De Rege et Regis Institutione Libri Tres* (Toledo: Pedro Rodríguez, 1599), 53.

<sup>188</sup> Mariana, 43–45, 54–57; Braun, “Juan de Mariana En Las Encrucijadas de La Moral Política,” 148.

<sup>189</sup> Mariana, *De Rege et Regis Institutione Libri Tres*, 53.

<sup>190</sup> Mariana, 44.

authority, De Mariana poses the classical question, current after the recent departure of Philip II, regarding the relaxation of royal authoritarianism: What is greater, the power of the king or the republic?<sup>191</sup>

In my opinion, given that royal power, if it is legitimate, has been created with the consent of the citizens, and only in virtue of this can have been placed at the top of public affairs, has to be limited according to a principle for laws and statutes so that it does not exceed in harming of its subjects and degenerate in the end in tyranny.<sup>192</sup>

The ends of the king thus have to remain in what is considered the general public interest, or the fundamental laws of a people, that is the basic precepts of political and social life of a given nation. Only then will the means he uses to obtain these ends be justified, and only then will he receive god's grace.<sup>193</sup>

Mariana's *deus-ex-machina*, finally, puts the Jesuits centre-stage. The monarchy, according to Mariana, risks losing sight of the proper ends of government, because it suffers from a clear lack of moral and intellectual quality. If Botero characterised religion as the source of potential divisions and the object of arbitration, Mariana puts religion forward as the effective societal bond to keep the Spanish crown in the saddle. That – and here the proposition becomes exceedingly controversial – is why the Spanish clergy should be drawn closer into the affairs of government.<sup>194</sup> De Mariana tries to show the close link between fear, religious ceremony and stable government, and eulogises the Roman general and politician, Scipio the African, for his manipulative use of religion, an example that recurs in Xavier's *Directorio*. Basing himself on Plutarch's description, De Mariana says:

Scipio, called “The African”, used to frequent the Capitol and the temples of Rome, and with this religious zeal, sincere or maybe suited to the circumstances of the

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<sup>191</sup> Milhou, *Pouvoir Royal et Absolutisme Dans l'Espagne Du XVIe Siècle*, 61.

<sup>192</sup> Mariana, *De Rege et Regis Institutione Libri Tres*, bk. I, chap. VIII; Milhou, *Pouvoir Royal et Absolutisme Dans l'Espagne Du XVIe Siècle*, 61.

<sup>193</sup> Braun, “Juan de Mariana En Las Encrucijadas de La Moral Política,” 150.

<sup>194</sup> Braun, 152.

times, he reached among the citizens a great reputation of probity and obtained an immortal name for his achievements.<sup>195</sup>

Mariana also gives the example of Numa Pompilius, the legendary second Roman emperor distinguished for his proverbial piety, as well as Moses and the minor kings of Egypt. He praises Numa for his astute way of manipulating the piety and superstition of his people, with the goal of maintaining public order.<sup>196</sup> The point is clear: public display of piety is a fundamental element of government, even if it does not necessarily come from spiritual sincerity.<sup>197</sup> We have come full circle, for as long as the king publicly promotes the Glory of God, the hollowness of the means he adopts are of no consequence. The implication is that Philip III has no other choice but to retreat to the single remaining defence line against heresy and dissidence: a Spanish clergy distinguished by its patriotic spirit and destined by history to safeguard political and religious unity of the kingdom.<sup>198</sup>

The political empowerment of the clergy should be paired with the requisite access to financial resources, which De Mariana sees as the ideal of the original church.<sup>199</sup> When Jesus decided to confirm the separation of secular and spiritual power in order to create a more holy church, De Mariana explains, he did not mean to force the bishops and priests to renounce secular riches and jurisdiction.<sup>200</sup>

Christ, son of god, wanted that in the new church, founded on earth on the model of heaven, the two charges be completely separated, giving the kings the power to govern the states they had acquired from their ancestors and entrusting exclusively to Peter and other apostles and bishops that succeeded him the safeguarding of the religion and the sacred matters, without being completely separated from temporal

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<sup>195</sup> Mariana, *De Rege et Regis Institutione Libri Tres*, bk. II, chaps. XIV, 259; Braun, “Juan de Mariana En Las Encrucijadas de La Moral Política,” 152–53.

<sup>196</sup> Mariana, *De Rege et Regis Institutione Libri Tres*, bk. II, chaps. XIV, 254–255; Braun, “Juan de Mariana En Las Encrucijadas de La Moral Política,” 153.

<sup>197</sup> Braun, “Juan de Mariana En Las Encrucijadas de La Moral Política,” 153–54.

<sup>198</sup> Mariana, *De Rege et Regis Institutione Libri Tres*, bk. III, chaps. II, 279; Braun, “Juan de Mariana En Las Encrucijadas de La Moral Política,” 158.

<sup>199</sup> Mariana, *De Rege et Regis Institutione Libri Tres*, bk. I, chaps. VIII, 97; Braun, “Juan de Mariana En Las Encrucijadas de La Moral Política,” 159.

<sup>200</sup> Braun, “Juan de Mariana En Las Encrucijadas de La Moral Política,” 160.



government, and not entirely incapacitated in exercising it. Thus, we see, and we must repeat it here, that in many nations, from ancient times, vast estates and great riches have been ceded to the priests.<sup>201</sup>

The echoes of Xavier's treatment of the issues of providential ends justifying vicious mean, of pagan-absolving piety, of the imperative of religious counsel for any king, and of the evil of appropriating the riches of the temples and priests, are perhaps already evident, and will be discussed in Chapter Four.

Parallel comparison of this sort do not enable us to trace circulations, but they do register echoes that allows us to reconstruct something of the ecosystem from which a given work emerged or in which it operated. The promotion of the clergy in the government of Spain, for instance, is echoed by Xavier's efforts at the Mughal court, with the parallel implication that Jahangir has no other choice but to retreat to the single remaining defence line against poverty and dissidence, the ailments of the despotic Oriental state: According to Xavier's project, this defence line was Western political counsel distinguished by its introduction of new knowledge to Indo-Persian *adab* and destined by history to safeguard political and religious stability of any kingdom, just as Aristotle's wisdom had been a wind at the back of Alexander as he conquered kingdom after kingdom from Macedonia to the Gangetic plain.

The changes proposed by De Mariana would at any rate constitute a de facto theocratisation of the Spanish monarchy. The clergy (but not the nobility) was to be readmitted in the courts of Castile, and matters of importance were not be decided 'without consent of the bishops.'<sup>202</sup> But the boldness of the demand to put the bishops in charge of the people and military pales in comparison to the suggestion that Felipe III should recruit his royal counsellors and committee-members exclusively from

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<sup>201</sup> Mariana, *De Rege et Regis Institutione Libri Tres*, bk. III, chaps. II, 275.

<sup>202</sup> Mariana, bk. I, chaps. X, 110–111.

among the clergy.<sup>203</sup>

## Absolutism and Divine Right

Mariana's imposition of limits on the king's power was prefigured four years earlier, in his fellow Spanish Jesuit Pedro de Ribadeneira's 1595 *Tratado de la religión y virtudes que debe tener el príncipe cristiano* ('Treatise on the religion and the virtues requisite in a Christian prince'). With the subtitle *Against the teaching of Machiavelli and the Politiques of these times*, and dedicated to the future Philip III, it was clearly a mirror-for-princes *à la mode*, soon to be translated into Italian (1599), Latin (1603) and French (1610).<sup>204</sup> Ribadeneira had joined the Society on the invitation of its founder and thus was likely to hold views close to accepted Jesuit creed. For starters, Ribadeneira rejected absolutism in the name of divine law which represents a limitation on the power of the prince.<sup>205</sup>

... no king is an absolute king nor independent nor proprietary, but an assistant and minister of god, for whom the kings rule, and from which any authority derives its being and strength... This is what the same kings confess and protest, when in the principle of their royal letters and provisions they say: ... 'for the grace of god, king of Spain, of France, etc.,' making clear that all kingdoms belong to god, and that he assigns their administration to whomever he is pleased with.<sup>206</sup>

In Xavier's *Directorio* the importance of divine investiture is given a central role. God bestows thrones on Xavier's kings if and when they have pleased him through sheer, blind faith. Even if they have incurred his wrath and as a result have had their kingdom, and in the case of Nebuchadnezzar his humanity, taken away from them, they can always be redeemed if through their pleasing actions they succeed in ingratiating

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<sup>203</sup> Mariana, bk. III, chaps. II, 275–276.

<sup>204</sup> Geoffrey P. Baldwin, "The Translation of Political Theory in Early Modern Europe," in *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Peter Burke and R. Po-Chia Hsia (New York, 2007), 112–13.

<sup>205</sup> Milhou, *Pouvoir Royal et Absolutisme Dans l'Espagne Du XVIe Siècle*, 60.

<sup>206</sup> Ribadeneira, *Tratado de La Religión y Virtudes Que Debe Tener El Príncipe Cristiano Para Gobernar y Conservar Sus Estados, Contra Lo Que Maquiavelo y Los Políticos de Este Tiempo Enseñan*, bk. I, chap. XIII.

themselves with Him once again. After all, God ultimately reinstates Nebuchadnezzar. In his *Samarat al-falasafa* ('The Fruits of Philosophers') composed in 1603 for Emperor Akbar, the Mughal historian Abdus Sattar and Xavier's bitter-sweet rival at court would also recount the story of Nebuchadnezzar (*Bukhti nasar*) as well as the interpretation of his dreams by Daniel.<sup>207</sup>

Ribadeneira uses precisely this example to show that the sanctification of the prince, the divine charge that makes him the 'lieutenant and minister of god', in fact relativizes his power. The king who does not recognise that he receives his power from God and does not respect his law (that is the law of religious authority) is nothing but a tyrant like Nebuchadnezzar. In the book of Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar is taken by pride at the sight of Babel and is chastised by God: resigned to madness, he is sent to roam among the wild beasts and does not regain his reason until he recognises the divine order. When he finally does so, royal majesty is rendered to him.<sup>208</sup> Nebuchadnezzar in effect serves as a model Oriental despot, whose intemperance and immodesty make him a beastly tyrant. However, he is also symbolic of the redemptive road to God, and thus a particularly useful example for Xavier's patron. The evocative force of Nebuchadnezzar as the irreverent antihero, in contrast to the divine providence of Spain, is highlighted by another Jesuit, Pedro Guerra de Lorca, in his *Memorias eclesiásticas de la ciudad de Granada*, probably composed between 1595 and 1597, where De Lorca claims Granada had been established by Jews whom Nebuchadnezzar had driven out of the East.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, "Samarat Al-Falasifah" 1603, fols. 6–8, University Collection, Maulana Azad Library.

<sup>208</sup> Daniel, 4, 25-34. For a discussion of this episode in Ribadeneria, see Milhou, *Pouvoir Royal et Absolutisme Dans l'Espagne Du XVIIe Siècle*, 61.

<sup>209</sup> A manuscript of this work is preserved in the Archivo de la Abadía del Sacromonte de Granada. For references see García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 220–21.

As we saw with Botero, Machiavelli was now firmly identified with an elevation of expediency over religion. In a way, that is what Xavier too is doing at the surface, asking for the political form of his advice to be elevated over his inopportune religious identity. At the same time, Reason of State acquired a variety of interpretations, a trend of which Ribadeneira is a good example. Like Botero, Ribadeneira used the notion of Reason of State to make a point about two distinct ways of seeing the relationship between religion and the state. He did so by suggesting that there are really two different kinds of Reason of State. One is a 'solid and real Reason of State,' the other 'vain and [merely] human', 'false and pernicious Reason of State'. As Höpfl puts it, 'the distinction between them is that the former prudently and devoutly acknowledges the responsibility of princes towards God, religion and virtues, whereas the latter imprudently and impiously denies it ... the former *de religion haze estado*, whereas the latter *de estado haze religion*.'<sup>210</sup>

Not only Ribadeneira, but Mariana and Botero too had internalised the Society's teaching that secular benefits derive from spiritual virtue, and not vice versa. This coincided with an exceedingly popular take on the subject in Cicero's *De Officiis* – a work Xavier appears to have translated into Persian at the Mughal court. According to Cicero, there could be no contradiction between that which is right and that which is expedient. And yet, somewhat paradoxically, all three saw the apparent virtue of tolerance as a pragmatic constraint on what spiritual virtue could accomplish. Xavier conveniently leaves out any explicit condemnation of religious tolerance, which made it possible for him to reside at the Mughal court in the first place, and which may have been considered a moderating quality of the Mughal despot. In a telling passage,

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<sup>210</sup> Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c. 1540-1630*, 105–8.

Mariana, echoed elsewhere by both Botero<sup>211</sup> and Ribadeneira,<sup>212</sup> despairs over the prospects of religious tolerance:

However tightly blood-ties, similarity of manners and mode of life, or common homeland may bind wills to benevolence, diversity of religion will make such benevolence collapse.<sup>213</sup>

It is unsurprising, then, that not only Mariana, who three years prior to the publication of his *De Rege* was among the experts recruited by Archbishop Don Pedro de Castro to translate and authenticate the Sacromonte finds, but also the Morisco Jesuit Ignacio de las Casas, who had studied in Rome and was well-versed in Arabic, would express their criticisms of the Lead Books in letters they exchanged with the Archbishop.<sup>214</sup>

However, other Jesuits were more enthusiastic about the Sacromonte finds and even engaged in exercises similar to Luna's, discussed in the previous chapter. While De Mariana and De las Casas scoffed at the finds, the Toledan Jesuit Jerónimo Román de la Higuera, for instance, was engaged in Christian thought that forced him to enter through the doors of Islamic ideas. Higuera supported the authenticity of the Lead Books. Like the others, he maintained contacts with the Archbishop De Castro as well as people like Castillo, the Morisco librarian at the El Escorial, and wrote a work that was essentially a rereading of Spain's sacred history in order to convert it from an Islamic into a Christian narrative. García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano have pointed out that we cannot, in fact, understand his work without recognizing the Mozarabs of Toledo as its animating force.<sup>215</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> Botero, *Della Ragion Di State e Delle Cause Della Grandezza e Magnificenza Delle Città*, bks. V, 2.

<sup>212</sup> Ribadeneira, *Tratado de La Religión y Virtudes Que Debe Tener El Príncipe Cristiano Para Gobernar y Conservar Sus Estados, Contra Lo Que Maquiavelo y Los Políticos de Este Tiempo Enseñan*, bk. I, chap. XVII.

<sup>213</sup> Mariana, *De Rege et Regis Institutione Libri Tres*, 354.

<sup>214</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, 26, 28–29.

<sup>215</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, 201.

## The Oriental Roots of Catholic Divine Kingship

Shifting objects of observation; now Oriental, now Spanish; now Islamic, now Christian; such as the recurring figure of Nebuchadnezzar, or the Christianised Mystic Sufism of the Lead Books; these not only found their way into Jesuit political thought as sources of historic legitimation, but over the course of the sixteenth century became fundamental to Catholicism's, and Catholic Spain's understanding of its own providential genealogy. They were joined by Islamo-Christian fields of vision, like the Messianism of David, Late-Jewish apocalyptic texts, Syrian and Byzantine motifs, or the edifying stories derived from rabbinical and aggadic literature. These were evident in the mosaic of propagandistic strategies of Philip II and III, and the Spanish Jesuit mirrors-for-princes composed for them. The broader effort underway in Europe of constructing a historical teleology of Christian monarchies' providential roles, saw authors lay claim to the Old Testament as the site of their nations' auspicious roots. Interestingly, however, this claim to a providential narrative, moving in reverse from a glorious future in the West, to an ancient and sacred history in the East, went far beyond the imagined geographies of the Holy Lands. As Urs App observes, Asian phenomena and texts, invented or not, were operative both in the European discovery of Asian religions,<sup>216</sup> as well as its reinvention of its own culture and religious history.

Jacques Boulduc's 1626 *De Ecclesia Ante Legem* ('On the Church before the Mosaic Law') shows how various ancient religions were integrated in a genealogy linking them to primeval religion as well as its fulfilment in Christianity. Boulduc claims that 'all philosophers, both of Greece and of other regions, had their origins in the descendants of the prophet Noah' and includes in this transmission lineage even

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<sup>216</sup> Urs App, *The Birth of Orientalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 3–4.

the ‘wise rather than malefic Persian magi [*Magos Persas non maleficos, sed sapientes*],’ Egyptian prophets, Gallic druids, and the ‘naked sages of India [*Indis Gymnosophistae*].’<sup>217</sup> As we know, the Turko-Mongol emperors of India engaged in an inverse genealogical exercise that traced their lineage all the way, not only to the Mediterranean Solomon and David, but to Adam.

The European fascination with far-Eastern lands like China and India, as well as the knowledge of their languages, is typically identified with the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries,<sup>218</sup> but given what we know of Jesuit study and production of Chinese, Persian and other texts, as well as the study of Arabic and Persian languages and collection of texts in Spain, Italy and elsewhere, this should be anticipated to at least to the end of the sixteenth century. To defer this ‘new Orientalism’, say, in the case of India, to the advent of the British translators of the eighteenth century, as Urs App does, belies the intellectual culture from which the engagement of individuals like Jerome Xavier and other Jesuit orientalist emerges.

In the year of the publication of Xavier's *Directorio* in Agra, his Jesuit colleague living among Hindus in Madurai, Roberto de Nobili, decided to proclaim himself ‘teacher of the fourth, lost Veda which deals with the question of salvation.’<sup>219</sup> De Nobili apparently believed, like his contemporary Ricci in China, that even though India’s original and pure monotheism had degenerated into idolatry, vestiges of the original religion survived and could serve to regenerate the ancient creed under the sign of the Cross.<sup>220</sup> After his failed experiment with Buddhist robes, Ricci adopted the dress of a

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<sup>217</sup> Quoted in App, 258.

<sup>218</sup> Thomas R. Trautmann, *Aryans and British India* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1997), 30.

<sup>219</sup> Županov, *Disputed Mission: Jesuit Experiments and Brahmanical Knowledge in Seventeenth-Century India*, 116.

<sup>220</sup> The idea stems from Partha Mitter, *Much Maligned Monsters: A History of European Reactions to Indian Art* (Chicago, 1977); It is picked up by Županov, *Disputed Mission: Jesuit Experiments and Brahmanical Knowledge in Seventeenth-Century India*, 3.

Confucian scholar, asserted that the Chinese had anciently been pure monotheists, and proclaimed Christianity to be the fulfilment of the doctrines found in ancient Chinese texts. A few years later, Ricci's compatriot De Nobili presented himself in India as an ascetic 'sannyasi from the North' and restorer of "a lost spiritual Veda"<sup>221</sup> who hailed from faraway Rome where the Ur-tradition had been best preserved. In his *Relação annual* for the year before (1608), Fernão Guerreiro wrote along similar lines that he was studying Brahmin letters to present his Christian message as a restoration of the spiritual Veda, the true original religion of all countries, including India whose adulterated vestiges were the religions of Vishnu, Brahma, and Shiva.

Is Xavier, in his attempt to imagine a shared Jesuit-Mughal historical geography stretching from Andalusia to the Malabar engaging in a similar exercise of 'restoration', of mending a broken historical narrative, one that would give him more import at the Mughal court, and a more willing imperial ear? Xavier's 'new knowledge' on political matters relies on ancient examples from the Old Testament, with actors chosen from the Mughals' familiar lines of vision, to give his advice scriptural weight. Similarly, when Christianity evolved from a Jewish movement and was accused of being a 'new religion' and an invention, ancient connections were needed to provide legitimacy and add historical weight to the religion. As App notes, 'the adoption of the Hebrew Bible as "Old Testament" ... linked the young religion and its "New Testament" effectively to the very creation of the world, to paradise, and to the Ur-religion of the first humans in the golden age.'<sup>222</sup>

One highly influential example of the currency this thinking had among contemporary humanists, is the Spanish Orientalist and Escorial librarian Benito Arias

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<sup>221</sup> Joan-Pau Rubiés, *Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance: South India through European Eyes, 1250–1625* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 339.

<sup>222</sup> App, *The Birth of Orientalism*, 256.



Montano,<sup>223</sup> sent by Philip II to the Antwerp printing-press of Plantin to edit the Polyglot Bible, which the Jesuits famously presented to the Mughal emperor.<sup>224</sup> Among advisers and proof-readers collaborating with Montano on the Polyglot Bible were people with knowledge of Semitic languages, like Frans van Ravelingen, the Flemish scholar of Arabic, Hebrew, Chaldean, Ethiopian, Syriac, and Persian.<sup>225</sup> Montano, who would later edit breviaries and missives of overseas missionaries,<sup>226</sup> shared Botero's, Mariana's and Ribadeneira's scepticism of religious tolerance, 'because in the end nothing can make them [heretics] surrender except respect, distrust or fear – not gentleness or fair treatment or any other praiseworthy and desirable means by which men are normally persuaded.'<sup>227</sup> Himself an Orientalist who had mastered both Arabic and Hebrew, Montano was connected to the archbishop of Algarve, Jerónimo Osorio, who had studied theology and Hebrew in Bologna, and had written a mirror-for-princes, *De regis institutione et disciplina libri VIII*, published in Lisbon in 1572.<sup>228</sup> Justus Lipsius, another friend of Montano's, had written the mirror-for-princes *Politicorum libri* where he put forward a model for the government of the modern

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<sup>223</sup> For details on the support Montano enjoyed at court and his social circles see B. Macías Rosendo, *La Correspondencia de Benito Arias Montano Con El Presidente de Indias Juan de Ovando* (Huelva: Universidad de Huelva, 2008), 140–43; and María Asunción Sánchez Manzano, "Arias Montano o La Pridencia: Las Virtudes Políticas En De Optimo Imperio y De Varia Republica," in *Virtudes Políticas En El Siglo de Oro*, ed. María Idoya Zorroza, Colección de Pensamiento Medieval y Renacentista 136 (Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 2013), 115.

<sup>224</sup> Sánchez Manzano, "Arias Montano o La Pridencia: Las Virtudes Políticas En De Optimo Imperio y De Varia Republica," 114.

<sup>225</sup> On Ravelingen (Raphelengius) J.T.P. Bruijn, "Iranian Studies in the Netherlands," *Iranian Studies* 20, no. 2–4 (1987); Gerard Wieggers, "Learned Moriscos and Arabic Studies in the Netherlands, 1609–1624," in *Romania Arabica*, ed. Jens Lüdtke and Reinhold Kontzi (Gunter Narr Verlag, 1996); L. Fuks and R. Fuks, "The Hebrew Production of the Plantin-Raphelengius Presses in Leyden, 1585–1615," *Studia Rosenthaliana* 4, no. 1 (1970): 1–24.

<sup>226</sup> Antonio Dávila Pérez, *Benito Arias Montano. Correspondencia Conservada En El Museo Plantin-Moretus de Amberes*, vol. 1 (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas; Instituto de Estudios Humanísticos, 2002), xxviii; Sánchez Manzano, "Arias Montano o La Pridencia: Las Virtudes Políticas En De Optimo Imperio y De Varia Republica," 114.

<sup>227</sup> José Luis Sánchez Lora, "El Pensamiento Político de Benito Arias Montano," in *Anatomía Del Humanismo. Benito Arias Montano, 1598–1998. Homenaje Al Profesor Melquiades Andrés Martín* (Huelva: Universidad de Huelva, 1998), 155–56.

<sup>228</sup> Sánchez Manzano, "Arias Montano o La Pridencia: Las Virtudes Políticas En De Optimo Imperio y De Varia Republica," 120.

state, based on a historical reflection on classical texts.<sup>229</sup>

Montano's own mirror-for-princes, *De optimo imperio*,<sup>230</sup> printed in 1583 at Plantin's print shop, the Golden Compass, is interesting to us because it is a vivid example of the preference for biblical commentary derived from the philological method practices by the humanists. The inspiration from biblical chronicles is peculiar. Like Xavier, Montano followed the ancient tradition of commenters who considered the Bible as a depository of learning. He referred, for example, to the organisation of the institutions that correspond to the promulgation of the human laws and to the concept of authority that makes them valid for a people.<sup>231</sup> Montano examined the nobles, and the public authority of the king, emperor, dictator and commander. The persons in the accounts narrated in the part of the Bible he focuses on (Book of Judges), lend themselves to consider general aspects of political authority, and the commenters who had studied it before him, advertised its ability to provide universalizable political examples. Montano had previously given much attention to the political application of the Old Testament in a book about on the virtues of king David.<sup>232</sup> The exegetic mode he applied there to the Books of David and Judges ended up being a combination of biblical archaeological context, philological commentary and, most importantly, a consideration of actionable political models in the heroes of the sacred text.<sup>233</sup>

We can observe the relation between Jerome Xavier's *Directorio* and Arias Montano's commentaries referring to Biblical books, in which the political leadership of the rulers of the tribe of Israel provides an opportunity for advice that can be

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<sup>229</sup> Justus Lipsius, *Politicorum Sive Civilis Doctrina Libri Sex* (Leiden: C. Plantin, 1589).

<sup>230</sup> B. Arias Montano, *De Optimo Imperio* (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1583).

<sup>231</sup> Arias Montano, 19.

<sup>232</sup> B. Arias Montano, *David, Hoc Est Uirtutis Exercitissimae Probatum Deo Spectaculum* (Antwerp: Philip Galle & C. Plantin, 1575).

<sup>233</sup> Sánchez Manzano, "Arias Montano o La Pridencia: Las Virtudes Políticas En De Optimo Imperio y De Varia Republica," 122.

extrapolated to the situation in which each of them operated. In this sense, the *Directorio* can be seen as an exemplar of an established genre in early modern Europe, that was particularly relevant in the Spanish context, one with which Father Jerome was certainly acquainted.<sup>234</sup> In that same context, it is possible to identify an important strand of mirrors-for-princes with origins in medieval Iberia that consists of a fertile combination of Christian and Islamic advice literature.<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>234</sup> For an overview, see Diego Suárez Quevedo, “De Espejos de Príncipes y Afines, 1516-1658. Arte, Literatura y Monarquía En El Ambito Hispano,” *Anales de Historia Del Arte* 19 (2009): 117–56.

<sup>235</sup> Hugo O. Adeline-Bizzarri, “Los Espejos de Príncipes En Castilla: Entre Oriente y Occidente,” *Cuadernos de Historia de España* 79, no. 1 (2005): 7–30.



### 3. From Beire to Agra

Xavier's family and cultural background in many ways made him ideally placed to end up as the author of a manual on proper conduct for the ruler of Mughal India. Rarely connected to Martin de Azpilcueta, but often referred to as *Sobrino del Apóstol* for his relation to Francis Xavier, the Ezpeleta family which connected them had an illustrious noble lineage both in Navarre as well as the south of France. Following the wars between Castile and Navarre, Xavier's grandfather Diego de Ezpeleta in 1512 had married Francis Xavier's sister, Ana de Jasso. Javier's father, Miguel de Ezpeleta, was their first-born. He built the parochial church of Beire, dedicated to Saint Aemilian (d. 573), where Jerome Xavier was baptised. Saint Aemilian had been a hermit who lived in the mountains, and miraculously appeared in the middle of the 939 battle of Simancas on the side of the Christian kings against Abd al-Rahman III. With this powerful, Christian counter-image of a sword-wielding Sufi ascetic, the iconography of a depraved Muslim other that deserved to be vanquished had marked Jerome from birth. Years later, Xavier would write to his family of Saint Aemilian, 'to whom I remain always devout, having received in his church the grace of being Christian.'<sup>236</sup> This was his source of consolation in the 'crooked and perverse' Muslim empire of the Mughals: 'one has no idea about the force needed to swim against the current of these backwaters! We are here in the stream of all vices, among these Moors, who seem rightly abandoned by God for the great sins they commit.'<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>236</sup> Letter to his brother, Leon de Ezpeleta from Goa, 1593, quoted in Hosten, "Some Letters of Father Jerome Xavier, S.J. to His Family (1593-1612)," 132.

<sup>237</sup> Letter to nephew Miguel de Ezpeleta from Agra, 14 August 1602, quoted in José María Cross, S.J., *Saint François Xavier. Son Pays, Sa Famille, Sa Vie. Documents Nouveaux* (Toulouse, 1894), 466.



*Figure 2: Saint Aemilian in the Battle of Simancas, by Fray Juan Rizi (1653-56). Monasterio de San Millán de la Cogolla*

Xavier's mother too was of noble blood, hailing from the Navarrese family of Goñi. Jerome's brother Bernardo de Ezpeleta was a highly respected Prior of the Knights of Saint John of Malta in the Kingdom of Navarre, and for many years a General of the Galleys of Malta. Jerome was the second child, and could not have known his grandmother Ana, the sister of Francis Xavier, who died in 1537, or the great-uncle whom he so admired, and who died in China when Jerome was three years old. The example of Francis Xavier would prove formative for the young Jerome, whose spiritual inclination led him in the footsteps of his famous relative. Xavier never seized to conceive of his own missionary ambitions and accomplishments as an extension of the work of Francis. In 1602, more than fifty years after Francis' death, Jerome

describes the missionary advances in India in a letter to his 14-year old nephew Miguel, as 'the fruits of [the] great labours' of 'our blessed uncle, Father Master Francis Xavier.'<sup>238</sup> The ways in which Francis, the 'Apostle of India and Japan,' could serve as a guiding light for Jerome as he entered the Society to head to the 'East' requires little comment. As we have seen, the role of Francis' cousin Martin de Azpilcueta was no lesser. Born a year after De Loyola, Azpilcueta had taught in Salamanca and Coimbra before moving to Rome to act as defence council for the Archbishop of Toledo, Bartolome de Carranza. It is difficult to overstate the stature of Azpilcueta as a canonist and casuist admired by the Jesuits. As a prominent exponent of the School of Salamanca, he held the Canon Law chair in Salamanca and along with Francisco de Vitoria and other members of the School left an indelible mark on the juridical theological thought of the day. At request of the kings of Spain and Portugal, he taught in Coimbra from 1538 to 1556. His *Manual de confesores y penitents* saw an extraordinary eighty-one editions in the second half of the sixteenth century alone,<sup>239</sup> and was received as a definitive contribution to the establishment of moral theology as an independent discipline.<sup>240</sup> Azpilcueta had completed his Bachelor of Theology in Alcalá, soon to be followed by his nephew Jerome Xavier studying for his Bachelor of Philosophy, both leaving behind their ancestral Navarre.

By Jerome's time, Alcalá had become the preeminent center of Jesuit learning in Spain. Xavier had repeatedly petitioned the Superiors of the Society for entry in the

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<sup>238</sup> Cross, S.J., 466.

<sup>239</sup> An almost exhaustive catalogue of the editions appears in E. Dunoyer, *L'Enchiridion confessoriorum del Navarrus: Dissertatio ad lauream in facultate S. Theologiae apud Pontificium Institutum "Angelicum" de Urbe* (Pamplona: Gurrea, 1957).

<sup>240</sup> Cf. R. Munoz, *Moral y economia en la obra de Martin de Azpilcueta* (Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 1998), 111-22; J. Theiner, *Die Entwicklung der Moralthologie zur eigenstandigen Disziplin* (Regensburg: F. Pustet, 1970)

noviciate; and once he obtained his degree in 1568, he was finally admitted. He was nineteen at the time. A 1600 chronicle of the Jesuit College in Alcalá records the event.

Don Jeronimo Xavier, of Beire in Navarre, entered the society on 7 May [1568]. Out of devotion to his uncle, Father Francis Xavier, Apostle of India and Japan, this young man entered the Society with the intention to pass to those parts where his uncle had gone. He has since gone there and now is completing some important missions to the Mughals in the great service of God Our Lord, and now lives there in Goa [sic!] with a name of great piety and prudence.<sup>241</sup>

In a letter to the General in Rome, the Provincial of Castile in 1568 described Jerome as ‘very capable, bachelor of arts, nephew of F. Master Francis Xavier, and very promising.’<sup>242</sup> The catalogue for Alcalá for the year 1568 reports the arrival of ‘Jerome Xavier, novice, nephew of our F. Francis Xavier; having qualified with much satisfaction for bachelor of arts, has come home.’<sup>243</sup> Before embarking on his journey toward India in 1581, Jerome would still have to undergo another thirteen years of training in the province, mostly in the former Muslim stronghold: the province of Toledo.<sup>244</sup>

He probably professed his vows in the two years after his noviciate, or in May 1570 at the latest. For as soon as he had done so, he returned to Alcalá to complete what was by now his fourth year of Philosophy (having already graduated in Theology in 1568) and to receive his degree. We know that once he had obtained the Philosophy degree, he continued with advanced studies in Theology, still in Alcalá. There is very scant information about Xavier’s academic pursuits between 1573 and 1580, but we do know that he was in Alcalá in 1574, when Alessandro Valignano, freshly appointed Visitor to the Eastern Provinces, passed through the College on his way to India. Xavier

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<sup>241</sup> Cristóbal de Castro, S.J., “Historia Del Colegio de La Compañía de Jesús de Alcalá de Henares, Compuesta Por El P...., Lector de Escritura En Alcalá y Salamanca” 1600, pt. II, bk. XI, chap. XVI, f. 976.

<sup>242</sup> Manuel Lopez, 1568, fol. 246v, Hisp. 108, ARSI.

<sup>243</sup> “Catalogues” 1568, 111v, Tolet. 12A, I, ARSI.

<sup>244</sup> Bartolomé Alcázar, S.J., *Chrono-Historia de La Compañía de Jesús de La Provincia de Toledo* (Madrid, 1710), 203.



pleaded with Valignano to take him along, but to no avail. Valignano had put together an extensive expedition. Given the gradual swing in favour of Portuguese missionaries being sent to Asia, this was the last expedition in which more than half were Spanish, with the rest equally divided between Italians and Portuguese. If previously there was hardly an annual expedition to the East without Spanish Jesuits, from here on most would head to the Americas. In this sense, Xavier truly left for India through the eye of the needle. Cases such as his, and a few other Spaniards who travelled to China and Japan, were quite isolated. In the expeditions from 1575 to 1579, there were no Spaniards going to India, and in 1579 only a single one.<sup>245</sup>

Thus, Xavier would have to wait another seven years to be granted passage to the passionately desired Eastern apostolate of his great-uncle.<sup>246</sup> Knowing that Xavier had been ordained for nineteen years in 1594, we can calculate that he entered priesthood the year after his meeting with Valignano, in 1575.<sup>247</sup> Xavier spent the following years preaching in villages across Castile, and it is here that he developed something of a reputation for his oratory and rhetorical skills. In 1579-80 he was completing the third year of his priorate at the College in Villarejo de Fuentes in La Mancha. From here he wrote to Father General Mercuriano, expressing his elation of having finally been granted permission to travel to India.

I am certain it was Our Lord himself who moved Your Paternity to send me what I had desired quietly, waiting for Him to remember me in his mercy, and send me to serve. In the meantime, I contented myself in doing my part, and to sacrifice myself twelve years ago on the twenty-fifth of this month [the date of Xavier's entry into the noviciate], and even before entering the Society, Our Lord had spoken of it to me, and to be honest, the desire to go to East India had come before the desire to enter the Society, and I had entered the Society in order to be able to go there and die in those parts. And all this led to my coming to Alcalá and learning about our

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<sup>245</sup> Santos Hernandez S.J., *Jeronimo Javier S.J., Apostol Del Dran Mogol y Arzobispo Electo de Cranganor, En La India, 1549-1617*, 2.

<sup>246</sup> April 4, 1580, fol. 279, Lusit. 68, ARSI.

<sup>247</sup> 1594, fol. 222v, Goa 24, I, ARSI.

Religion; of which I had hardly any memory in Navarre.<sup>248</sup>

In another letter, Xavier writes

When Father Alessandro Valignano passed through Alcalá on his way to India I tried to go with him: and since then I decided to remain silent and wait and did not know that those from Castile were not to go to Portuguese India any longer, because they are disliked there. In light of this and given that in seven years no one had been sent there, I had already given up hope and had considered all hopes of this mission thwarted – thanks to God and Your Paternity who (I believe moved by Him) has granted me this charity, and with it they will see in that Province that the door was not closed to a thing so much desired by many.<sup>249</sup>

Xavier leaves Spain for Portugal at the end of January 1580,<sup>250</sup> but an outbreak of the plague delays his departure, and he is sent to wait at the college of Evora until the following year.

The mission finally departs on 8 April 1583 with two boats each destined for India and Malacca, reaching their destination five and a half months later, on 25 September. Xavier shared a ship with the new Viceroy Francisco Mascarenhas, the first to be sent by the new king of Spain and Portugal, Philip II.<sup>251</sup> Others on board included Diogo Lobo, governor of Malacca, João Correa de Brito, governor of Colombo, Antonio de Sousa, captain of Daman, and Manuel Pereira, captain of Bassein.<sup>252</sup>

Over the next eleven years, Xavier would fill the posts of Master of Novices of the College of Saint Paul in Goa (1583-4), Rector of the College of Beçaim (1584-6), Rector of the College of Cochin (1586-1592), and finally Superior of the Professed house of Goa (1592-4), until his departure to the Mughal court. The Superior of the Professed House functioned as the Vice-Provincial of Goa, meaning that Xavier came

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<sup>248</sup> Jerome Xavier, S.J., “Letter from Jerome Xavier to the General from Evora,” 1580, fol. 279, Lusit. 68, Epist. Lusit. 1577-1584, ARSI.

<sup>249</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 27.

<sup>250</sup> P. Porres, n.d., fol. 1, Hispan. 129, ARSI.

<sup>251</sup> Alfonso Pacheco, n.d., fol. 292, Lusit. 68, ARSI.

<sup>252</sup> Couto, *Decada Decima*, pt. I, chaps. IX, 66.

within a hair's breadth of becoming the most important Jesuit in Asia at the time. That alone is quite astonishing, given that history has consigned him to near oblivion.

## **In the Footsteps of St. Francis Xavier**

Xavier, as he himself reports,<sup>253</sup> was of rather ill health throughout his life in India, although what finally killed him was not illness, nor old age, but a fire engulfing his room in Goa in 1617. Nonetheless, his constitutional weakness did not prevent him from vigorous efforts in Goa, Beçaim and Cochin. Driven by the memory of his great-uncle, whose relic in Goa was the object of daily visits from the novices,<sup>254</sup> and who had left a legacy as the pioneer of the Spiritual Exercises in India. After Francis Xavier's death, the Exercises had fallen into almost complete disuse until the arrival of Jerome.<sup>255</sup> In governing his Colleges, the latter would lead the novices by example, withdrawing himself each year to a sacred retreat – like a veritable Saint Aemilian – to practice the Exercises.<sup>256</sup>

Only two months after Xavier's arrival in India, Valignano himself arrives from Japan with a task for the Navarrese. The just-completed, original Portuguese manuscript of Valignano's *History of India*, written at the request of the Superior General, was to be translated into Spanish.<sup>257</sup> Xavier had only a little more than a month to complete the work, yet by January Valignano was able send it to Rome.<sup>258</sup> If

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<sup>253</sup> Jerome Xavier, S.J., "Letter to Aquaviva," October 25, 1582, fol. 186, Goa 47, ARSI.

<sup>254</sup> Vicente Ruiz, S.J., October 21, 1582, fol. 249, Goa 47, ARSI.

<sup>255</sup> Ignacio Iparraguirre, S.J., "Los Ejercicios Espirituales Ignacianos, El Método Misional de S. Francisco Javier, y La Misión Jesuítica de La India En El Siglo XVI," *Studia Missionalia* V (1950): 3–43.

<sup>256</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Letter to Aquaviva," October 25, 1582, fol. 185.

<sup>257</sup> Alessandro Valignano, S.J., *Historia Del Principio y Progreso de La Compañía de Jesús En Las Indias Orientales (1542-64)*, ed. Josef Wicki, vol. II, Bibliotheca Institutii Historici S.I. (Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I., 1944).

<sup>258</sup> Alessandro Valignano, S.J. n.d., Jap-Sin. 49, ARSI.

he was not already, Valignano, who had just been informed by General Acquaviva that he was to abandon his Visitorship and take up the role of Provincial in Goa, was to become a crucial influence on Xavier's missionary philosophy, and his career.

Valignano, born in Chieti in 1539 was a Doctor in Law from University of Padua, and had joined the Jesuit ranks in 1566. Named Visitor of the East Indies the year after, he arrives in Goa a year after meeting Xavier in Alcalá, with the expedition of 1574. During 1575 and 1576, he travels throughout India, leaving for Macao in 1578, and finally Japan in 1579. It is in Japan that he makes his mark by implementing his brand of missionary accommodation, adopted in their own ways by the likes of Matteo Ricci in China, and Jerome Xavier at the Mughal court.<sup>259</sup>

At this stage, Jerome Xavier's reputation in India was excellent. Before Valignano had returned from Japan, the issue of solemn profession had come up for a number of candidates. Valignano ultimately decided to concede the honour to three of the seven immediately, but to wait for the General's response on the others. Xavier was among the three unequivocal cases. The reasons given were his apparent 'virtues and good traits.'<sup>260</sup> A little over a year after his return from Japan, Valignano as the new Provincial writes to the General that Xavier is ...

... very religious, virtuous and prudent, and has talent and traits suitable for leadership, which he demonstrates in his charge, and has authority, and is well-regarded both by those of the house and others; and it would be good to rely on him much more in this business of leadership, although he is weak and unwilling, but in everything very good and effective.<sup>261</sup>

One can scarcely imagine a more glowing recommendation, and if it would appear later on that the General retained an exceedingly positive view of Xavier's abilities, these

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<sup>259</sup> Valignano, S.J., *Historia Del Principio y Progreso de La Compañía de Jesús En Las Indias Orientales (1542-64)*, II:45.

<sup>260</sup> N.d., fol. 236v, Goa 13, I, ARSI.

<sup>261</sup> Alessandro Valignano, S.J., "Letter to Acquaviva," December 12, 1584, fol. 216, Goa 13, I, ARSI.

early assessments from the lips of Valignano can only have helped that impression. Valignano, however, would soon be reappointed Visitor and leave for Macao to concern himself with the opening of the Chinese mission, before returning to Japan. Valignano next arrives in Goa eight years later, in March 1595, missing the dramatic turn in Xavier's fortune and his departure to the Mughal court by a matter of two months.

Xavier had complained about the spendthrift of some of the Superiors in Goa.<sup>262</sup> And though he insisted that more rigour was needed among the Superiors to prevent people from leaving the Society in India, these letters had nothing but praise for one individual: Alessandro Valignano.<sup>263</sup> It is not inconceivable Acquaviva felt that this zeal for proper management, along with leadership skills, made Xavier well-placed to serve as Superior in the Professed House in Goa. In any event, Acquaviva would eventually appoint him to that position.

Xavier pleaded with Acquaviva to keep Valignano in India, and not to send him back to Japan. While it is perfectly understandable that men of such skill are needed in Japan, Xavier says, 'I still think it would be a great scourge for this Province to lose this Father, because if there is one Province that has a need for Father Alessandro's traits, it is this one (...) he is beloved by all, has experience in nearly every part of the province, he knows everyone, everyone knows him; to leave them now would be a matter of great distress (...) For if there were someone to fill his shoes, his absence would be more tolerable, but there is no one, nor can I see how there could be.' As Valignano's departure is briefly delayed, Xavier reveals to the General his hopes for a divine intervention to prevent his departure altogether, but the ship does ultimately sail.<sup>264</sup> As he wrote these letters to Acquaviva, Xavier had no idea that just seven years later,

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<sup>262</sup> Jerome Xavier, S.J., "Letter to Aquaviva," 1583, fol. 186, Goa 47, ARSI.

<sup>263</sup> Jerome Xavier, S.J., "Letter to Aquaviva from Cochin," January 2, 1587, fol. 336, Goa 13, II, ARSI.

<sup>264</sup> Jerome Xavier S.J., "Letter to Aquaviva from Cochin," February 3, 1586, fol. 332, Goa 47, ARSI.

in 1594, he would himself become the General's favourite to fill those shoes, if fate had not conspired against him.

Even with Valignano gone, Xavier's popularity as preacher 'with spirit,' and the apparently incessant requests from other orders for him to preach in their churches, remained the stuff of letters – at least the Spanish ones – to the General.<sup>265</sup> The importance of language, to become an enduring problem of his Mughal mission, and Xavier's particular emphasis on adaptation to the local linguistic reality, are one of his main preoccupations from the time of his interaction with the St. Thomas Christians under his charge. As is apparent from his correspondence with the General,<sup>266</sup> Xavier and the Catalan Jesuit Francisco Ros – who knew Syriac, Chaldean and Malayalam 'perfectly'<sup>267</sup> – repeatedly requested books in Syriac or Chaldean to be sent and advocated for Jesuits working in these parts to learn Chaldean, as Father Valignano had apparently instructed before his successor dismissed the notion.<sup>268</sup>

Xavier and Ros were not only opposed to the total assimilation of the Eastern Rites to the Latin ones but advocated outright accommodation to the liturgical customs of the local Christians. Xavier made the explicit request to approve the doctrine of the Eastern Rites, so that their priests could be ordained by any Catholic bishop, with the approval of the Fathers.<sup>269</sup> The language issue was especially close to Xavier's heart.

The proposal to leave the Chaldean language now is a demon in disguise, for it will nip the flower in the bud. Firstly, they say that His Holiness Gregory XIII, when asked about this matter, replied that the beauty of the Church was in allowing its children to praise God in many languages (...) who has the right to take not only their customs, but their language from them (...) If Father Francisco Ros dies, who will read their books? Who will discover and amend their errors? Who will

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<sup>265</sup> Texeda, January 7, 1588, fol. 470, Goa 13, II, ARSI.

<sup>266</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Letter to Aquaviva from Cochin," January 2, 1587, fols. 335–337; Xavier, S.J., "Letter to Aquaviva from Cochin," January 1, 1589, fols. 338–339.

<sup>267</sup> Jerome Xavier, S.J., January 8, 1590, fols. 1–4, Goa 14, ARSI.

<sup>268</sup> For more on Francisco Ros, see Antony Mecherry Cherian, S.J., "Francis Ros S.J., and the Method of Accommodation among the Christians of St. Thomas in Malabar (1584- 1624)" (Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2016).

<sup>269</sup> Jerome Xavier, S.J., January 2, 1592, Goa 47, ARSI.

introduce our teachings and take them forward in their prayers? Is it therefore not necessary that our people learn Chaldean? (...) As for the notion that our customs will be better introduced through Latin, I say they would be worse, since our Latin is and will always be of the very few, and their Chaldean of the many, and the union of the Church consists of doctrine, not language.<sup>270</sup>

Xavier's appeals for a more accommodative missionary approach were met with opposition. Yet the opposition stood in stark contrast to the extraordinary variety of languages spoken within the Society in Goa. When in 1592 Xavier replaced Francisco Cabral, the new Provincial, as the Superior of the Professed House in Goa, the celebration of the previous Provincial's new appointment held in the College of Saint Paul featured sermons in Latin, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Basque, English, Flemish, but also Malabar-Tamil, Chinese, Japanese, Greek, Hebrew, Kannada, 'Peruvian' (probably Quechua) and three or four other languages, including, most likely, Malayalam and Hindustani.<sup>271</sup>

## **The Provincial that Was Not**

Soon after Aquaviva's appointment of Xavier to the prestigious post of Superior of the Professed House, and his newfound position as Vice-Provincial to Cabral, the opinion of other senior figures in the Society in India regarding Xavier's character and work, as expressed in letters to the General, suddenly took a decisive turn for the worse. In little over a year, between October 1593 and the fall of 1594, a successful campaign was mounted to discredit Xavier in the eyes of Rome, and prevent his appointment as Provincial, which given the General's favour many thought was only a matter of time.<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Letter to Aquaviva from Cochin," January 1, 1589, fol. 338.

<sup>271</sup> Luís de Guzmán, *Historia de Las Misiones Que Han Hecho Los Religiosos de La Compania de Jesus, Para Predicar El Sancto Evangelio En La India Oriental y En Los Reynos de La China y Iapon* (Alcalá: Gracian, 1601), pts. II, 551.

<sup>272</sup> Regarding the appointing and selection mechanisms of the Society of Jesus for the different overseas missions, see Ines Županov, "Fervors and Tropics: A Jesuit Missionary Career in India (Antonio Gomes,

Cabral himself soon writes to Acquaviva regarding troubles with Xavier's leadership of the Professed House. 'Father Xavier is very virtuous and has prudence but lacks authority and is not well accepted due to his being Castilian.'<sup>273</sup> Cabral is careful not to defame Xavier explicitly, but observes that being aware of his position, Xavier had himself grown distrustful and despondent.

The Portuguese contingent sent numerous letters to the General, reaffirming the claim that Xavier had not been 'accepted as Superior,' because of his lack of authority as a Castilian. Having Xavier stay on as Vice-Provincial and Superior was one of the worst things that could happen to the Province, these letters claimed, because there was nothing worse for the Portuguese, than to be governed by a Spaniard. Quite to the contrary of Valignano's assessments some years ago, the contention now was that the government of the Province would lose nothing with the departure of Xavier, who in spite of his 'virtue, prudence, loyalty and education' was beset by fatal flaws. According to the complainants, Xavier was fervently nationalist to the point of choleric outbursts, often forcing him to apologise.<sup>274</sup> 'There was nothing worse,' one of them declared, than Xavier's election to the post of Superior and Vice-Provincial, for he 'wants to destroy and show that he holds us in low regard and is not fit for government.' The petitioners were convinced that Xavier's promotion either came from the General himself, or else Valignano, for 'no one would have wished for such a decision except for [Valignano] (...) before [whose] arrival there had never been a foreign, and especially Castilian Rector of the College of Saint Paul, nor Superior of the House, much less Provincial. And even if Xavier had had all the necessary traits (which he does not), it is enough that he should be Castilian, and have come up from a young age in Alcalá, and,

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1548-54),” in *Missionary Tropics: The Catholic Frontier in India (16th–17th Centuries)* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005), 113–71.

<sup>273</sup> Cabral, December 15, 1593, fol. 163, Goa 14, ARSI.

<sup>274</sup> Gómez Vaz, S.J., November 26, 1594, fol. 256v, Goa 14, ARSI.



though Navarrese, have all the spiritual leanings of the Castilians, for the Portuguese to take it badly, at least the ones who understand what government is.<sup>275</sup>

It is not clear how one recovers from an unmitigated and broadly held dismissal of this kind from one's own peers. Indeed, as it would turn out, there was no escape for Xavier. The only thing his opponents now feared was that a removal from his post as Superior could result in his being appointed and sent to Rome as Procurator of the Province. Given that the Procurator's role was to meet with the General in Rome every three years to discuss the most delicate matters and represent the needs of the Province before Rome, this scenario had to be avoided at all cost. It was therefore made sure that the election of the head of the third Mughal mission would precede that of the Procurator. That way, having already been appointed to the first post, Xavier could not stand for the second. His election to head the Mughal mission was unanimous. The Spanish Fathers were scandalised.<sup>276</sup> Shortly after the election, the Spanish Father Francisco Fernández reports to the General, not without a tinge of bitterness:

Now all are agreed in sending Father Jerome Xavier, whom Your Paternity had appointed here as Superior, to the Mughal, well aware that there is little or no hope to accomplish anything there, and that the only reason the mission had to be undertaken is because the Viceroy demanded it, because he would not write to the king [Akbar] that we have to excuse ourselves on account of work. Still he [Xavier], the saint that he is, goes there with optimism, ready to die in his charge.<sup>277</sup>

Where, in all this, was Valignano? He too had been on the receiving end of complaints about Xavier's appointment as Superior, seen as a dangerous step towards Xavier's potential Provincialship. Valignano's response, however, was striking. His experience in Japan had led him to believe that the joining of the two nations under a single crown had only brought them further apart, for several reasons, all of which can be

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<sup>275</sup> Monclaro, October 26, 1593, fol. 42v, Goa 14, ARSI.

<sup>276</sup> Alberto Laerzio, S.J., November 18, 1594, fol. 236, Goa 14, ARSI.

<sup>277</sup> Francisco Fernández, S.J., November 7, 1594, fol. 209, Goa 14, ARSI.

summarized as the impression that Castilians were strengthening their position in the Moluccas, China, and Japan. Valignano concluded it was unwise to have Jesuits coming from other missions and taking up posts in Portuguese territories, to avoid worsening the tensions already existing because of Spanish Fathers arriving via Portugal. It was hence not advisable to ever appoint a Spanish Provincial. After explaining that Xavier's appointment as Superior gave the impression he was in line to become Provincial, he concludes that Xavier's prospects, at least in India, had to be cut to size.

To tell Your Paternity what I feel in my heart, and what seems to me to be true, is that under no condition should Your Paternity have made Xavier Superior of the Professed House, for the reasons I have mentioned, and because I have much love for Father Xavier and believe (...) he could be named Provincial in some European Province, but not in India, where others would be more suitable for the job. (...) Besides, I regret to say that in my judgement, Father Jerome does not have the traits or ability for this position, because besides being too young for the Portuguese, he has a weak heart, and at times is very choleric. And although, as I said, he is virtuous and prudent, he does not have the talent nor authority necessary for a Provincial of India, who in his Province is a second General.<sup>278</sup>

It is interesting to note that just as assessments of Xavier's character had undergone a sudden deterioration as he entered the orbit of Provincialship, those assessments were rapidly restored in the following years, when his threat had been removed to the distant court of the Mughal: still a problematic 'choleric-sanguine' in 1594,<sup>279</sup> became a 'phlegmatic-sanguine' in 1599,<sup>280</sup> and finally possessed with a 'very moderate disposition' in both 1605 and 1608.<sup>281</sup> The Navarrese who could have held high office in Europe and whom the King of Spain nominated for an archbishopric, had lost his footing in the quicksand of Goan politics.

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<sup>278</sup> Alessandro Valignano, S.J., November 15, 1593, fol. 127, Jap. Sin. 12, ARSI.

<sup>279</sup> 1594, fol. 241, n.6.

<sup>280</sup> 1599, fols. 290v, 301v, n.200, Goa 24, II, ARSI.

<sup>281</sup> and 1608 1605, fols. 369, 384v, nn.218; 410, 421, 204, Goa 24, II, ARSI.

## 4. The Jesuit as Mughal Courtier

The third Mughal mission was political from its inception. Akbar had insisted to the Viceroy in Goa that new fathers be sent to his court. Viceroy ultimately threatened the Jesuits – who were reluctant following the lack of encouraging signs during the previous mission – to extend the invitation to another order if the Society of Jesus were to refuse. This, and General Aquaviva's well-known desire to continue the Mughal missions, finally led them to agree.<sup>282</sup> From the beginning, the politics of the mission also had a clear imperial dimension with Philip II expressly thanking the Viceroy for the 'arrangement' of the mission to his Mughal counterpart.<sup>283</sup>

The first task before the three men comprising the mission, Xavier and his companions Manuel 'the Mughal' Pinheiro and Benito Goes, was to learn the Persian language. Given Xavier's firm belief in the importance of vernaculars in missionary activity, this was no surprise. But it required some resourcefulness. As they travelled toward the Mughal capital, at that time in Lahore, Xavier would go out and look for Persian teachers in the street.<sup>284</sup> Once they arrived in Lahore, Akbar immediately encouraged them to advance their Persian studies. Not only did they seek instruction daily, they described the study of the language during those early months as their 'only and complete occupation.'<sup>285</sup> The little progress they made was nonetheless a source of satisfaction, and they were soon 'able to say that [they were] in Lahore whereas until [then they] had been like statues.'<sup>286</sup> Due to the heavy guard, their quarters in the imperial fort were relatively isolated, but this was apparently seen as a boon, again, for

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<sup>282</sup> 1595, fol. 539, Goa 32, II, ARSI.

<sup>283</sup> Maclagan, *The Jesuits and the Great Mogul*, by Sir Edward Maclagan., 50.

<sup>284</sup> 1595, fol. 539v.

<sup>285</sup> Jerome Xavier, S.J., September 8, 1595, fols. 23–24, Goa 46, ARSI.

<sup>286</sup> Jerome Xavier, S.J., August 20, 1595, fol. 288, Goa 14, ARSI.

language study. If the fathers are to be believed, the study turned into something of an obsession. Xavier apparently considered even the festivities and entertainments at court merely a distraction from serious studying.<sup>287</sup> The missionaries would wait outside the audience hall with other nobles before being called in and took advantage of time by discussing religious subjects with other religious men in Persian. This was far from easy because they did not have the proper vocabulary for religious themes, most of which was Arabic rather than Persian in origin.<sup>288</sup> In meetings with Akbar, they would recount only stories they had previously translated into Persian, since their proficiency was insufficient for a spontaneous discussion of matters of faith. The reason for their caution was simple: realizing that they were in distinguished and powerful company, they understood the danger of getting embroiled in philosophical or theological disputes where a single misspoken word could cause irreparable damage to their reputation and the mission's hopes for success.

Nonetheless, within a few years, Xavier had managed to improve to the point where was expected to translate the letters sent by the Provincial and Father Monserrat from Portuguese into Persian in front of the courtly assembly. Indeed, mastering the Persian language was the first rite of passage Jerome Xavier had to undergo if he wished to become a credible interlocutor on matters of faith at the Mughal court. Akbar himself made this quite clear, when he jokingly promised to convert as soon as Xavier would master the Persian language. It seems the Fathers failed to grasp the irony of this wry remark.<sup>289</sup>

Two years after arriving at court, Xavier decided to accompany Akbar to Kashmir, with ample opportunity for impromptu interaction with the Emperor. This

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<sup>287</sup> Xavier, S.J., September 8, 1595, fol. 27.

<sup>288</sup> Jerome Xavier, S.J., August 13, 1598, fol. 32, Goa 46, ARSI.

<sup>289</sup> Fernão Guerreiro, S.J., *Relação Anual Das Coisas Que Fizeram Oz Padres de Companhia de Jesus Nas Suas Missoes ... Nos Annos 1600 a 1609.*, vol. I (Coimbra, 1930), 5.

suggests that as early as 1597, the Jesuit courtier felt relatively comfortable engaging in conversation on religious matters. Still, we should be careful not to exaggerate his linguistic prowess, since Xavier himself reported struggling with the language several years later. Nonetheless, by the time of the Kashmir expedition, Xavier had already completed a manuscript in Spanish of his first book for the Mughal emperor and was now working intensively on a translation into Persian. Akbar was aware of this effort and appointed a Mughal courtier and historian to assist Xavier in the task. The man in question, Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, was charged with learning Latin, studying European philosophical and religious sources, and studying with the Fathers in order to obtain insight into their ideas. The claims and justifications of the Catholic courtiers were to be critically evaluated. Thus, the task fell to Sattar of working with Xavier on some of the latter's Persian books for the emperor.

While in Kashmir, a draft of the Persian translation was stolen, forcing Xavier to resume the project anew. It would take twelve years before the translation of the Spanish text entitled *Fuente de Vida* was finally completed and presented to Jahangir in its Persian version: *Āīnāyi Haqq-numā* ('The Truth-showing Mirror'). This work, written within the first two years of Xavier's stay at the Mughal court, had the express purpose of proving the truth of Christianity, and the falsity of Islam.<sup>290</sup> And while Xavier's subsequent literary projects show a progression toward more accommodationist works, this crude attempt at 'disproving' the religion of his host was still considered sufficiently reflective of the mission in 1609, when its Persian translation was presented to the Mughal emperor.

As someone who was working on literary projects under the patronage of the Timurid sovereign, Xavier had effectively entered the courtly circle of scholars. Men of

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<sup>290</sup> Jerome Xavier, S.J., August 18, 1597, fol. 344, Goa 14, ARSI.

religion, men of letters, historians, philosophers and astrologers, all competing for the emperor's favour by excelling both at their own craft and that of courtly politics. Inadvertently, his standing would be compared, not least by himself, to that of Mughal nobles long before his works were deemed worthy of discussion at the court assembly. Xavier would proudly claim, for instance, that when he would fall ill, Akbar himself would pay him a private visit, sitting on the floor beside him and stay for a while, 'as if he were a Father visiting, and order his private doctor to attend to him.' Xavier's first reaction is to compare Akbar's favour to that received by other courtiers:

How many magnates of the empire would have wanted this kingly favour! In fact, he [Akbar] sometimes visits some of his most precious Captains; they value and pay so much these attachments, that some of them offer rich presents, worth more than 30.000 rupees in precious cloths, horses and elephants. And there are many captains in Lahore who would give enough to build a church to obtain a visit such as I received.<sup>291</sup>

Xavier developed a keen appreciation for some of the courtiers. Abdus Sattar, who would become his collaborator has already been mentioned. Having learned Latin as Akbar's request, Sattar drew on Xavier's knowledge, and Latin books contained in the imperial library, to write the *Samarat al-falasafa*, a history of European kings and philosophers, focused on the Greco-Roman world and drawn largely from the *Summa Historialis* (1459) of Antonino of Florence, another work from Akbar's collection. Abdus Sattar was instrumental in translating several of Xavier's other works, though Xavier would consistently describe himself as translator of those texts. It is quite likely that Xavier's translations, while functional, had to undergo such heavy editing as to prompt Sattar to claim them as his own. At any rate, the two appear to fall out after

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<sup>291</sup> Xavier, S.J., September 8, 1595, fol. 31v.

1607, and in their writings dismiss each other acerbically. It is therefore likely that the *Directorio* was completed with little or no involvement from Abdus Sattar.<sup>292</sup>

Abu'l Fazl, Akbar's famous ideologue, was another courtier for whom Xavier developed an appreciation. Abu'l Fazl articulated religious and secular policies that garnered fame for his patron, and which would extend into the reign of Akbar's successor. Yet his role transcended intellectual pursuits, and he served as a general in Akbar's army, conducting important expeditions to the Deccan in the south of the subcontinent. He was the author of several books, including the *Akbarnama* and the *A'in-e Akbari*, which were central works of reference informing Mughal imperial ideology and administrative policy, and a recurrent subject of written commentaries and discussions among the courtly elite. Like Xavier himself, Abu'l Fazl was a permanent fixture at courtly assemblies, audiences, and rituals. The admiration Xavier appears to have felt for Akbar's closest advisor stands in contrast to his suspicion of Abdus Sattar. Referring to Sattar's opportunism, Xavier commented that 'these [Muslims] will do anything for money.'<sup>293</sup> Yet, when the rebelling Prince Selim (future Jahangir) had Abu'l Fazl assassinated in 1602, Xavier eulogised the noble as not only 'the great man of advice,' but a 'great person, great counsellor, of great prudence and government, and a great commander.' 'With this,' Xavier concludes, 'we have lost a great friend.'<sup>294</sup> One cannot help but notice in Xavier's assessment the uncanny traces of the very characteristics once ascribed to himself by Valignano and others, and of his own impending foray into the realm of political counsel.

Another highly regarded member of the court whose activities crossed paths

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<sup>292</sup> For a discussion of Xavier's and Sattar's use of European sources, including Xavier's explicit reference to Cassius Dio's "Roman History", see Lefèvre, "Europe–Mughal India–Muslim Asia: Circulation of Political Ideas and Instruments in Early Modern Times," 134.

<sup>293</sup> Xavier, S.J., August 18, 1597, fol. 344.

<sup>294</sup> Jerome Xavier, S.J., n.d., fol. 77v, Goa 33, I, ARSI.

with Xavier was a nobleman by the name of Naqib Khan. This historian had contributed to Akbar's monumental *Tarikh-i alfi* ('Millennial History' referred to in Chapter One) and translations of the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* into Persian, as well as a number of collective literary projects led by Abu'l Fazl himself.<sup>295</sup> Jahangir declared him, unequivocally, to be the world's greatest historian.<sup>296</sup> Unlike Abu'l Fazl, who was of Iranian extraction but born in India, Abdus Sattar and Naqib Khan were Iranians proper. All three, however, had joined the court in pursuit of its lavish patronage thanks to Mughal taste for Persianate art, literature, and philosophy. When Jahangir considered sending an embassy to Philip III, Naqib Khan was the main contender for the job. In spite of Naqib Khan's reputation for Islamo-Persian conservatism, Xavier was favorably disposed to someone he considered to be among the foremost Muslim scholars and historians, and sympathetic to the Portuguese cause. In short, Xavier's Mughal peers counted among them the most important historians, translators, scribes and copyists, and men of the pen, who with the waning influence of the clergy held the scissors and the cloth of imperial ideology in their hands.

The debates in court were the site of fierce rivalry between the likes of Abdus Sattar and Naqib Khan. As they vied for the emperor's favor, they constantly attempted to outdo each other in erudition.<sup>297</sup> Abdus Sattar's cosmopolitanism and closeness to

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<sup>295</sup> Abu'l Fazl, *A'in-i Akbari*, trans. H. Blochmann, D.C. Phillott, and H.S. Jarrett (Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1997), vols. I, 110–113; he also translated Abu'l Fazl, "Muqaddamah of Abū Al-Faḍl Ibn Mubārak," in *Mahābhārata: The Oldest and Longest Sanskrit Epic. Translated by Mir Ghayasuddin Ali Qazvini Known As Naqib Khan (d. 1023 AH)*, ed. N.S. Shukla and S.M. Reza Jalali Naini, trans. Naqib Khan, 4 vols. (Tehran: Kitabkhanah-i Tavuri, 1979).

<sup>296</sup> Nur al-Din Muhammad Jahangir, *The Jahangir Nama: Memoirs of Jahangir, Emperor of India*, ed. and trans. Wheeler M. Thackston (Washington D.C. and New York: Freer Gallery of Art, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery and Oxford University Press, 1999), 34.

<sup>297</sup> Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, *Majalis-i Jahangiri: Report of Night Assemblies at the Court of Nur Al-Din Jahangir, From 24 Rajab 1017 to 19 Ramadan 1020 A.H. / 24 October 1608 to 15 November 1611 A.D.*, 88, 111–12, 171–73, 215–17, 231, 241–42; see also Lefèvre, "Le Livre En Acte à La Cour Moghole: Le Cas Des Littératures Historique et Religieuse d'après Le Majālis-i Jahāngīrī (1608-1611)," 304.



the Jesuits was apparently something of a distinction in this context.<sup>298</sup> Soon, Xavier would enter the fray with his own interventions and attempts to establish himself in the pecking order of the court's intellectuals.<sup>299</sup> By the time of Akbar's death in 1605, Xavier had produced a major new work, markedly different from the anti-Islamic diatribe he had penned upon arrival at court, and which was still undergoing a lengthy translation process. The new text was a skillfully Mughalized *Vitae Christi*, a carefully selected collection of stories, apocryphal and otherwise, from the life of Christ. The work played on the emperor's identification with the messianic King of Kings as the son of a virgin, ushering in a new age and freeing his people from poverty with spiritual nourishment. This was closely paralleled by the Mughal emperor's self-conception as world-king, millennial Renewer, Sufi leader establishing peace and prosperity and a Son of Mary whose origins according to Timurid myths lay in virginal conception. This affinity had already begun to find its way into Mughal imperial painting, especially under the patronage of the young Prince Selim. And once Selim became Emperor Jahangir, the appropriation of Christian iconography flourished and became emblematic of his imperial self-fashioning, even in the memory of his successors.<sup>300</sup> Abdus Sattar read this work as well as his other translations into Persian aloud in court, 'with the permission of the Fathers' and under Akbar's 'exalted patronage.'<sup>301</sup> Akbar

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<sup>298</sup> Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, *Majalis-i Jahangiri: Report of Night Assemblies at the Court of Nur Al-Din Jahangir, From 24 Rajab 1017 to 19 Ramadan 1020 A.H. / 24 October 1608 to 15 November 1611 A.D.*, 3–4; the rivalry is discussed in Alam and Subrahmanyam, "Frank Disputations: Catholics and Muslims in the Court of Jahangir (1608-11)," 487; and Lefèvre, "Le Livre En Acte à La Cour Moghole : Le Cas Des Littératures Historique et Religieuse d'après Le Majālis-i Jahāngīrī (1608-1611)," 305.

<sup>299</sup> For a reconstruction of disparate Jesuit and Mughal account of these assemblies, especially in light of the Majālis-i Jahāngīrī, see the chapter on Catholics and Muslims in the Court of Jahangir in Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Writing the Mughal World: Studies on Culture and Politics* (Columbia University Press, 2012), 249–310.

<sup>300</sup> Zver, "King, Sufi and Messiah: The Tomb of Mughal Emperor Akbar (r.1556-1605)"; see also Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign*.

<sup>301</sup> Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, *Majalis-i Jahangiri: Report of Night Assemblies at the Court of Nur Al-Din Jahangir, From 24 Rajab 1017 to 19 Ramadan 1020 A.H. / 24 October 1608 to 15 November 1611 A.D.*, 34.

gave the book the title *Mir'āt al-quds* ("The Holy Mirror"), but it was Jahangir who assumed patronage of the copying of multiple albums, their lavish illustration, and their gifting to rival Muslim kings, such as the Safavid emperor Shah Abbas.<sup>302</sup>

In addition to producing works which became tools of Mughal imperial ideology and diplomacy, the Jesuits were directly, if covertly, involved in courtly politics. Their role in the jostling for power between Akbar and Salim serves as an example. While Selim was rebelling against his father, Xavier maintained a close relationship with the renegade son, receiving favours and money in return.<sup>303</sup> The ambiguity of his loyalty to both the emperor and the rebellious son, and the pragmatism with which he viewed the succession struggle would soon be reflected in the emphatically critical assessment Xavier gave of the matter of dynastic succession in the mirror-for-princes he wrote for Jahangir.<sup>304</sup>

With one foot firmly within the Mughal imperial court, Xavier continued to engage with the world beyond India, including the Orientalists in Rome and issues concerning Jesuit missions elsewhere. He offered the General in Rome advice on how to proceed in Abyssinia, and even made preparations to undertake a mission of his own to China, as his great-uncle had done.<sup>305</sup> Following approval from the Vatican and the Spanish crown, Xavier ultimately delegated the expedition to his companion Benito Goes.<sup>306</sup> One of the main reasons Xavier felt confident Goes was up to the task was his excellent knowledge of the Persian language, something that was of critical importance

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<sup>302</sup> Guerreiro, S.J., *Relação Anual Das Coisas Que Fizeram Oz Padres de Companhia de Jesus Nas Suas Missoes ... Nos Annos 1600 a 1609.*, I:309.

<sup>303</sup> Xavier, S.J., n.d., fol. 126.

<sup>304</sup> For more on the politics of Mughal succession, especially from Akbar to Jahangir, see the chapter on Asad Beg Qazwini in Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Writing the Mughal World*, 123–64; see also Jorge Flores, "I Will Do as My Father Did': On Portuguese and Other European Views of Mughal Succession Crises," *E-Journal of Portuguese History* 3, no. 2 (Winter 2005): 1–23.

<sup>305</sup> Alcázar, S.J., *Chrono-Historia de La Companhia de Jesús de La Provincia de Toledo*, 209.

<sup>306</sup> Maclagan, *The Jesuits and the Great Mogul*, by Sir Edward Maclagan., 339.

for the journey.<sup>307</sup> Goes embarked on the mission and reached China. However, he died before Matteo Ricci's Chinese emissary, Joan Fernandez, was able to reach him in Suchen.

## **Mughal accommodation and Xavier's *akhlāq***

The issue of modifying or adapting universal principles to accommodate local diversity – an approach that marked Jesuit missionary activity and would be foregrounded by Xavier in the *Directorio*'s introduction – ranked highly among the main challenges faced by the Mughal rulers themselves in the context of a culturally and religiously diverse India.<sup>308</sup> Just as the Jesuits adapted Christian theology and liturgy to local custom in Japan, China, India and elsewhere, so too the expanding Mughal empire, with an ever greater diversity of religions among its subjects, had to depart from an unmediated imposition of *sharī'ah*. In his seminal study on the political language of Islam on the subcontinent, Muzaffar Alam has shown that over time the emphasis on *sharī'ah* faded in discussion of law as norms that constituted and governed the political and social field. The reasons for these developments have been explored at length,<sup>309</sup> but it is important to recall here that by the time of the emperors Akbar and Jahangir's interactions with Jerome Xavier, the way had been opened for the institution of *fatwā*, 'intended to create a space for interpretation and enforcement of a juristic position in

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<sup>307</sup> Guerreiro, S.J., *Relação Anual Das Coisas Que Fizeram Oz Padres de Companhia de Jesus Nas Suas Missoes ... Nos Annos 1600 a 1609.*, I:311.

<sup>308</sup> For the cross-cultural translational strategies at play in courtly settings, including visual and textual media, see Subrahmanyam, *Courtly Encounters*; See also Peter Burke, "Translating Knowledge, Translating Cultures," in *Kultureller Austausch in Der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Michael North (Köln-Weimar-Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2009); for instructive Chinese analogues, see R. Po-Chia Hsia, "The Catholic Mission and Translations in China, 1583-1700," in *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Peter Burke and R. Po-Chia Hsia (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 39–51.

<sup>309</sup> Muzaffar Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam: India 1200-1800* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2004), 6.

diverse contexts.<sup>310</sup> A consensus existed among the Muslim jurists and divines about the significance of diversity (*ikhtilāf*) in the reading of traditions, elaborated by Islam's own version of scholasticism (*kalām*).

Under Akbar, texts such as the *Fatawā-i Jahāndārī* of Ziya al-Din Barani, where a king's imposition of his own laws and attendant policies was seen as totally opposed to the *sharī'ah*, gradually gave way to a philosophy more attuned to the profane exigencies of rulership. Even Barani had countenanced legislation on the basis of pragmatism, as the vicissitudes of the time required a secular, attenuating intervention for the preservation of the Muslim community. In the *Akhlāq-i Nāsirī* of Nasir al-Din Tusi, whose vision of kingship had a profound influence on Mughal ideology in the decades preceding Xavier's activity, the king's own legislation was not necessarily in contravention of the *sharī'ah*. In fact, here the distinction between 'secular' and *sharī'ah* regulations 'merged into a grey area.' If the writings of Barani had represented a literary style that one would classify as *adab*, Tusi's work is differentiated as *akhlāq*, or mirrors for princes.<sup>311</sup> As Alam further noted, these *akhlāq* texts, especially the ones which took Tusi's work as a model, show how Muslim thinkers would absorb ideas from other cultures that could be understood as contrary, or even hostile to Islamic orthodoxy. These works exhibit an attempt at a humanistic alternative to the narrow confines of *sharī'ah*, which found itself challenged by the religiously diverse environment of India. As a consequence, *sharī'ah* itself was given a new meaning that freed it from the tight grip of a literalist interpretation of Islamic Law.

The concern of *akhlāqi* literature with the application of norms to particular contexts coincides with the philosophy of accommodation as promoted by Alessandro

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<sup>310</sup> Alam, 8.

<sup>311</sup> Alam, 11.

Valignano, Visitor of the Society of Jesus in Asia and perhaps the most influential Jesuit in this part of the world during the three decades preceding his death in 1606. At its heart, this philosophy or strategy consisted of appropriating the ‘other’s’ means for one’s own purpose. Tusi’s effort to appropriate non-Islamic rules of conduct into a Muslim intellectual world is also reflected in Xavier’s mirror-for-princes. The *Directorio* shares with the Nasirean *akhlāq* tradition both subject-matter and use of wise sayings from the non-Islamic world, as well as a certain encyclopaedic character that seeks to catalogue every imaginable circumstance the king might find himself in. In spirit too, it resonates with the post-Mongol *akhlāq* literature: ‘more than being mere digests of norms of individual good behaviour, ethics, and urbanity, these texts were intended to articulate and transmit what ought to constitute correct conduct and action in varying political contexts.’<sup>312</sup>

The attempts of *akhlāq* literature to intermingle the sacred and the secular have a corollary that lies at the heart of the *Directorio*: the natural blending of Biblical, Christian and European knowledge with a non-Abrahamic, Perso-Hellenic tradition shared by the Mughals whose pantheon of imperial ideology included figures like Khosrow II, Alexander, Plato, and the Orpheus-like Majnun.<sup>313</sup> Instead of juristic discussions around the validity of individual policies and conduct according to divine law, an exercise Xavier had already attempted in his *Āʿīnāyi Haqq-numā* (1600, Persian translation in 1609) – a dialogue between a Christian and Muslim sage, presided over by a philosopher king – the *Directorio* resonates with the *akhlāqi* mode of constructing non-sectarian, universalistic proscriptions, and demonstrating, using a wide array of political contexts from Alexander the Great and the Muslim naval chief

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<sup>312</sup> Alam, 12.

<sup>313</sup> See Koch, “The Mughal Emperor as Solomon, Majnun, and Orpheus, or the Album as a Think Tank for Allegory.”

Kunjali Marrakar of Calicut, all the way to Philip II, certain principles of conduct that hold across time and space, if adapted in their delivery to local exigencies. In doing so, the *Directorio*'s program might have sought to emerge as a putative work of *akhlāq* for its elite Mughal readership, much the way that Xavier's *Mir'āt al-quds* ('Mirror of Holiness,' a *Vitae Christi*) had been recognised as a work of history (*tārīkh*). It also puts the *Directorio* in line with the philosophical vision that informed Jerome Xavier's missionary policy of accommodation as developed by Valignano.

Xavier's collation of Persianate lore with his Biblical perspective powerfully replicates Tusi's synthesis of Hellenic philosophical writings 'with his own "Islamic" view of man and society,' represented – and this is crucial – as a 'subtle transcending of both.'<sup>314</sup> Leaving aside the motivations for doing so, the *Directorio* does not attempt to displace, let alone disprove Mughal knowledge outright, but appears to act as 'supplement,' connected to and with pretensions to extend the existing knowledge systems of Xavier's patron. Thus, rather than merely 'arouse Jahangir's interest in the moral principles of Christianity as applied to politics,' which has been proposed as the work's motivation,<sup>315</sup> the more likely work of the *Directorio* was to provide moral principles that credibly *transcended* the Christian framework, in an effort to side-step the dialectical stalemate of the missionary enterprise at the Mughal court. Certainly, the utilitarian politics of dissimulation – echoing De Mariana with Scipio the African, among others, offered as an example of how a king should go through the motions of religious ritual and feign piety if needed – cannot be considered indicative of 'moral principles of Christianity'; nor, for that matter, can the focus on Alexander the Great as

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<sup>314</sup> G.M. Wickens, "Akhlāq-i Naseri," ed. Ehsan Yarshater, *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (London, Boston and Henley, 1985), 275; see also Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam: India 1200-1800*, 47.

<sup>315</sup> Lefèvre, "Europe–Mughal India–Muslim Asia: Circulation of Political Ideas and Instruments in Early Modern Times," 136.

the *Directorio*'s central figure.

According to Tusi, the ideal king was the philosopher king, who was worthy both as a moral person, and because of his union with God. Yet, after the Mongol invasion, Tusi simply repurposed his *Akhlāq-i Nāsirī* for the non-Muslim ruler by replacing the preface but keeping the rest of the content intact.<sup>316</sup> The teachings were valid, regardless of which particular god the ruler served. The *Directorio* exhibits a similar flexibility in its reliance on stories with a striking cultural and geographical reach. Take away the highly stylized, subtly Islamicised introduction, and the body of the text could easily be repurposed for a Christian king in Georgia. The philosopher king had already been a central figure in Xavier's *Āīnayi Haqq-numā*, but if in that work he acted as an arbiter *between* religions – his wisdom predicated on his choice for Christianity – the *Directorio* juxtaposes, as equals in terms of kingly ethics, both non-Abrahamic and Christian, Jewish as well as pre-Islamic, Sasanian and Perso-Hellenic kings. In Xavier's mirror for Jahangir, non-Christian kings are able to act in accordance with the ideals of kingship through a historicised form of piety, without regard to, or at least undiminished by, its non-Christian nature.

## **A courtier and counsellor**

Having already spent fourteen years at the Mughal court by the time he presented Jahangir with the *Directorio* in 1609, Xavier 'the Mughal courtier' had established himself both a divine – the author of several religious books (which were being copied, illustrated and discussed at court) – as well as, as Jorge Flores has noted, a *homo*

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<sup>316</sup> Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam: India 1200-1800*, 48–49.

*politicus*.<sup>317</sup> The very fact that Xavier's 1602 *Mir'āt al-quds* had been taken up by the imperial and sub-imperial workshops to produce lavishly illustrated albums replete with the fine miniatures that have come down to us, means at least two things. One, the content and style of that work was accepted as worthy of appropriation and distribution, including as a token of pride before rival rulers like Shah Abbas of Persia, who received an ornately decorated version as a gift from the Mughal Emperor. There is, however, a second conclusion to be drawn. The decision to illustrate the albums rules out any notion that the book was treated as containing divine revelations of any sort. Instead, it received the treatment reserved for works of history, mirrors-for-princes composed of anecdotes and historical examples, epic narratives of the Indo-Persian, and at times Sanskritic traditions – such as the *Hamzanāma*, the *Shahnāma*, the *Būstān*, or the *Anwār-e Suhaylī*, the *Pañcatantra* and others – which were the main focus of the imperial workshops.

This offers an important insight into Xavier's position at court. His authority derived from books and knowledge that were considered *historical* or *politico-literary* rather than *religious*. This is confirmed in Mughal records of the nightly assemblies held at Jahangir's court after 1608, where Xavier's *Vitae Christi* is explicitly labelled as a work of history.

This apparent 'misnomer', though perhaps offensive to Xavier's religious sensitivities and adverse to the immediate object of conversion, did nonetheless have its advantages. It added breadth to Xavier's portfolio of talents as a scholar and man of wisdom beyond the realm of religion. In other words, it made him less like his peers

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<sup>317</sup> Flores, *The Mughal Padshah: A Jesuit Treatise on Emperor Jahangir's Court and Household*, 6:x; on Catholic knowledge production in South Asia and its shape-shifting actors, see Ângela Barreto Xavier and Ines G. Županov, *Catholic Orientalism. Portuguese Empire, Indian Knowledge (16th-18th Centuries)* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2015).



among the Muslim *‘ulamā* who during much of this period were marginalized at court, and more like his bitter-sweet Mughal colleagues (and rivals), the historians Abdus Sattar and the celebrated Naqib Khan.

## ***Majālis-i Jahāngīrī* and the Mughal Assembly**

Abdus Sattar’s report on the nightly assemblies at Jahangir’s court, the *Majālis-i Jahāngīrī*, tells us that Xavier was present at courtly debates where canonical works – epic mirrors-for-princes like the *Shāhnāma*, history works containing exempla like the *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, works by the Iranian philosopher of ‘illuminated kingship’ Suhrawardi, as well as religious works like the *Suhuf-i Ibrāhīm*, the Tora and the Gospels, Shiite religious works, Hanafi legal works, along with Xavier’s own works – were discussed in great detail. Many of these books were debated specifically in the context of discussions on the rules that apply to the proper conduct of kingship.<sup>318</sup>

What is more, according to Abdus Sattar’s account, the Fathers were summoned to weigh in on questions regarding their religion on no less than fourteen occasions – making Christianity one of the most popular subjects of discussion at Jahangir’s assemblies.<sup>319</sup> Of all the assemblies, the longest account is given of a debate concerning Christian theology.<sup>320</sup> In this light, it is difficult to accept the contention by Sanjay Subrahmanyam and Muzaffar Alam that these assemblies are evidence that Mughal curiosity that was merely a playful engagement with ‘minor interlocutors’, stemming

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<sup>318</sup> Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, *Majālis-i Jahāngīrī: Report of Night Assemblies at the Court of Nur Al-Din Jahangir, From 24 Rajab 1017 to 19 Ramadan 1020 A.H. / 24 October 1608 to 15 November 1611 A.D.*; for a list of the works discussed in these debates see Lefèvre, “Le Livre En Acte à La Cour Moghole : Le Cas Des Littératures Historique et Religieuse d’après Le Majālis-i Jahāngīrī (1608-1611),” 308.

<sup>319</sup> Christian theology is the subject of discussion on 3 November 1608, 6 November 1608, 9 October 1610, 21 May 1610, 19 June 1610, 28 June 1610, 10 July 1610, an unknown date in June or July 1610, 20 August 1610, 28 August 1610, 18 October 1610, 8 November 1610, 1 May 1611, and 28 June 1611.

<sup>320</sup> The discussion took place at the assembly of 21 May 1610, see Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, *Majālis-i Jahāngīrī: Report of Night Assemblies at the Court of Nur Al-Din Jahangir, From 24 Rajab 1017 to 19 Ramadan 1020 A.H. / 24 October 1608 to 15 November 1611 A.D.*, 29–37.

from an attraction to some aspects of European ‘material culture’.<sup>321</sup> Certainly, European kingdoms and their representatives were generally considered of secondary importance (especially in comparison to envoys from the Persianate world), and European material culture, including painting, did become something of a Mughal obsession. But the image Subrahmanyam and Alam paint is incomplete. It does not account for the need or desire of a senior Mughal noble (Sattar) to devote a large section of his account of imperial assemblies (an account that, Sattar claims, summarizes Jahangir’s views for the seekers of truth who follow him), to theological discussions with the Jesuits. The subjects of painting, gifts, and medicine – which one might claim had greater weight – are mentioned only in passing.

For what is furthermore striking is not only the prominent role of Abdus Sattar in these debates, but the space he affords his rival and fellow-historian Naqib Khan, in an exercise that appears to prioritise subjects to enhance primarily the image of the author himself. The subject of Christianity seems to occupy an important place in the account in order to illustrate the instances of humiliation of, and triumph over, the Fathers in debate. In his introduction to the *Samarat al-falasafa* some years earlier, Abdus Sattar had already suggested that among the reasons for taking an interest in Western knowledge was to provide the pitiful Fathers some ‘solace in their hearts as a consequence.’

Even if Abdus Sattar had not documented Xavier’s attendance during discussions of various books broadly relevant to Mughal statecraft, it is hard to imagine that in learning Persian, Xavier would have managed to avoid the fundamental building blocks of Persian language curricula, beginning with Sa‘di’s *Golestān* – which

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<sup>321</sup> Alam and Subrahmanyam, “Frank Disputations: Catholics and Muslims in the Court of Jahangir (1608-11),” 507.

opens with the famous chapter on ‘The Manners of Kings’ and was one of Akbar’s favourite works.<sup>322</sup> Indeed, as we will see in the next chapter, the central themes of the *Directorio* strongly resonate with the body of advice literature existing in Mughal India, including the themes of justice, knowledge, piety, and the idea of the ruler as servant of the people.

Moreover, an affinity for ideas found in Mughal texts is unsurprising if we consider that books such as the Arabic *Sirr al-asrar* were an important source for both the European and Indo-Persian bodies of advice literature existing in Mughal India, including al-Turtūshi, al-Ghazālī and Nizām al-Mulk, who drew from it exempla and anecdotes. Elsewhere, Xavier had relied on the knowledge of fellow Jesuits of Persian extraction and education, such as the Iranian *murtadd* Francisco Henriques. Hugues Didier has pointed out that ‘certain particularities in the Castilian text [of Xavier’s *Fuente de Vida*] lead to the assumption that notes previously written in Persian, possibly by [Henriques] ... were translated and reused by Xavier.’<sup>323</sup>

All of this is not to suggest that Xavier had an intimate knowledge of Persian literature read and produced at court, but that there is little reason to assume an enduring ignorance over twenty years spent at the Mughal court. Certainly, Xavier could not count on the credibility Mughal men of letters such as Abdus Sattar or Naqib Khan themselves enjoyed in the courtly forum, but a gradual shift in his persona had nonetheless occurred in the years since his arrival at court in 1595. By 1609, Xavier was no longer preoccupied exclusively with the accommodation to Mughal exigencies in his

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<sup>322</sup> On adab’s curricular role, see Mana Kia, “Adab as Ethics of Literary Form and Social Conduct: Reading the Gulistān in Late Mughal India,” in *No Tapping around Philology, A Festschrift in Honor of Wheeler McIntosh Thackston Jr.’s 70th Birthday*, ed. Alireza Korangy and Daniel J. Sheffield (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2014), 281–308.

<sup>323</sup> Didier Hugues, “Jerome Xavier,” in *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History Volume 11 South and East Asia, Africa and the Americas (1600-1700)* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 87–88.

literary treatment of Christian subjects. He was now both steeped in the inner workings of the court— having for years, and on a daily basis, observed the interactions among courtiers and the emperor and being able to assess courtiers’ political fortunes<sup>324</sup> – and relatively familiar, however erroneous some of his understandings, with the language of Mughal politics. His immersive study of the Persian language, his interactions with members of the courtly elite, such as his close and imperially sanctioned collaboration with Abdus Sattar, also mandated an exposure to the world of Indo-Persian political and literary language.<sup>325</sup>

## ***Tahqīq* and the ‘Gentle Method’**

Alessandro Valignano, Visitor of the Society in Asia, criss-crossing between Japan, China and India around the turn of the seventeenth century, is the name most readily associated with the promotion of the missionary policy known as accommodation or ‘the gentle method’ (*il modo soave*). In truth, this method, which in spite of support in fundamental Jesuit texts had previously had a somewhat clandestine status, was vigorously promoted by Valignano after his arrival in Japan in 1579 and became something of a success story in Europe after a Japanese embassy to Rome he had organised in 1585. Valignano and those who followed his lead – including most famously Roberto de Nobili in India’s Madurai and Matteo Ricci in Ming China – were vigorously criticised for their aberrant way of proceeding. The method was, and continues to be, characterised along the lines of nationality, as in the ‘Italian’ method

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<sup>324</sup> Flores, *The Mughal Padshah: A Jesuit Treatise on Emperor Jahangir’s Court and Household*, 6:x; Jerónimo Xavier to the Provincial of the Society of Jesus in India, Lahore, 4 August 1607 *Documentação Ultramarina Portuguesa*, vol. III (Lisbon: Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos, 1963), 101–2; see also Flores, *Nas Margens Do Hindustão*.

<sup>325</sup> On adab’s curricular role, see Kia, “Adab as Ethics of Literary Form and Social Conduct: Reading the Gulistān in Late Mughal India.”

in contradistinction to that of the ‘Iberians’. But such characterisations ignore the work of the likes of the Navarrese Jerome Xavier, who have largely been left out of idealized analyses of accommodation as the work of a group of visionaries inspired by a quintessentially Italian spirit of the Renaissance.

Valignano’s philosophy in effect had little to do with Italian Renaissance per se. His idea was simply to apply the principle of experimentalism, or empiricism, to missionary work. In other words, this meant recognising and elevating the value of experience over abstract concepts. In the missionary field, conduct was thus to be guided by observing, or experiencing, the particularity of a given situation or place, and adapting abstract concepts accordingly. This sensitivity to the particular, or specific, implied a recognition of the world’s diversity, and of nature’s varied manifestations. Indeed, Valignano’s proposition was a common reflection of the humanist affirmation of the importance of experience in knowledge-formation. The solution to diversity here was not universalizing theory, but applied, modified theory.<sup>326</sup> This was an interpretation of Aristotle, especially his *Physics*, that ran counter to Thomas Aquinas’ idea of a total unity of the world and God. In a way however, it merely emphasised the notion already present in the *Constitutions* of the Society’s founder Ignacio de Loyola, where the mobility and itinerancy of the Society were already taken as necessary adaptations to the diversity of humanity.<sup>327</sup> As Valignano himself affirms, ‘the customs and laws of Japan are so strange and new that a man cannot in any way be guided by the resolutions of Cajetan or Navarro’s [Azpilcueta], or the other chroniclers of Europe, but must adapt universal and natural rules to the particular cases of Japan.’<sup>328</sup> To put

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<sup>326</sup> V. Luís Filipe Barreto, *Os Descobrimentos e a Ordem Do Saber. Uma Análise Sociocultural*, 2nd ed. (Lisbon, 1989), 72–79.

<sup>327</sup> Luce Giard, “Relire Les ‘Constitutions,’” in *Les Jésuites à l’Âge Baroque, 1540-1640*, ed. Luce Giard and Louis De Vaucelles (Grenoble, 1996), 55.

<sup>328</sup> Alessandro Valignano, S.J., *Sumario de Las Cosas de Japon (1583)*, ed. José Luis Alvarez-Taladriz (Tokyo, 1954), 220–21.

it even more simply, ‘do what is convenient, here and now, in the most particular circumstances.’<sup>329</sup>

The accommodational philosophy and the specific strategy it produced in individual missions had a further analogue in Mughal ideology itself, in addition to the problem of adapting to diversity as discussed above. Valignano had advocated a break with the constancy of universal concepts in favour of action informed by observation of a variable, changing reality. As we have seen, this implied an innovation of one’s established modes of operation. Secondly, it led to the particular role adopted by accommodationists, including Matteo Ricci and Jerome Xavier, posing as harbingers of new knowledge. Abu’l Fazl, Akbar’s chief ideologue and author of the famous chronicles of his reign, the *Akbarnāma* and *Ā’in-e Akbarī*, had signalled a parallel distinction between the blind imitation of received abstract concepts (*taqlid*), and innovative knowledge (*tahqīq*) which was based on experiential reasoning.<sup>330</sup> Under Akbar, the latter had further implied an active inquiry that would allow for new sources of knowledge, especially in other languages. This Mughal openness to new knowledge, which, like the Jesuit strategy, has been described with the term ‘accommodation’, is what prompted the translation of Sanskrit works like the *Mahābhārata* in the workshops of the Mughal emperor.<sup>331</sup> To use Abu’l Fazl’s own words: to engage with the foreign was to ensure ‘the morning of discernment.’<sup>332</sup> Applied to the realm of kingship, it meant the perfect king was one on an endless quest for new knowledge that

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<sup>329</sup> Alessandro Valignano, S.J., “Apologia En La Qual Se Responde a Diversas Calumnias Que Se Escribieron Contra Los Padres de La Compañia de Japon y de La China” 1598, fols. 56v-57r, Jap-Sin. 41, ARSI.

<sup>330</sup> Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *Religious and Intellectual History of the Muslims in Akbar’s Reign, with Special Reference to Abu’l Fazl, 1556-1605* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1975), 341.

<sup>331</sup> On the formative interaction between the Persianate Mughal elite and Sanskrit scholars, see Audrey Truschke, *Culture of Encounters: Sanskrit at the Mughal Court* (Columbia University Press, 2016).

<sup>332</sup> Abu’l Fazl, “Muqaddamah of Abū Al-Faḏl Ibn Mubārak,” 17–18.

could enhance his perfection.<sup>333</sup>

He [Akbar] is a potent speaker who, having gained knowledge of different languages of people in the world, speaks with all types of men about their customs and the subtleties of various tongues. Particularly regarding the languages of India that are far from the road of those born of the Turks, having become a true master, he discourses on innovative meanings and esoteric topics. Ask him to decipher the secrets of subtle speakers since other than Solomon he alone knows the language of the birds.<sup>334</sup>

It appears this shared, once could say humanist, recognition of the world's diversity, and of nature's varied manifestations on both the Mughal and Jesuit side, made it possible for Xavier to immerse himself in Mughal culture to the point of producing Mughalized books in Persian for the Emperor, and for Akbar and later Jahangir to take a sincere interest in the art, politics and religion of the Fathers' homeland. It would be a mistake, however, to idealize mutual perceptions and motivations on the basis of this coincidence. Mutual affinities enabled an exchange but had surprisingly little bearing on prejudices or politico-religious objectives.

## **The *Ā'ina-i Haqq-numā*, the Slave and the Despot**

The ideological blueprint for Xavier's engagement with Mughal kingship is apparent in his first work, the *Fuente de Vida*, where the image of the Muslim oscillates between that of a slave and the despot who rules over him. It is tempting to see this work, completed no later than 1600 (and probably as early as 1597) as an initial position which softened over time, followed by more conciliatory works such as the *Mir'āt al-quds* or the *Directorio*. However, the Persian *A'ina-i Haqq-numā* and its abridgement

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<sup>333</sup> Catherine B. Asher, "A Ray from the Sun: Mughal Ideology and the Visual Construction of the Divine," in *The Presence Of Light: Divine Radiance and Religious Experience*, ed. Matthew Kapstein (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 170–71.

<sup>334</sup> Abu'l Fazl, "Muqaddamah of Abū Al-Faḍl Ibn Mubārak," 13.

*Muntakab A'ina-i Haqq-numā* were completed in 1609, whereas the Spanish original (*Fuente de Vida*) on which they were based was composed by 1600.<sup>335</sup> As such these works envelop Xavier's literary output for the Mughal court from its inception to its final stage.

When Jerome Xavier first arrived at the Mughal court, Akbar had a number of European books brought out of the library and invited Xavier to use these in his work at court. Among them was Thomas Aquinas' *Summa contra Gentiles*, held in the Mughal imperial library since the first Jesuit mission. As we will see, this work ended up being an important source for Xavier's first work. Because a partial translation was lost while the *A'ina-i Haqq-numā* was in progress, and because Xavier appears to have worked more independently from his Mughal collaborator Abdus Sattar on this particular work, it took some twelve years to complete the translation. We know that Xavier was working on this translation as early as 1597, since in that year he writes to the Provincial or Visitor promising show it to him before presenting it to Akbar. A completed copy that survives is dated 1600, the same year Xavier had sent a copy of a manuscript he called *Fonte de Vida* (the title in Portuguese) to the Visitor Pimenta. The surviving copy refers to Akbar as the addressee, and so even in case of a conceivable error in the year given, must predate Jahangir's ascent to the throne in 1605. It is thus likely a copy of the original Spanish version, rather than a later Spanish translation of the Persian version of 1609. Comparison to the Persian translation, the *Āīnayi Haqq-numā*, shows the latter was a faithful rendering of this original.

It makes sense why this decidedly polemical work, which sets out not only to prove the truth of Christianity, but the error of Islam, made a Muslim collaborator unlikely. Following a fall out un 1607, Abdus Sattar's literary collaboration with Jerome

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<sup>335</sup> cf. B.L. Persian MSS. Hart 5478 and Add. 23, 584, respectively



Xavier appears to have come to an end, and he is unlikely to have had a hand in either of the two major works presented to Jahangir in 1609, the *Āīnayi Haqq-numā* and the *Directorio*. Initially written to present the Mughal emperor with reasons to assume the Christian faith, the *Āīnayi Haqq-numā* would go on to become the subject, over many decades, of rebuttals by Muslim and Christian authors in Iran, Rome, as well as India, disputing and defending its claims (see Chapter One).

The work reflects the permission obtained by Alessandro Valignano in 1580 to allow missionaries to become well-versed in local religions so they could write refutations.<sup>336</sup> The permission granted to Valignano was not entirely out of character, but in fact followed closely in the steps of Aquinas and early sixteenth century Salamanca theologians. It was also pursued by Jesuits like José de Acosta as part of a rationalist framework that presumed the applicability of a universal natural law.<sup>337</sup>

The Mughal penchant for critical rationalism – faced by the Fathers in courtly debates but denied in correspondence – may have been what encouraged the text’s form as a dialogue between a Jesuit and a Muslim theologian, presided over by a philosopher king as proxy for Emperor Akbar, who regularly hosted such debates in his court. In adopting this model, Xavier follows that of Ramon Llull’s *Libre del gentil e dels tres savis*, himself influenced by the Persian philosophers Al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā and the Andalusian Ibn Sab’in. The nature of the debates at the Mughal court was decidedly predicated on rational argument from first principles. As we have seen, Mughal sources claim this very mode of disputation was deployed, with notable success, to refute the claims of the Jesuit fathers as internally inconsistent and

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<sup>336</sup> Josef Wicki, ed., *Documenta Indica*, Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, 70,72,74,78,83,86,89,91,94,98,103,105,113,118,123,127,132-133 (Romae: Apud “Monumenta Historica Soc. Iesu,” 1948), vol. X, pp. 334–5.

<sup>337</sup> Barreto Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism. Portuguese Empire, Indian Knowledge (16th-18th Centuries)*, 146; see also Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge University Press, 1986).

contradictory.<sup>338</sup> Notably, the dialectic of Xavier's *Ā'ina-i Haqq-numā* corresponds to this mode of debate.

However, the work is important for a second reason, which has been overlooked. It drew on Aquinas' portrayal of Muhammad and those who follow him in his *Summa contra Gentiles*, the book Akbar had brought out from the imperial library for Xavier to use. Xavier applies Aquinas' language of Mohammad and his followers' seduction, carnal pleasure, mendacity, brutality and beastliness, to the discussion of Mughal government, thus aligning the terms of discussion with those that would become commonplace in European discourse on Oriental despotism over the ensuing decades and centuries. Rubiés' prescient interpretation of the conceptual development of ideas about the East, and in particular the concept of oriental despotism, as 'an intense interaction between European debates about monarchy and travel narratives about non-European cultures,' invites us to explore this interaction, which I believe was crucial for Xavier's conception of good counsel, more closely.<sup>339</sup>

Xavier's Muhammad permits dissimulation not only under threat of injury (*taqīya*) but actively requires his followers to deceive in a variety of ways: by concealing money, the religious path, and religious law itself.<sup>340</sup> Moreover, Mohammed sanctions the slaughter of infidels and the release of prisoners. This is contrasted to the Christian practice of leading by reason, education, and example. Mohammed – a proxy for the Muslim king as Mohammad's descendant – incites his followers to kill, and to lie in ambush for idolaters. Islam is like a vicious warrior tempting his soldiers to war, exacting tribute and retaliation.<sup>341</sup>

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<sup>338</sup> Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, *Majalis-i Jahangiri: Report of Night Assemblies at the Court of Nur Al-Din Jahangir, From 24 Rajab 1017 to 19 Ramadan 1020 A.H. / 24 October 1608 to 15 November 1611 A.D.*

<sup>339</sup> Joan-Pau Rubiés, "Oriental Despotism and European Orientalism: Botero to Montesquieu," *Journal of Early Modern History* 9, no. 2 (2005): 112.

<sup>340</sup> Jerome Xavier, S.J., "Fuente de Vida" (Agra, 1600), fols. 182-187v, ARSI.

<sup>341</sup> Xavier, S.J., fols. 190v-192.

The sword is not a key giving admission to the heart, never, never! It is reasons, instruction, good example, tenderness and benefits that open well-locked hearts. That key was used by Jesus Christ, our Lord, whereas Mohammad wielded the sword.<sup>342</sup>

According to Xavier, Mohammad gave free reign to man's passions by permitting polygamy, thereby debasing humans to animals, and promoted the unfettered use of female slaves, and the spread of promiscuity by permitting divorce.<sup>343</sup> Christianity is the way of moderation, whereas Islam is the way of unbridled sexual appetites, a symptom of the lack of charity and chastity.

The portrayal of Mohammed as the antipode of (female) virtue had a history in Europe. A popular Sarum primer from the end of the fifteenth century shows a sequence of female virtues crushing personifications of vices, including Charity stomping on Herod, Justice on Nero, Temperance on Tarquin and Force on Holofernes, while the first image is that of Faith trampling on Mohammed.<sup>344</sup> Xavier is not satisfied to make his point discretely. He charges that Mohammed tried to enrich himself and acquire honour by war and cruelty and was sexually insatiable and promiscuous.<sup>345</sup> Mohammed is built up into a textbook example of the Oriental despot and all that animated him in the European imaginary. As the progenitor of Muslim kings, he forged laws arbitrarily to suit his appetites, Xavier adds, as evidenced by the laws allowing him to marry multiple wives and have sex with slaves. His claims thus have no credibility; they are not revelations but dreams, with him as the only witness.<sup>346</sup> Xavier generalizes this characteristic to Muslims in general as inventors of

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<sup>342</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 189v.

<sup>343</sup> Xavier, S.J., fols. 194v-195r.

<sup>344</sup> *Horae Presentes Ad Sarum* (Paris: Philippe Pigouchet and Symone Vostre, 1498); see Matthew Dimmock, *Mythologies of the Prophet Muhammad in Early Modern English Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), 65 et passim.

<sup>345</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Fuente de Vida," fol. 217r.

<sup>346</sup> Xavier, S.J., fols. 219r-219v.

untrue miracles.<sup>347</sup>

Shifting to a comparative framework, Xavier explains that the larger and better part of the world is Christian. Better, because Christian peoples are known for their achievements in literature and arts, their inventions, and world-power – Xavier’s vision of European intellectual superiority accounting for its global political dominance. Corroborating Abdus Sattar’s account of the Western countries in *Samarat al-Falasafa*, but in a comparative framework that elevates their rationality over the imagination of their non-Christian counterparts, Xavier paints a picture of Christian Europe as a cohesive whole, each part contributing to a greater, consistent whole. Thus, Greece is responsible for literature, arts and inventions, while Spain and Portugal are known for world-power. The Eastern Christians apparently have no role in the greatness of a Christianity that is cast as decidedly European. In rule of law, too, Christian countries are superior, for the Pope rules by virtue of the Law of the Gospel, whereas Islam spreads disorder and ignorance.<sup>348</sup> Christian countries rely on Procurators and Judges to dispense charity and justice, while there are none of these in Islam. How could Christian kings not be greater than Muslim rulers, when Christ is a better lawgiver than Mohammed?<sup>349</sup>

Xavier amalgamates a fantasy of insatiable sexual desire and animal-like promiscuity of his Muslims with superstition and ignorance, to account for a comparative lack of reason, charity, moderation, good laws, arts, inventions, justice, and world-power (relative to European Christianity). This perception had implications for Xavier’s strategy a court, specifically as regards his self-fashioning as a scholar, where a conscious choice appears to have been made to steer clear of astronomy, and

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<sup>347</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 220v.

<sup>348</sup> Xavier, S.J., fols. 259v-265v.

<sup>349</sup> Xavier, S.J., fols. 265v-270v.

to focus on literary works the Mughals would categorize as historical. The Jesuits themselves had of course long been well aware of the Mughals' political use of astronomy, yet the view of Mughal astronomy as corrupted by the Mughals' innate superstition and irrationality, and thus part of a distinctly Muslim matrix of depredations, would pose a problem for Xavier's fashioning as an astronomer at the Mughal court, in spite of his own expertise and the successful use of astronomy by Matteo Ricci, his contemporary in China. The central role of astronomy in Mughal kingship could not have escaped Xavier. Abdus Sattar describes the nightly assemblies in which Xavier participated as 'crossings and conjunctions of the stars' which are aimed at the seekers of truth (*tālibān-i tahqīq*) who follow Jahangir.<sup>350</sup> The debates are made up of divine secrets and advice (*mazhar-i asrār-i ilāhī*), emphasizing the purpose of astronomical knowledge as discernment of hidden truth and good counsel.

If from the Mughal perspective astronomy could speak to the political with the potency of history, this was not a perception shared by European observers. However central to the Mughal ideology of government, astronomy as practiced by the Mughals was in the mind of the European observers the epitome of Oriental superstition and corruption of rational thought. As such, it was antithetical to Xavier's self-fashioning as a great Western scholar and a vanquisher of the errors of Mughal despotism. The political overtones of astronomical science are key to understanding the 'impossible short-circuit' between its place in the Mughal and Jesuit imaginaries. However, in spite of Azfar Moin's study of the central role of astrology in the construction of sixteenth and seventeenth century Mughal 'rationality',<sup>351</sup> and Sanjay Subrahmanyam's

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<sup>350</sup> Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, *Majalis-i Jahangiri: Report of Night Assemblies at the Court of Nur Al-Din Jahangir, From 24 Rajab 1017 to 19 Ramadan 1020 A.H. / 24 October 1608 to 15 November 1611 A.D.*, 2.

<sup>351</sup> Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign*, 13.

suggestion of a ‘global’ conjecture of millenarian discourses in the sixteenth century,<sup>352</sup> the seventeenth century already shows a perceived distinction between a superstitious Eastern astrology and a mathematical Western one, gradually assimilated into the sweeping image of oriental despotism. Astronomy’s role in what was seen as Mughal despotism, absorbed the subject into a consistent discourse among European observers in which the Oriental, and more specifically Muslim mind was prone to a constitutional weakness that gave way to ignorance, credulity and superstition, leading into endless error.

In the eyes of a conventional European wisdom that viewed Eastern astronomy as a manifestation (and tool) of Oriental despotism, assuming the role of a court astronomer would mean engaging in a compromised and compromising practice in service not of the Greater Glory of God, but of the embodiment of vice enthroned. History, including the moral history of mirrors-for-princes, commanded more credibility as a normative guide for government than scheming soothsayers and their ‘untrue miracles’. Nonetheless, as Xavier’s clandestine astronomical salons show, the interaction was not limited to European condescension and Mughal awe. In contradiction to Xavier’s wilful, if not wilfully misleading, silence on the matter, members of the ‘credulous’ Mughal elite took it upon themselves to examine, translate, and incorporate aspects of European astronomy they considered useful.

## **A Climate of Oriental Despotism**

It is hardly surprising that Xavier should have approached any matter concerning the Emperor of a Muslim empire through the long-standing lens of oriental despotism. In the 1580s, Ralph Fitch had written about the opulence of the Mughal

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<sup>352</sup> Subrahmanyam, “Turning the Stones Over: Sixteenth-Century Millenarianism from the Tagus to the Ganges.”

court in a way that not only Xavier, but also many other European observers of the Mughal court would echo in the decades that followed, including William Hawkins and Sir Thomas Roe. Fitch extended the idea of an innate Muslim sensuality which already existed in European fantasies of Eastern seraglios to the Mughal harem in particular. The connection between this notion of sexual incontinence and Islam was made explicit with references to the Koran's sanction of polygamy and the treatment of women as servants. Some years later, the Dutch Francisco Pelsaert would muse about Mughal palaces 'adorned internally with lascivious sensuality, wanton and reckless festivity,' as part and parcel of a disposition projected outward as 'superfluous pomp, inflated pride, and ornamental daintiness.'<sup>353</sup>

The conflation of these attributes with a universal Muslim political disposition was part of a broader re-popularization among late sixteenth-century thinkers of the Aristotelian idea of oriental despotism. In this sense, the writing of the former Jesuit Giovanni Botero constituted a watershed moment. Employing a comparative analysis of existing travel accounts, Botero in his *Relationi Universali* (Rome, 1591-1595) produced a sort of universal history covering geography, political economy, and religion of the world's major countries. He applied the concept of *governo despotico*, rendered as 'absolute government' in contemporary English and French translations, to examples as varied as Turkey, Muscovy, Ethiopia, Siam, China, Vijayanagara and Mughal India.

Rubiés has shown that Botero's development of the idea of despotism as an analytical tool was the result of reading creatively, and through an Aristotelian lens, a number of sixteenth-century empirical accounts which had a wide circulation in

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<sup>353</sup> Francisco Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India: The Remonstrantie of Francisco Pelsaert*, trans. W.H. Moreland and P. Geyl (Cambridge, 1925), 64–65.

Europe. Several of these accounts —especially descriptions of Turkey, Russia, and India — already contained elements that supported a fundamental opposition between European and Oriental political regimes.<sup>354</sup>

Key to Botero's universal comparative history is the theme of the despotic ruler's unconstrained access to private property, an indiscretion writers from the seventeenth century onward would make central to the discussion of the ills of despotism.<sup>355</sup> In this sense, Botero prefigures as crucial tenet of a theory of Oriental despotism that would be reiterated in various ways by a long line of intellectual descendants from François Bernier in the seventeenth and Montesquieu in the eighteenth, all the way to Marx in the nineteenth and Weber in the twentieth century. Secondly, the majority of Botero's 'oriental princes' shared a number of distinguishing traits, generally defined as excessive and counterproductive. It is telling that Safavid Persia, the Catholic monarchy's vital ally in the Muslim East, is exempted from this damning verdict for being 'the most regal and political amongst the Muslims.' But the terms in which Botero contrasts the ideal Muslim monarchy to its typical variety already implies a *universal standard* of exploitation, viciousness, and immorality, for '... all [other Muslim governments] extinguish the nobility and rely on the work of slaves, and kill their brothers, or blind them.'<sup>356</sup>

The contention that thanks to Botero's analysis non-European barbarism came to be primarily determined by neither race nor religion, but by the relation between civility and politics, should therefore be qualified. For the Jesuits, as important contributors to the debate on despotism throughout the ensuing century, race and religion continued to have direct implications for how they thought about Muslims'

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<sup>354</sup> Rubiés, "Oriental Despotism and European Orientalism: Botero to Montesquieu," 130.

<sup>355</sup> Rubiés, 124.

<sup>356</sup> Giovanni Botero, *De Relationi Universali* (Rome, 1591), part II, 174-5.



ability to engage in good government. A deeply entrenched tradition since at least the thirteenth century of stereotyping Muslims, especially a supposed moral weakness that prevented them to ensure good government, remained current in European accounts on the Mughal empire through the seventeenth century.

## **Valignano and Peoples ‘born by nature to serve’**

Aristotle’s claim that the reason why Oriental governments were despotic was because Asian people were ‘by nature slaves,’ and thus uninterested in rebelling,<sup>357</sup> was recalled by Alessandro Valignano, who corroborated the observation but went further by linking it to race: ‘In the Asian Jesuit province, except the Japanese and the Chinese, all the inhabitants were black in colour because of the heath and universally speaking what all these people have in common is their lack of perfection and capacity, and it seems as Aristotle said that they are born by nature to serve.’<sup>358</sup>

The examples from Xavier’s *Āīnayi Haqq-numā* or *Fuente de Vida* given above demonstrate the reach of ideas that feed into the phantasm of Oriental despotism and would go on to inform the program of the *Directorio*. These ingredients – preconceptions about the nature of Muslims, and by extension Muslim government – would gain an ever-wider circulation over the ensuing decades, and themselves drew on a widely popular tradition established between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries in Europe. Xavier’s Mohammad, as a model Muslim sovereign, embodies all the traits of the Oriental despot: deceptiveness, arbitrary and whimsical dispensation of justice, oppression, gratuitous violence, and especially a lasciviousness that clouds the mind and causes disarray in government. Not only

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<sup>357</sup> Aristotle, *Politics*, ed. Stephen Everson (Cambridge, 1988), 74.

<sup>358</sup> Centro de estudos históricos ultra-marinos (Portugal), *Documentação ultramarina portuguesa. III, III*, (Lisboa: Centro de Estudos Historicos Ultramarinos, 1963), vols. XII, 475; quoted in Barreto Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism. Portuguese Empire, Indian Knowledge (16th-18th Centuries)*, 127.

would these properties be reflected in the editorial choices of the *Directorio*, but they can be understood as harbingers of the ambiguous attitude toward Mohammed and Islam persisting into the Enlightenment. Thus, it is important that the fantasy at work in Xavier's characterizations of Mughal kingship is not one of his own making, but a collective and longstanding one, which he and many after him were unable to escape, and which in some ways remains alive today.

I have tried to expose the internal contradiction of Xavier's effort to assimilate into Mughal courtly norms of scholarly endeavour, his keen ability to advance a missionary program by engaging – with a helping hand from Mughal scholars such as Abdus Sattar – the political language of his host, and yet to observe Mughal kingship through the distinct lens of Oriental despotism. Chapter Five looks at the inner workings of the advice literature this confluence of factors produced in the form of the *Directorio*.

## 5. A Mirror-for-Princes for Jahangir

The title of Xavier's mirror has been the source of some confusion. The title *Adab al-saltanat*, which is most commonly used to refer to the *Directorio* in scholarship, has lead one historian to wonder why Xavier chose this title, if he 'actually had in mind the *akhlāq* tradition ... the term *adab* referring to the competing (more religiously oriented) tradition of political writing in the Muslim world.'<sup>359</sup> Beyond the question of Xavier's emulation of existing *adab* and *akhlāq* literature in a courtly context, where competition for Persian-language literary distinction required a certain fluency in these forms of ethical writing, there is a much simpler explanation for the title.

The only title appearing in either of the two known manuscripts is *Directorio de Réys* (with the slight variation of 'Directorio dos Réys' in the SOAS version, presumably a slip by the Spanish-native Xavier). This title is written in Xavier's own hand at the top of the Portuguese introductory note that precedes the main text. A description immediately following the title specifies the subject as 'the proper conduct of kings in matters of government.'<sup>360</sup> The spine of the Casanatense copy bears a further title, in Latin: *Hieronimi Xavier De officio Regis ad Regem Mogol*, ('By Jerome Xavier on the proper conduct of kingship for the Mughal king'), a title reminiscent of Cicero's *De Officiis* ('On Duties' or 'On Proper Conduct') of which Xavier appears to have also produced a now lost translation into Persian. On the inside of the cover, a card (now removed) used to give the title simply as *De Regimine Regis* ('On Kingship').<sup>361</sup>

Indeed, the title, or even just the phrase '*adab al-saltanat*,' does not appear

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<sup>359</sup> The question, posed by Corinne Lefèvre, is referred to in Flores, *The Mughal Padshah: A Jesuit Treatise on Emperor Jahangir's Court and Household*, 6:44 (see footnote no. 7).

<sup>360</sup> Jerome Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys" (Agra, 1609), fol. 1r, Ms. 2015, Biblioteca Casanatense, Rome; Jerome Xavier, S.J., "Directorio Dos Reyes Em Qui Se Trata Como Se Ha de Aver Hu Rey Nas Cousas de Sue Governo = Ādāb Al-Saltānah" (Agra, 1609), 1r, Ms. 7030, SOAS, London.

<sup>361</sup> Gustavo Sacredote, *Cataloghi Dei Codici Orientali Di Alcune Biblioteche d'Italia*, vol. I (Firenze: Tipografia dei successori Le Monnier, 1878), 438.

anywhere in Xavier's text. The only instance where it is used is an anonymously composed bilingual (Portuguese/Persian) list of works produced by 'the Fathers of this mission' (i.e. the Jesuit mission in Agra) in Persian, appended at a later time to the end of the manuscript now held at SOAS. This list also gives us a second Portuguese variant of the title for Xavier's mirror as the *Forma dos Principes e vertudes que saõ proprias delles* ('The proper conduct of Kings and the virtues they should possess').

We know that in 1649 Father Francisco Morandi copied some of Xavier's works at the library of the Jesuit residence in Agra (among which a Persian version of the Gospels is specifically mentioned).<sup>362</sup> Analyses of the handwriting by Arnulf Camps and Angel Santos Hernández have pointed to Francisco Morandi as the author of the above appendix to the SOAS manuscript. It would appear then, that Morandi either assigned this title as his own Persian translation of the original Portuguese title provided by Xavier, or that the work was known to him, and perhaps was even commonly known, as *Adab al-saltanat*, a fact Morandi merely recorded. The latter seems more likely, for whoever composed the list clearly did not have access to the copy of the *Directorio* to which it is appended today. This is made very clear by the deviation in the Portuguese variant of the title in the appended list, from that which is indicated by Xavier himself in the manuscript to which the list is appended. Given that this copy (now held at SOAS) was intended for the Italian Orientalist Giovanni Battista Vecchietti, who had visited Xavier in Agra, and that instead of reaching its addressee it remained in India for some two hundred years, it is possible that while the manuscript had been sent to Goa for the purpose of boarding a ship to Europe, it remained there, ultimately being equipped with Morandi's loose Agra note listing Xavier's Persian works. The SOAS

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<sup>362</sup> "Breve Ragguaglio Sopra La Missione Della Compagnia Di Giesù Della Provincia Goana Nell'Indie Orientale: Appresentato All'Eminentissima Congregatione de Propaganda Fide Del Padre Giovanni Moracci, Procurator Della Detta Provincia, in Aprile Dell'anno 1649" n.d., fol. 381v, Goa 34, II, ARSI.

manuscript is dated 5 December 1609, some six months younger than the Casanatense copy, dated the previous summer, 26 June 1609 (Ramadan 8, and Rabi 1, 23 respectively, both A.H. 1018).<sup>363</sup> Xavier had intended the first, cleaner copy to be sent to Claudio Acquaviva, the General of the Society in Rome. Nothing is known about its peregrination, or indeed about Acquaviva's receipt or impression of it, prior to its entry into the Casanatense library in Rome at an unknown date.<sup>364</sup>

The *Directorio* is divided into four chapters, treating the king's relation to God, himself, the nobles, and his people. In the cleaner, Casanatense copy, which was used for this study (though the texts appear to be virtually identical) chapter one starts at 7r (and is ff43 in length), two at 50r (ff90 in length), three at 140v (ff76 in length) and four at 216r (ff50 in length). The rather extensive text occupies a total of 267 folios.<sup>365</sup> The second chapter, on the king's relation to himself, that is on the need for his continuous moral self-correction, or self-improvement, is the longest, and along with the first chapter on God – crucial given the missionary context – receive the most attention in this exploratory study. In the introduction, Xavier explains that the four chapters correspond to the four pillars of kingship as laid out by Plutarch,<sup>366</sup> but upon reflection another correspondence presents itself, which Xavier may have intended, but chose not to reveal.

Ignatius de Loyola had defined the goal of the Jesuit enterprise as the service and betterment of four elements: first, the Society, where every Jesuit superior stood in the place of Christ (cf. *Directorio's* chapter one); second, yourself (cf. *Directorio's*

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<sup>363</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio Dos Reyes Em Qui Se Trata Como Se Ha de Aver Hu Rey Nas Cousas de Sue Governo = Ādāb Al-Saltānah," fol. 286v; Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fol. 267r. The difference of circa twenty folios in length between the two versions is due to the number of lines used per page (i.e. 15 and 17 respectively).

<sup>364</sup> A seal of the Casanatense library can be found in the margin of a folio in the first chapter. Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," 22r.

<sup>365</sup> Xavier, S.J., 267r.

<sup>366</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 5r.

chapter two); third, the kings and nobles (cf. *Directorio*'s chapter three); and fourth, the common people (cf. *Directorio*'s chapter four). The application of these topics and actions in written texts and social performances is precisely what the Jesuit enterprise depended on. And as Ines Županov has shown, in its realisation, the Jesuits depended on a 'powerful impression management' – a term she borrows from Erving Goffman.<sup>367</sup> Xavier appears to have gotten off to a good start, for already it seems a Jesuit formula has been made more palatable by sheer and skilful 'impression management.' It is not for nothing De Loyola had exhorted his missionaries to take a leaf from the devil's book: 'enter through the other's door and leave through [your] own.'<sup>368</sup>

## History and New Knowledge

The preamble is in many ways a typical preliminary section such as one would find in both European and Asian-Muslim mirrors for princes. I will readily admit that this geographic or cultural distinction has little meaning when it comes to this particular genre which effortlessly moved throughout these territories without regard for any spatial categories we might imagine. But it is used here simply to indicate that the use of the textual portico or antechamber was, to a degree, universal. It served to address existing patronage, readership and power-relations, and as such steered the audience into and through the content, while creating expectations about its purpose.<sup>369</sup>

The preamble is distinguished by a much more difficult and refined language than the rest of the book, which lacks a stylistic flourish. Given the limitations of his

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<sup>367</sup> Županov, *Disputed Mission: Jesuit Experiments and Brahmanical Knowledge in Seventeenth-Century India*.

<sup>368</sup> Young, *Letters of St Ignatius of Loyola*, 51.

<sup>369</sup> On this see Chartier, *The Author's Hand and the Printer's Mind*.

own Persian, it is quite possible that Xavier relied on the assistance of a scribe to polish his introduction, though there is no acknowledgement of one in the text or any reference by Mughal scribes, such as Abdus Sattar, of having participated in this project. Notably, a similar contrast had also been present between the sections in the *Mir'āt al-quḍs*, where the language of the prologue, penned by Xavier, did not have the refinement and clarity of the rest of the text. In the *Directorio*, Xavier in effect acts as the translator, corrector, composer, copyist, and censor, though his failing to mention a collaborator does not mean there was none. The emphasis, at any rate, in these opening lines, is on his identity as a scholar and counsellor in the art of governance.

In the Name of God, the Compassionate the Merciful, Rare praise and due gratitude to God, the Great Lord, the obedience of Whose supreme commands for the humble worshiper of His court is rewarded with the ornament of elevation and the asset of abundance, grandeur and fortune:

Who am I to think of thanking Him?  
For what is worthy of his dignity, I'm not able to accomplish,  
No one is capable of counting His blessing  
For He is high above all that they say.

A lonely hermit dares to speak of the ways of His [Jahangir's] reign and the rule of his dominion which truly is a bliss and guidance of the awakened fortune and the vessel of sovereignty and the world's mysteries, yet for this slave who has spent years on the study of the lives of the forefathers, if in my experiment which is the consequence of that high trade, I have chosen some principle from the forerunners' works as a tenet, it is in the hope of service to Him, and the grace and blessing of the reassuring words of the Elders. And it is no wonder that God Almighty has created all by his knowledge, and that creatures all are blessed only when knowledge is accessed, for if knowledge remains concealed, it interferes with proper conduct. Philosophers say that the hand is the general instrument in of all professions, and by the virtue of this it is called the instrument of all instruments. While any profession requires an instrument, which is particular to it, the need for the hand remains unchanged as without it all instruments are suspended, as the hand is the maker of all the other instruments. It is also said that though each profession belongs to a particular instrument, no profession can proceed without knowledge. For these reasons they call knowledge their instrument, but it is better to say knowledge is the general cause for all things. Causes are thus of two types, the general and the particular. The particular cause is that which generates an effect of its own kind, as man generates man and fire generates fire. The general cause is that which by its sovereign power generates different kinds of manifestations. The sun out of pure power and perfection generates all kinds of things on earth, just as man generates man etc (...) In so much as the sun is the proprietor of substance, it is the provider of living things with life. And according to this law, the goldsmith can only bring up a goldsmith (...) but has the power to bring up any profession and makes men craftsmen, warlords. It should be used by

rulers of just and perfect kingdoms since it teaches how to be distinguished in one's craft, and anyone is deprived of knowledge of their art does not reach perfection. (...) If the sun provides corporal growth and perfection, knowledge provides both corporal and spiritual growth and thus knowledge is superior to the sun, because the sun cannot generate another sun, even though it generates different things in the skies and on earth, while a man of knowledge not only has the power to teach arts and crafts to others, but can create a man in his own image, one who can take his place and himself become a teacher and instructor of arts and crafts, and opine on the principles of the art of governance.<sup>370</sup>

Beginning with the Islamic invocation of God, the opening immediately signals its accordance with the conventions of the body of advice literature existing at the Mughal court. Mughal rhetoric of the emperor's reign shining a light on the mysteries of the world is echoed and appears to refer to Jahangir's self-fashioning as an enquirer and investigator of the natural world, over which his reign imposes sovereign order. Xavier acknowledges that he is in no position to advise a ruler as enlightened, his undertaking merely an experiment flowing from his trade as a scholar. While he is undeserving, the great sages of the past who might possess the authority to reassure the Emperor. In an important move, Xavier then groups the advice that is to follow under the neutral and divinely-sanctioned rubric of knowledge. The exempla are not presented with some ulterior motive in mind, but because the concealment of knowledge runs counter to divine creation and inhibits proper conduct. Thus, Xavier is acting out of duty not only to God, but to the Emperor himself. The next step is to demonstrate that of all possible causes that might animate Xavier, the one behind this work is the most honorable, and most valuable of all.

This is accomplished by referring to the Aristotelian principle of general and particular causes, common territory for the Jesuits as well as the Mughals. Standing above other general causes is the sun, the Emperor's celestial counterpart, which has the capacity of generating all manner of things on earth. Only one general cause rises

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<sup>370</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fols. 1v-2v.



above it, and that is knowledge. Unlike the sun, it provides spiritual as well as corporal growth, and has the capacity for infinite multiplication and transference – transforming students of the art of governance, into teachers. The introduction thus quickly establishes knowledge as the currency of exchange between Xavier and Jahangir. Xavier is a gateway to new knowledge (*tahqīq*) the keys to which are placed in Jahangir’s hands. Xavier is momentarily stripped of his missionary robe to join the long line of political advisers to history’s greatest kings.

A few folios further, Xavier turns to the specific genre in which he is addressing Jahangir: historical exempla. Xavier’s choice to write a collection of anecdotes, a mirror-for-princes reflected the atmosphere and debates he observed at court. The assemblies taking place while Xavier was writing the *Directorio*, described in Abdus Sattar’s *Majālis-i Jahāngīrī*, featured discussions of historical anecdotes, which Corinne Lefèvre has described as a sort of negative *adab*, or anti-manual. These were stories of negative historical examples which provided a warning against improper conduct. Lefèvre has shown how the Mughal emperor, by contrast, appeared as virtue incarnate, the exercise evidently meant to elevate the world-conqueror Jahangir over all historical examples.<sup>371</sup> Yet, the matter changes when the examples are adduced specifically to address the Emperor – a selection assembled for him alone.

Just as opium can be used as a drug or a medicine, looking at the past can lead you to repeat or to avoid mistakes of your predecessors, as from every bad thing something can be learned. (...) the just wash their hands with the blood of sinners, because the sinner’s conduct provides a teaching, which itself is harmless and free from the evil of sin. Thus, the king profits from knowing the experience of others. And with my weak and powerless body I have accepted the suffering and abstinence required to study the ancient books from morning till night, and from night until morning, and during the day I meditated, and at night was wakeful. And I studied wonderful tales and colourful stories word by word and chose them with much thought and meditation. I read the books of the prophets and treatises of wise scholars trading lightly with the foot of meditation and thought. I picked these flowers of knowledge with my eyelash and made a bouquet to form a holy circle so

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<sup>371</sup> Lefèvre, “Le Livre En Acte à La Cour Moghole : Le Cas Des Littératures Historique et Religieuse d’après Le *Majālis-i Jahāngīrī* (1608-1611),” 311.

that by listening to them you can see, and they can illuminate your far-seeing eyes and comfort your sapient mind. (...) If I were young, I could tackle this task with the necessary devotion, and I wish I were in a land with more books so that the full abundance of wisdom could enter your heart, who are Lord of the Age, but reflecting on it, I realised my weakness and old age, and the lack of the books of wisdom. The wise philosopher says that the wisdom of old age can protect the knowledge acquired in youth, whereas the young are quick of learning. But I have found that whatever you learn in the spring of youth, you lose in the autumn of senescence and forget. Whatever remains I have tried to turn over in my mind a thousand times and search for whatever I had learned and accumulated. I have remembered only a few things and so this bride [referring to the *Directorio*] now awaits your majesty's admission with her face veiled in her scarf. Oh, great king, this low and imperfect man did not have the wit to write an introduction, but the awaking fortune of the ascent of the imperial throne of the caliphate to the highest heaven opened my eyes to the difficulty and importance of the task of the Ornament of the World, and it and loosened the knot of confusion. Kindness and good will in my work are like the marrow of my bones and like the soul in my powerless body, and my imperfect use of language for a work I had no right to attempt. I boast of love and sincerity not because it is so plentiful, but because one needs all of it to do just the work that is possible and feasible. If my search and suffering will not prove acceptable to the emperor, I shall be disappointed. (...) I trust my Lord will consider my overzealous love, not my insolence. A wise man once said, love and do anything you wish, which means that love gives you strength to do anything even if your objective makes little sense, as it comes from your love, it cannot be senseless. There is a famous saying, that if the origin of the fault is love, the mistake is forgiven.<sup>372</sup>

In this prologue Xavier comments on the pitfalls of contemplating historical examples. Like opium, he says, the setting of historical examples is best left to others, from whose experience, and mistakes, one should learn.<sup>373</sup> With this book, Xavier is providing Jahangir access to examples which will allow him to avoid mistakes. He goes to great lengths impressing upon the Emperor the selflessness and enormity of the effort. Working day and night to complete it, Xavier carefully meditated on the most precious examples and weaved them into a coherent whole, which will enlighten Jahangir. The resulting advice is like a modest bride – the opposite of arrogance – humbly presenting itself with pure and pious intentions. It is a telling metaphor, because it reveals something of Xavier's desire to beguile and persuade, and in equating new knowledge with a bride resurfaces the primacy of the Muslim emperor's carnal impulse, even in

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<sup>372</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fols. 4r-5r.

<sup>373</sup> Xavier, S.J., fols. 1v-2v.

matters of the spirit. Xavier himself is cast as an ascetic in ‘suffering and abstinence,’ meditating and denying sleep to his aging body so he may arrive at the right examples for the emperor. The use of fine phrasing is paired with the reliable imagery of light, illumination and its corollaries, wisdom and knowledge. The self-effacing tone, dismissing Xavier’s abilities, and his memory as failing, is reflective of the literary style he sought to emulate as a humble servant of the Mughal Lord of the Age. Striking is the intimate expressions of a love for the emperor which concludes the passage. It is love, which has driven Xavier to undertake this work. This alone, should be a reason for the Emperor to cherish the advice, for what comes out of love cannot be senseless. But if Jahangir should have not use for it, at least he should not take offence or view it as a sign of arrogance, since what produced it was love.<sup>374</sup>

Xavier is acutely aware that a mirror-for-princes crosses a line from discussion of moral questions in general to an application of moral principles to the Emperor in particular. It is uncertain territory to presume to be able to teach Jahangir how to properly manage the affairs state, but if reduced to general remarks, a mirror-for-princes might appear less interesting, less relevant to the concerns of the addressee.

And this lowly person [Xavier] has spent all his life studying the books of the prophets and scholars of the past. And he has had the arrogance and insolence to provide some introductions according to your situation and present them as a gift to the holy and noble king, to read, heed and enact with a view to the betterment of the welfare of the situation of all the people and citizens. This book provides stability to your kingship and betterment to the world. King of the World! If I had those books in my hands, I would translate them into Persian. But these books are rare in this land and it forces me to choose and write about some stories and several accounts, some which I studied and memorized before, and some others, from other books. In order not to abandon the ambit of politeness in my choice, I did not lecture in the way of a preacher because that is no way to talk to the King of the World. But I put in every chapter different situations of past kings, and especially those of the emperors of Rome. Perhaps it may therefore be acceptable and worthy of the dignity of this great king, protected by the shadow of God, and perhaps it may find a way to your holy heart, and your approval will give my book validity,

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<sup>374</sup> Xavier, S.J., 3v.

because wisdom that is learnt from history is closer to the nature of kings.<sup>375</sup>

Xavier's purpose is no longer the mere exchange of knowledge, but the stability of Jahangir's kingship and the betterment of general welfare. The examples are framed according to Jahangir's situation, and presented as a gift. For a second time, Xavier emphasizes that he has no intention to lecture Jahangir, but his compulsion to reassure the Emperor is telling.

Finally, Xavier addresses the historical nature of the wisdom contained in his anecdotes. Recall that Xavier had found himself whether by circumstance or design perceived by members of the Mughal court as a divine, who produced works of history. The *Mir'āt al-quds* had been branded as such, and was reproduced, illustrated and circulated as reflective of Mughal imperial identity. It is possible, but unlikely that Xavier's choice to anchor his advice in the authority of historical accounts was coincidental. Xavier emphasizes that as these anecdotes are drawn from historical examples, Jahangir by virtue of being a king alone should admit them into his heart, because it is the way of kings to learn from history.

As discussed earlier, the accommodational strategies promoted by Valignano and implemented by the likes of Xavier, were predicated on a recognition of the world's diversity, and of nature's varied manifestations. The solution to the challenge of diversity was sought not in universalizing theory, but in applied, modified theory, based on universal natural law. This is reflected in Xavier's note to the reader, in which he warns that the specific names, and therefore the specific geographic or religious provenance of individual protagonists are irrelevant, and only serve to vouch for the historical authenticity of the story. You will find names of prophets, kings, wise people

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<sup>375</sup> Xavier, S.J., 3v.

‘only to emphasize the validity of this text,’ he writes in the opening.<sup>376</sup> The decision to provide the names of presumably unfamiliar figures – be they Biblical, Greco-Roman or contemporary European – in the margins, has been interpreted as indicative of a ‘true’ objective: to arouse Jahangir’s interest in the ‘moral principles of Christianity as applied to politics, and secondarily only to inform him about contemporary Europe.’<sup>377</sup> While the latter claim, that information about contemporary Europe was only secondary, seems quite likely, the former – an emphasis on Christianity – belies the contrast between the strategy of the *Directorio* and Xavier’s previous, more explicitly religious works.

It has also been suggested that the similarity of the *Directorio* to Mughal mirrors pertains to the structure, but that the origin and nature of the anecdotes differ to a great extent. This is uncontroversial. However, Corinne Lefèvre adds that Xavier’s focus on the Biblical and Classical differs from the typical Mughal corpus of anecdotes taken from ‘Sassanid and classical Islamic history and, less frequently, from the more recent Indo-Muslim past.’<sup>378</sup> There is another way of looking at it. The remarkable thing about the *Directorio* is that, in spite of its promise to discuss new material ‘unknown in these lands,’ it aptly takes advantage of the common pool of political culture, and historical examples of ideal kingship, from which both Mughal and European worlds drew specific, and often identical notions of ideal kingship. Thus, while Xavier does draw extensively on Biblical, Greco-Roman, and later Humanist sources, he is keenly aware of the familiarity of his audience with the very figures who

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<sup>376</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 7v; Xavier, S.J., “Directorio Dos Reyes Em Qui Se Trata Como Se Ha de Aver Hu Rey Nas Cousas de Sue Governo = Ādāb Al-Salṭānah,” 9r-9v.

<sup>377</sup> Corinne Lefèvre, “Europe–Mughal India–Muslim Asia: Circulation of Political Ideas and Instruments in Early Modern Times,” in *Structures on the Move: Technologies of Governance in Transcultural Encounter*, ed. Antje Flüchter and Susan Richter, Transcultural Research: Heidelberg Studies on Asia and Europe in a Global Context (Berlin and London: Springer, 2012), 136.

<sup>378</sup> Lefèvre, 134.

feature most prominently in his anecdotes: Alexander (*Iskandar*) and Solomon (*Sulaimān*).

Unlike most other proper nouns referring to this supposed ‘new knowledge,’ the names of Alexander and Solomon, for instance, are included in the body of the text, as are those of other Mughal ‘intimates’ like Plato (*Aflatūn*)<sup>379</sup> and Aristotle (*Aristū*).<sup>380</sup> It was obvious to Xavier that these figures required no introduction to the Mughal courtly elite. More than that, he was well aware of their venerated place in the Mughal imperial-ideological pantheon, and their Persian-language lives. Chosroes II (*Khosrow*),<sup>381</sup> Darius II (*Dārā*),<sup>382</sup> Philip of Macedon (*Fīlaqūs*) – all these names are produced in their alternative, Persian form – but not, interestingly, those of others, such as Cyrus the Great, whose name does not appear in the body of the text but in the margin, and in the transliterated Latin form ‘*Sīrū*’ (instead of the standard Persian *Kūrosh*) – another sign of the absence of Sattar’s hand.

It is thus worth considering the possibility that the *Directorio*’s purpose could have been to arouse Jahangir’s interest in the value of the Jesuit missionary himself, as a source of universal knowledge, including as a counsellor in matters pertaining to statecraft. What qualified him for this position was not so much his European-Christian identity, or the appeal of Christian moral philosophy per se, but his identity as a knowledgeable scholar and historian, arrived from distant, little-known worlds, and his presumed ability to act as a link in a historical chain of philosopher-advisors to kings from the pre-Abrahamic age of Aristotle, to the contemporary role of Jesuits as confessor-counsellors to the greatest kings of the age. This positioning is would place Xavier alongside other scholars, poets and historians, who through the continued

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<sup>379</sup> Xavier, S.J., “Directorio de Reys,” fol. 3r.

<sup>380</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 3r.

<sup>381</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 20v.

<sup>382</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 14v.

reading of their works in court, functioned as virtual counsellors keeping the emperor's spirit on the path of proper kingship, and with whose voices Xavier's own text would often resonate in spirit and subject-matter. Here we may recall the canon of major classics which Akbar would have read out to him each night, books of exemplars, cautionary and aspirational tales, whether fictional or historical.

From day to day experts present books to the emperor who hears every book from beginning to end. Every day he marks the spot where they have reached with his pearl-strewing pen. He rewards the readers with gold and silver according to the number of pages read. There are few well-known books that are not read in the royal assembly. Which are the ancient stories (*dāstānhā-yi bāstānī*), curiosities of science (*gharā'ib-i 'ulūm*), or fine points of philosophy (*navādir-i hikam*), which the leader of wise men does not appreciate? He does not tire of hearing a book again and again but listens with great interest. The *Akhlāq-i Nāsirī* [by Tusi], the *Kīmiyā-yi sa'ādat* [by Ghazzali], the *Qābūs-nāma*, the letters of Sharaf Maneri, the *Gulistān* [by Sa'di], the *Hadīqa* by Hakim Sana'i, the *Masnavī-i ma'navī* [by Rumi], the *Jām-i jam* [by Auhadi], the *Būstān* [by Sa'di], the *Shāhnāma* [by Firdausi], the *khamṣa* of Shaikh Nizami, the *kulliyāts* of [Amir] Khosrow and Maulana Jami, the *dīvāns* of Khaqani, Anvari, and other history books are read out to him.<sup>383</sup>

These works functioned as a curriculum for the education of the emperor, and the recitation of these stories and their discussion offered an edifying re-enactment of historical episodes and examples that validated their pertinence in the present. Abu'l Fazl explains that as much as 'delight and pleasure,'<sup>384</sup> these works provided examples of ideal kingship, the secrets of which could only be revealed by authors who possessed the spiritual and ethical wisdom revealed in books such as the *Būstān*, the *Shāhnāma* and the *khamṣa*. Jahangir also commissioned mirrors-for-princes, like Shaykh 'Abd al-Haqq Muhaddith Dehlavi's *Risāla-i Nūrīyya-i Sultānīyya*,<sup>385</sup> followed by Baqir

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<sup>383</sup> Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, reprint (Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University, 2005), 96; translation of this passage is taken from Sunil Sharma, "Reading the Acts and Lives of Performers in Mughal Persian Texts," in *Tellings and Texts: Music, Literature and Performance in North India*, ed. Francesca Orsini and Katherine Butler Schofield (Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2015), 287–88.

<sup>384</sup> Abu'l Fazl, *Akbarnāma*, ed. Agha Ahmad Ali and Maulawi Abd-ur-Rahim, vol. 2 (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1881), 233.

<sup>385</sup> A new discussion, to which I have not had access, is provided in Corinne Lefèvre, "Mughal Early Modernity and Royal Adab: Shaykh 'Abd Al-Haqq Muhaddith Dihwali's Sufi Voice of Reform," in *Adab and Modernity*, ed. C. Mayeur-Jaouen and L. Patrizi, (forthcoming).

Najm-i Thani's *Mu'izah-i Jahāngīrī*,<sup>386</sup> the *Akhlāq-i Jahāngīrī*,<sup>387</sup> and presumably Xavier's *Directorio* as well, all of which are works of guidance and moral exhortations, general in nature.<sup>388</sup>

Interestingly, given Jahangir's liberal conception of Islamic law, the *Risāla* appears to have been written with an eye to a reaffirmation of the *sharī'ah* following the Nasirean experimentation under his father. Dehlavi was a traditionalist, whose Sufi *tazkirah* text *Akhhār al-Akhīyār*, completed in 1591, was nonetheless praised by Jahangir.<sup>389</sup> Like the aspiring Xavier, Dehlavi is a good example of a respected counsellor who could summon authoritative knowledge of history as well as religion, was known for learning and sanctity alike, would have travelled widely and well beyond India, and would contribute to a wide range of literature from *hadīth* and *tasawwof*, to biography, travelogues, history, poetry, logic and philosophy – as well as to practical ethics, including as they pertain to kingship.<sup>390</sup>

## A Critique of Mughal Kingship

Xavier's disillusionment with the missionary project, the profound consequences that political jostling in Goa had had for his own career, and the experience of having been

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<sup>386</sup> Muhammad Najm-i Sani Baqir, *Advice on the Art of Governance: An Indo-Islamic Mirror for Princes: Mu'izah-i Jahangiri of Muhammad Baqir Najm-i Sani*, trans. Sajida S. Alvi (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989).

<sup>387</sup> Nur al-Din Qazi Khaqani, "Akhlāq-i Jahāngīrī" n.d., Oriental and India Office Collections, British Library, London; for a discussion of this work see Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam: India 1200-1800*, 71–74.

<sup>388</sup> For an analysis of mirrors-for-princes against the background of political ethics and the politics of Naqshbandi Sufism and the ulema, and especially the career of Baqir Najm-i Sani, see Sajida Sultana Alvi, *Perspectives on Mughal India: Rulers, Historians, "Ulamā" and Sufis* (Oxford; New York; Karachi, Pakistan: Oxford University Press, 2012).

<sup>389</sup> Nur al-Din Muhammad Jahangir, *The Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri Or Memoirs of Jahangir*, trans. Alexander Rogers and Henry Beveridge (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1909), vols. II, 111.

<sup>390</sup> N.H. Zaidi, "Abd-Al-Haqq Dehlavī," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (New York, 1996), <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/abd-al-haqq-dehlavi>.



instrumentalized politically by hosts whom he had come to regard as politically ‘cynical’, should be viewed in the context of the progressive cultural and intellectual assimilation outlined above. I use that word, assimilation, in the broader sense of becoming an organic part of the courtly elite, including the political proclivity required for survival. This of course did not negate his Jesuit missionary identity, but it allowed for a plurality of roles, quite in accordance with Loyola’s exhortation for a Jesuit to be ‘all things to all people.’ Nor did this shield him and his companions from falling into disfavour. Like any other member of the court, they were exposed to the vicissitudes of the wildest political exigencies. And while at one point this meant effective banishment from court, a new day could mean Jahangir would call on Xavier to sign a peace treaty on his behalf.

The *Directorio* channels Xavier’s scepticism of Mughal kingship. The criticism is not overt, for, as he states in the introduction, ‘that is no way to talk to the King of the World.’ Especially so, if one pretends to emulate the Persianate style of advice literature employed by his competitors at court. It was a golden rule of Muslim courtiers not to give advice directly as this could be construed as *lèse-majesté* and could have dire consequences.<sup>391</sup> At Muslim courts from the Mediterranean to the Pacific, this kind of ‘politico-allegorical story-telling’ was a familiar practice. In Mughal India it had expanded into visual media, including painting and architecture.<sup>392</sup> Its ideas had been laid out with some clarity by Ibn Rushd in his commentaries on Aristotle’s

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<sup>391</sup> Aziz Al-Azmeh, *Muslim Kingship: Power and the Sacred in Muslim, Christian and Pagan Politics* (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 1997), 9.

<sup>392</sup> For the use of allegory in Mughal painting, see for example Koch, “The Mughal Emperor as Solomon, Majnun, and Orpheus, or the Album as a Think Tank for Allegory”; and Japer C. Van Putten, “Jahangir Heroically Killing Poverty: Pictorial Sources and Pictorial Tradition in Mughal Allegory and Portraiture,” in *The Meeting Place of British Middle East Studies: Emerging Scholars, Emergent Research & Approaches*, ed. Amanda Phillips and Refqa Abu-Remaileh (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 99–118; for its use in architecture under Jahangir see Zver, “King, Sufi and Messiah: The Tomb of Mughal Emperor Akbar (r.1556-1605).”

*Rhetoric* and *Poetics*, where he drew clear parallels between the mirror-for-princes *Kalīla wa Dimnah*, historical works, *hadīth* collections, and the Homeric epics.<sup>393</sup> All of these represented narrative arguments ‘transferring the effect of one particular onto another.’<sup>394</sup> This kind of allegorization could be seen at work in the *Arabian Nights* and eventually would be used in mirrors-for-princes as well. As Xavier explains in the introduction, he meditated long and hard on precisely which anecdotes to select so that they would have specific pertinence to his patron. It is therefore safe to assume that his choice, at least in some cases, reflects his assessment of Jahangir’s predicament.

To illustrate the way in which the *Directorio* uses historical exempla to obliquely address the failings of the king, it is best to examine a longer passage in which Xavier discusses the themes of justice and welfare of the general public. In order to defang the implicit criticism of Jahangir – why offer advice on a matter in which the emperor excels? – Xavier engages in an artful entanglement of novel anecdotes and familiar themes or ideals of kingship, thus echoing the body of advice literature existing in Mughal India.

In the introduction, Xavier had referred to general welfare as something to which he wished to contribute by introducing certain examples to Jahangir:

When Nero reached old age and found that he was too weak to rule, he gathered the city elders, sought pardon for his misdeeds, and expressed a desire to step down. He handed the crown to them, but the members of government (*arkane daulat*) asked he recommend a successor. Instead of choosing the person among nobles and friends, the Emperor pointed at a stranger and said: ‘This person should ascend the throne, as I consider him to be the best suited.’ Indeed, inquiries show this to have been the case. This person performed the task of kingship in the best manner, but whereas during this period kingship (*khilafat*) changed hands without self-regard, under this stranger a dynasty began. (...) It is essential for those who have ascended the throne as dynastic successors to do their best to promote general welfare if kingship is to be done properly. The wise Plutarch also emphasizes again and again that the king who applies himself fully to his task, tries to improve himself, and is prepared to do good, will not be despised and ridiculed. If he

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<sup>393</sup> Ibn Rushd, *Talkhis Al-Khataba (Middle Commentary on Aristotle’s Rhetoric)*, ed. M. Salim Salem (Cairo: Al-Majlis al-A’la lil-Shu’un al-Islamiya, n.d.), 453.

<sup>394</sup> Al-Azmeh, *Muslim Kingship: Power and the Sacred in Muslim, Christian and Pagan Politics*, 90.

reforms himself, his character is not the subject of abuse, no harm comes to him. He must do so, for when the king reaches a certain exalted position, the people can distinguish even the smallest flaw. Thus, this philosopher said that those who step on the throne, reaching such a lofty status, are held to the standard of an accomplished man, and there is no room for error.<sup>395</sup> When selfish desires inevitably arise, one should not give in to them. (...) It is a strange thing, and surprising, that a human being should not desire excellent and flawless objects such as precious stones, elephants for war, strong horses beautifully decorated, palaces, and robes of honour. But they befall to him as part of kingship. A wise philosopher has said that the worst and most wretched thing in a king's possession is his own character. And the ugliest objects should be named after him. (...) There once was a young man, named Alcibiades. He had noble origins (*bozorg nezhad*) and was beautiful and eloquent and knowledgeable and for all these virtues he was one of the blessed persons but in reality, he was a sinner and had surrendered to his vices. One day the sage Plato looked observed his bad habits and condemned him harshly. When he realised how destructive and cursed he was, he was overcome with shame and wept inconsolably. In short, what good are all the subtle and nice qualities to a king when he does not have an excellent character, and in the list of all the objects which he has, his character is the smallest and least worthy, and he worries for everything except his character.<sup>396</sup> A king must decorate himself with all the finest virtues. The counsel of the philosopher Plutarch to a king who asked how he should refine himself (*benaheslah*) to ensure the welfare of his kingship, should be wholeheartedly accepted. He reminds us that the ruler is a human being as well as king. He therefore needs two kinds of refinement; first, human refinement, and second, kingly refinement. Plato then explains that human beings come out of this earth and upon which the dust of this world gives complete freedom in modesty (*adame khaki*) and stability. The fire adds light and beauty. And thereafter water and wind also come in so that a balance occurs. We say that kingship is a combination of these elements. Human virtues provide the stability [of the soil], whereas the position of kingship imbues the human with greatness. Therefore, a king must remember that though he is king, he depends on his humanity. When the king of Sparta, for instance, obtained victory after victory and became proud of himself, he lost his balance and became completely despotic. When he asked a philosopher for useful counsel, the philosopher replied: 'remember that it is essential for a king to refine his human (*ādamiyāni*) as well as his kingly (*pādshāhāni*) character. You have lost you humanity. You must therefore learn to refine your human character.<sup>397</sup> (...) Two other things are considered important. They are revered by the Greeks, who consider them to be divine exhortations: know yourself and be true to yourself. Greek philosophers consider these to be divine pillars. They are that which moves, everything [both planetary bodies and the earth]. One must recognise what objects surround oneself, and it is ever essential that he should know what kind of object he is himself. Just as someone buying a horse does not look only at the accoutrements (*azimi va lagan*) but also the strengths and weaknesses of the horse's physique. Or when a large building is constructed, first the land is observed, the kind of soil and position and additional qualities, which will give it shape. But first a foundation is laid to ensure stability. Thus, the king should not observe only the objects of kingship but also the reality of his own character. To prevent his kingship from failing due to the lax attitude of members of his cabinet (*sistiarkan*), everything should be accorded proper estimation, proportion, and balance (*andaze angarderad*). Thus, he should

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<sup>395</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fol. 54r.

<sup>396</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 54v.

<sup>397</sup> Xavier, S.J., 55v.

retain a certain amount of control to keep cabinet affairs in check.<sup>398</sup> (...) Why should we ask the question, what is a human being, when a king seeks to know himself? Because wherever there is a faculty of speech, there is a capability of knowledge. And hence come science and the ability to know God and all manner of things about the world, whence he can come to know the rules and regulations of government. (...) But the ship which is loaded with a range of goods and cash is also loaded with sorrow and grief, which makes it heavy, unstable, and unsafe. Therefore, whenever a trader loads a variety of material, commodities, and luxuries on the ship, he first loads it with stones so that it becomes heavy and its cargo remains safe and the ship moves safely. It was with this trick of the trade that that supreme philosopher [God], before loading precious goods in the form of knowledge and wisdom to be carried away in all safety first loaded stone and dust in the shape of the human being -- together they form the human virtues of the speaking animal. These precious materials which provide the faculty of speech, make the human proud and full of arrogance. On the other hand, the animal part keeps him aloof and out of danger in a state of subduedness and humbleness. (...) Many other philosophers have likened the human being to a ship. (...) All the precious items and exclusive robes (*mahmal zarbaht khilat*) that adorn him are taken from the sky – theology, his love for God, his farsightedness – and they are contained in the speech of the human being.<sup>399</sup> In another anecdote, the Spanish king Philip II in his old age ordered a glass coffin to be made and used to keep it always in his presence to remind him of his own mortality while he was alive. Philip said to his son: ‘Look, this coffin is my house, and it will be your house too. From the material world, nothing will remain of me except this coffin, therefore we should always remember death. (...) Like all others I am also mortal and also born of the same earth as others and also from a mother born. No king has been born in any other way and in the same manner all previous kings came into, and left, this world. And that is why I had the desire to obtain knowledge, having an intense desire for it, and it was finally bestowed upon me.’<sup>400</sup> A king from a lowly background, who reached the throne due to his good traits, did not forget the past, even if gone. Once he was engaged with the daughter of another great king, a man sarcastically remarked to him in court: ‘So finally you have a godfather!’ The people in attendance gasped, but the king did not blink, since he was not ashamed of his own relatives. When he used to ride alongside the king of Portugal, on one occasion he would meet his father, a very poor man, having few clothes and riding on a donkey, on the street in the market. The son humbly climbed down from the horse and kissed the hand of his father, and the king [of Portugal] asked who this person was. ‘Oh master, this is my real father.’ King and all present nobles appreciated his humbleness and righteousness. No one knew that he could be the son of such a poor person but he did not conceal this fact. He established the proper right of the father in the presence of all and felt proud of it. Those present were surprised and taken aback. Even more awe-inspiring is the story of Pope Benedict, the representative of Jesus Christ to the people. His origins were very modest, yet his knowledge and piety elevated him to the position of Pope. He became respected and revered so that even the representatives of other religions used to kiss his hand, and other emperors of the time of his rule used to shoulder his throne and pay reverence to him. As his mother was still alive, his happy news reached her motherly love, full of affection. She left her residence to see her son. It is just like when the great Jacob heard that Joseph had reached an exalted position in Egypt and wanted to see him while he was still alive, and with this intention left Canaan to see him in Egypt. In the same manner it was the mother’s intention to meet her

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<sup>398</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 55v.

<sup>399</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 56r.

<sup>400</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 58r.

son during her lifetime in the great palace. When the nobles of the court learned of the news they came out of the city to welcome her and put themselves at her service. She did not want to lose any time before seeing the Pope, but the women told her it was not appropriate and worthy for her to go in such a dishevelled dress. This old lady heeded their advice and wore a grand dress.<sup>401</sup> When she came before the Pope to convey her compliments, he asked what sort of dress this old lady was wearing. 'Out of respect for you she has been given a suitable robe of honour (*khilat*).' 'She is not my mother,' the Pope replied, 'who is a pauper, and in her life has never seen a precious dress.' He did not allow the woman to approach and she had to leave. But the mother recognised the wisdom of her son. She took off the precious dress and wore her own dress before returning to the Pope. As soon as the news reached him, he said 'this is my real mother!' The Pope was sitting with great nobles and as per the protocol they all went to touch his feet to show their reverence and raised their hand to invoke Christ Jesus. But then the Pope performed placed his own forehead to the feet of his mother and kissed her hand and received her blessing. In short, these great people had not forgotten about their past and origins. They never objected when someone pointed to their past and actual place, never felt provoked, and thus gained even more reverence and status. When a peacock looks at his feet and the beautiful circles he displays during his dance, he finds that his ugly feet offend the beautiful circles and he becomes perturbed and his face changes. This king, on the other hand, embellishes his beautiful circles of power and grandeur by looking at his own faults and trying to improve himself by knowing himself. The great Solomon says that as long as you show yourself humble and modest in every matter, both god and subjects will be. Such is the matter of self-knowing. Having addressed God's creation of the body, I should say something about the soul, which makes the human being perfect. Because the king is a human being, he is made a perfect person by his human virtues and perfect wisdom and knowledge. Therefore, he must employ wisdom in all affairs.<sup>402</sup> Seneca said that in order to conquer all, you must first conquer wisdom, so that you can know how to deal with others. If your wisdom is well-ordered, you will know how to act in every matter. So, let us see what burdens the king and what is more preferable; external strength or internal wisdom of the soul? Certainly, his affairs cannot be governed without reason and wisdom. Some rulers (*khalefa*) try to embellish the status of kingship with arrogance and immodesty. Some have wanted to decorate kingship with grandeur and greedy pride, with decorative objects, colourful carpets, good horses, elephants, fine dress, innumerable servants, maintaining an arrogant silence and not looking others in the eyes out of haughtiness, not laughing at assemblies, and retreating into seclusion, failing to grant audience to subjects, and they have committed mistakes in all these affairs. For beauty is ephemeral; since the arms and legs should not be long and hard, and all parts should be in balance and soft, the beauty of kingship does not lie in the force of external objects, but internally. Thus, there should be refinement and logic and wisdom and justice (*akhlo kefayat o insaf*). The beauty of a mirror is not that it should be studded with diamonds, but that the reflection is like a real person. If the beauty of kingship is to be like that of other objects, it must be embellished by ruling according to wisdom and knowledge, welfare and good counsel (*salah*). When the philosopher Pythagoras came into a city he saw the local women who had always taken great pride in their beauty and used to put on costly dresses and precious jewellery. One day he was lecturing (*nasiyat konad*) and his counsel so much impressed them that they parted with whatever gold they had and gave it to the temple. The words of the philosopher made such an impression that they abandoned their precious dresses and contented themselves with simple clothes. The reasoning of the

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<sup>401</sup> Xavier, S.J., fols. 58v-59r.

<sup>402</sup> Xavier, S.J., fols. 59v-60r.

philosopher had such an effect because the real beauty of a woman lies in her piety, chastity, obedience, and the social interaction of her husband, not just beautiful dresses and precious metals.<sup>403</sup> If that farsighted philosopher had lived in our times, he would tell the kings that the beauty of kingship does not lie in precious and rare objects you collect, for these are ephemeral and do not last. The beauty of kinship of any age lies in the embellishment of the king's own character and his way of ruling and, as philosopher Socrates said: 'you will become a good person if you have revered yourself.' The great philosopher Apuleius, on the other hand, says that nothing is dearer and more estimable to the Almighty than well-wishers who aim to perfect themselves in modesty. Another philosopher says that it is the person who works according to reason and wisdom who reaches up to God, not the person who remains a prisoner of his desires. A king may have grandeur, but unless he possesses wisdom, he will not be liked, and will not be loved. Heraclitus<sup>404</sup> tells us that if there were no sun, and only stars, life would have been dark. Thus, kings devoid of wisdom, even with all external possessions, will end up with the least reverence, as it is only the sun which can be used as a light. Therefore, the king must concentrate on logic and welfare (*makuliyat, aql*). As he does not revel in outer pomp and show, this will ensure his greatness.<sup>405</sup> Another Emperor Theodosius handed over his two sons to the teacher Arsenius<sup>406</sup> for education. Then one day he came to class and saw his sons sitting and the teacher standing. He objected to this self-deprecation (*zabuni akanat*) before the students and got angry with his sons for their poor manners and rudeness. The teacher however suggested that it was in accordance with proper conduct (*adab*) in this situation. If a child is asking him to be educated, it shows good upbringing and character and manners (*adab*) and respect for others. The Emperor became angrier still, and said it is not for you to show them respect as if they were kings. If they are treated like this, they will never reach kingship. The teacher responded that if they prove unable to rule, it will be for a lack of a king's main characteristics, which are knowledge, justice and piety. God will make them kings. And if they do not have the necessary qualities, it is better they never ascend the throne. The king then commanded the students should stand and the teacher to sit and teach. This well-mannered (*nek-nafs*) king knew that the fortune of a king will depend on his wisdom and goodness.<sup>407</sup> Philosopher Plutarch says bad luck may have wrought problems and hardships on humankind: poverty, ill-respect, disorders, and illness. But unless there is injustice and imbalance (*bietadal*) these hardships will fail to debase humankind. Fire can hardly melt silver if we do not add borax (*suhaga*, a Hindustani term). In the same manner, days of bad luck cannot hurt a human being free of injustice and imbalance. Socrates used to say that if someone wants to hurt you, he can. But no loss will touch you if there is a goodness and wisdom in your heart (*akhlāqi jalali, kheir wa shar*). Therefore, goodness and wisdom make men dearer (*aziz migardand*) as long as they avoid ostentatious displays of kingship. It is well-known that Thracian was chosen among the people, and received all the

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<sup>403</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 61r.

<sup>404</sup> This saying is found in Plutarch, Aetius, Aristotle and Plato. See e.g. Plutarch, Aq. et ign. comp. 7, p. 957. Idem, de Fortuna 3, p. 98.

<sup>405</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fols. 63r-63v.

<sup>406</sup> This scene was featured in the 1614 play *Magister Bonus, sive Arsenius*. Its original source is probably Horace (Odes 3.3. (2.2), Epistles 1.1 (2.3) and Ars Poetica (2.3). It also appears in but also Laurentius Surius' *De probatis sanctorum historiis* (1570-7); Cesare Baronio's *Annales ecclesiastici* (1588-1607); and most interestingly in Pedro Ribadeneira's *Flos sanctorum* (1599-1610). British Drama 1533-1642: A Catalogue. 1609-1616, Martin Wiggins, Oxford University Press, 2015, 409-410.

<sup>407</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fol. 63v.

respect and reverence, solely for his goodness. He would meet his subjects and soldiers in a down to earth manner as if he were not the emperor. He used to go into battle on foot alongside his soldiers into battle, and though he was soft-spoken he would converse with them. At the same time, it was evident that he was an emperor. In the same manner Diocletian would ask common people to sit with him on his dining mat. So well-mannered and humble (*mudab-o matouzeye*) that he asked the older people (*mardom-e sālkhurdeh*) to sit above him in the assembly or court. He never discriminated among people. He possessed such greatness that no one in the world could become greater than he. In brief, goodness and wisdom are the beauty of kingship. And every king, as a human being, should seek goodness and wisdom (*kheir wa nikuyi bashad*). These will embellish and decorate his character, as wisdom and sobriety in his speech (*sanjidegi dar sakhn*) and in his estimation of all things will bring about a modesty (*haya*) that will make him beloved. These characteristics will allow him to rule effortlessly. The plank of a door may be heavy, but if it hinged in masterly way, even a small child can move it with ease. However, if the hinge is tilted, even wrestlers cannot move it. In the same manner, a king can have all the grandeur in this world, but in reality, it takes little to have his way with the people, if he behaves wisely. The Israelites used to complain about the amount of religious tax (*zakat*) which their king Rehoboam asked them to pay. But the same amount was paid gladly to the great Solomon, his father, because he hinged the throne of his kingship on the axis of wisdom. But since the son did not act in accordance with knowledge and wisdom, the subject refused to obey.<sup>408</sup> As every group has its own characteristics according to their trade – the sword, arrow, bow, and horse grace the soldier; the book and knowledge grace the scholar; justice and temperance grace the judge – what are the characteristics of the king? Since he is also a human being, we should give him knowledge and wisdom (*zinad bedehim*) so that he may recognize himself and know what kind of man he is. (...) And this is the difference between an intelligent and an ignorant king: an intelligent king reveres the great art of kingship, while the ignorant one assumes kingship with arrogance. The first king understands the purpose of kingship, and while the other one rules for his own benefit and comforts, the intelligent king rules for the welfare and peace and safety of every person. The nobles of Rome deposed and replaced one of their Emperors when they found him mistreating the subjects and decided on a replacement.<sup>409</sup> During the deliberations one elder said, ‘I want this person to be king as he will promote the welfare of the country and the interest of the people.’ (...) Since that fellow was present in that group and was now nominated for the office of kingship, he was asked to accept on the grounds that he was suitable. And he was asked to nourish and safeguard the people of Rome so they might accept him and be grateful for his government. He accepted, not so that he could rule over others, for this he had no desire. Rather, by accepting the throne he could ensure that all subjects would receive equal benefits -- no only his sons and people close to him should get positions in government. He took his oath before the nobles and the public (*khāss-o-amm*) and loudly declared: ‘Oh, my friends, I have accepted the office of kingship to serve you at all times and to provide relief to people in every sort of hardship.’ And whatever he promised, he made true.<sup>410</sup> Aristotle spoke of a young man, sweet-tongued, rich and handsome [this is a second reference to this example]. When observing a person, one should find out his inner thoughts, for what might appear pious and good, may yet be vile on the inside. In the same manner it can be said that whenever kingship appears outwardly beautiful, it is in fact full of pain and hardship (*ranj va mahantehast*). Some renowned counsellors have told their kings (*danayi nasihat konan*) that

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<sup>408</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 64v.

<sup>409</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 65r.

<sup>410</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 65v.

whoever has a great kingdom must have fearful thoughts and worry about ensuring welfare. These thoughts do not allow him to enjoy happiness and keep him in pain and hardship (*ranj wa Mahanta*). Many people have given up kingship because contrary to appearance, it is a huge burden. For this reason, a philosopher has spoken of a king who, before being crowned, looked at the crown and said: 'Oh, fine clothes, you have the image of such grandeur and power, and the finer benefits and comforts. Whoever looks at you had better know just how much pain and disappointments you carry within you. And even if he should find you lying on the ground, he should not pick you up, for your sweetness is brittle like death.' If you ask what kind of art kingship is, the king of Macedon will offer this reply. When Alexander's son at a young age had an elderly person arrested, and thrashed another, and intimidated a third, crushing all of them, Alexander told him: 'Oh, my son, you do not know how to be a king, for a king is a trustworthy servant. This is only logical, as he is servant to his subjects, servant to the state, servant to all. But a servant with dignity, and more than that, because he is in service of the art of kingship itself.<sup>411</sup> Philosophers have described it as tree that bows down its crown, whose branches are like arms and legs and always bending, while its root is a source of superior sensitivity and wisdom. In the same way it can be said the king is like a person turned upside-down – richer and dearer precisely because he submits himself to the service of others. In other words, he is a servant and its opposite. Because this servant is subordinate even to himself. Just as the master sits leisurely in his house and his servant works hard on his behalf; and even when the master goes to bed, his servant remains awake to guard his house; when the master sits at his dining mat to eat, his servant endures every hardship; in the same manner, while people live and sleep in comfort and leisure in their homes, the king must remain ready for battle and wander the mountains and fields, and he remains awake at night to seek the advice of his counsellors for the welfare of his subjects. He remains sleepless, traveling far and wide so that his people can remain at rest.<sup>412</sup> The Almighty commands for a mediator who is a messenger of God (*pegambar*). The Almighty through his prophet Seth (*Shish Nabi*) commanded that even if the people appoint you and put you on the throne, do not become arrogant, always think of your subjects, serve even in illness, and perform all the charges of your position. Then sit, as relieved man, to observe your fruits and the welfare of your people. And you will be happy, for when seeing them, you will feel the beauty of proper use of the crown, and you will have reaped the rewards of your consistent service.<sup>413</sup> The story of the Roman citizens seeking a non-Tyrannical emperor and went to see Germanicus [Claudius], who refused to accept kingship and threatened to kill himself if he was forced to take up the throne. He was then asked to pass the kingship to his son, but he refused. If the kingship were to become hereditary, he would bid farewell to kingship as per his own status of having been from a queen-mother (...) Putting his son under such a heavy burden would be tantamount to killing his own children. In brief, first one has to labour long and hard to learn the art of kingship. Before accepting this office, one should understand that welfare and perfection come through consultation and good work. Good character and elegance in their affairs are characteristics which people of greatness and reverence possess. These are required to reach their exalted status and not to stray from their ambitions as statesmen.<sup>414</sup>

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<sup>411</sup> Xavier, S.J., fols. 66r-66v.

<sup>412</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 66v.

<sup>413</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 67r.

<sup>414</sup> Xavier, S.J., fols. 67v-68r.



If to Xavier the Mughal Emperor stood as a symbol of imperial dynasty, of presiding over an elite of nobles bound to him by familial and social ties, of celebrating enormous wealth by decorating one's palaces, collecting rare objects and animals, dressing in the finest clothes and covering oneself with precious stones, of keeping a harem of concubines, and having an obsession with fine arts and wine, and living in spiritual or religious error, this passage paints the image of an ideal king very much the opposite of his Mughal host in every way save one – the stated objective of general welfare. It appears Xavier did not believe Jahangir could attain this noble objective, unless he rejected his ostentatious lifestyle and quest for material wealth and instead turned to spiritual self-improvement.

## Spiritual Self-improvement

This spiritual quest of the ruler, Xavier claims in this chapter, is a necessary condition for justice and the welfare of the general public to exist. In addition to echoing Fornari's and Aquinas' *acceptio personarum*, his foregrounding of a kind of moral meritocracy corresponds to the *akhlāqi* principles of authors such as Tusi or Kaika'us ibn Iskandar, the author of the eleventh-century *Qābūs-nāma*. In an oft-quoted passage, Muzaffar Alam explains that for these authors,

... the goal in the discourse is thus 'cooperation', to be achieved though justice (*adl*) administered in accordance with a law which is protected and promoted by a king whose principal instrument of control should be affection and favour (*rafat-o-imtinan*), not command and obedience (*amr-o-imtisal*). *Akhlāq* literature hence recommends the evaluation of behaviour among men of strength, and their level of natural goodness or ill disposition (*khair-o-sharr-i tab'i*).<sup>415</sup>

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<sup>415</sup> Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam: India 1200-1800*, 57; see also Kaika'us ibn Iskandar, *Qubus-Nama*, ed. Ghulam Husain Yusufi (Tehran, 1966), 227–239; "Akhlāq-I Humayuni" n.d., f. 37r–38v, Ms. No. 767, BM.

Unlike his Persian counterparts, Xavier extends this reasoning to the matter of succession. His repudiation of dynastic succession is a direct challenge of his patron's legitimacy. Still drawing on an idea reminiscent of the *acceptio personarum*, Xavier's main qualm seems to be the partial interest such a system breeds, the preference for one's own, and consequently the neglect of the interest of the general public, whom the emperor must provide with peace and prosperity. At a declarative level, Jahangir was committed to this cause, but the *Directorio* is sceptical. In what seems like an accurate channelling of Fornari's 'spiritual counsel that aimed at attaining virtues through the cultivation of the inner self', the right way lies in self-correction and improvement (*eslāh*), which naturally breeds love and adoration from one's subjects. Promotion of the public interest or general welfare is not only an ideal of proper kingship, but its necessary condition. A slew of sources from Plutarch, Plato, Pythagoras, Seneca, Socrates, Apuleius, the prophet Seth, and king Solomon are mined for direction, in anecdotes covering a range of kings and countries including Nero, Claudius, Alcibiades, Pope Benedict, Philip II, Theodosius, Solomon, Thracian, Diocletian, and Alexander the Great. In the *Jahāngirnāmā*, ostensibly the site of reflection on the emperor's 'true', inner self, Jahangir had claimed the supernatural power of domesticating wild animals, which were a proxy for the unruly subjects requiring harmony-ensuring government. The trope was rooted in the mythology of some of the *Directorio*'s main protagonists: figures like Plato, Orpheus, Alexander the Great and King Solomon. As we know, all these were enormously popular in Islamic and Persianate literature.

In a further echo of Azpilcueta's distinction between the public and private personae of the king, Xavier locates the principal threat to his exemplary kings are inner selfish desires, and the pursuit of ephemeral pleasures and qualities instead of

efforts to improve oneself as a human being.<sup>416</sup> It is the perfection of one's inner, human (*ādamiyāni*) element – that is one's moral character as a human being regardless of his public capacity as king (*pādshāhāni*) – that should be the starting point in trying to perfect the art of statecraft. The moral rectitude of a human being is the structure which supports the task of kingship. If in a sense of pride over his victories a king should neglect the improvement of his inner humanity, he may lose his balance and stray into despotism.

Xavier's exhortations spoke to a moral imperative articulated by the Mughals themselves, including specifically in reference to Jahangir. In a famous painting from the Salim Album (compiled mainly between 1600 and 1604 for Prince Salim, future Jahangir, while he rebelled against his father Akbar) a woman is gazing at her reflection in a mirror. Gregory Minissale has suggested that the text around the image suggests the mirror was given to the woman as a gift from God (the mirror itself perhaps used as a metaphor for the ability of self-examination, or recognition, a distinction which sets humans apart from other animals) and that 'the self-admiring soul' is oblivious to anything but her own visible beauty.<sup>417</sup> In the passage above, Xavier stresses that the beauty of a mirror is not in its being studded with diamonds, but its ability to provide a true reflection.

## **Rejection of Wealth, Embrace of Poverty**

In a critique of wealth and the misplaced pride it begets, Xavier turns to the matter of poverty. The subject here is poverty as it applies to a king. If he is to achieve justice and

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<sup>416</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fols. 53r-68r.

<sup>417</sup> Gregory Minissale, *Images of Thought: Visuality in Islamic India, 1550-1750* (Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006), 172.

general welfare, and be loved by the people, he should descend from his throne, break bread with commoners, and kiss the feet of poverty. Not merely as a benefactor, but someone who himself rejects all the trappings of wealth. The only possessions the king needs are wisdom and knowledge (of the art of statecraft). The king, in other words, should be the ultimate servant, ‘a person upside-down’, the more selfless he is, the greater his kingship. Yet, this servant is the opposite of a slave; he is guided by reason and wisdom, and not a desire for ephemeral beauty and pleasure.

The lesson of our spiritual guide in the *Directorio* is that modesty, humility and submission are the signs of true greatness, but also the path to World-Kingship. The Pope, unashamed of the poverty of his mother, kisses her feet, but his hand in turn is kissed by representatives of other religions, who ‘shoulder his throne and pay reverence,’ because of his knowledge and piety. The ideal is an inversion of prejudice, a deliberate elevation of the poor. The symbolism of a ruler’s equals bowing ‘under his power’ is also used widely by authors like Barani but also further afield in places like Umayyad architecture, where it refers to all would-be world-kings. Carl Ernst notes Barani’s description of the reign of the Persian king Qubad, where ‘his equals were the Caesar of Rome, the Khan of China, the Aziz of Egypt, the Padshah of Syria, the Taba of Yemen, the sultan of the Franks, and the Ray [raja] of Qannauj.’ He adds that ‘a nearly identical symbolism is found in the wall paintings of a princely palace of the Umayyad caliphate, Qusayr Amra, dated to around 710; there, the caliph is pictured on the throne of world rule, with the Caesar, the Khosrow (Kisra), the Khan, the Aziz, the Negus of Ethiopia, and the last Visigothic king of Spain, all acknowledging his suzerainty with salutations.’<sup>418</sup> In a famous painting Jahangir sits over a Sufi *pīr* and

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<sup>418</sup> Carl W. Ernst, *Eternal Garden: Mysticism, History and Politics at a South Asian Sufi Center* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 42.

the kings of Rum and England, but unlike the Pope who was granted authority on account of his wisdom and piety alone, Jahangir assumed his position thanks to the controversial device of dynastic succession.<sup>419</sup> Not only was dynastic succession unmeritocratic, and therefore unjust according to Xavier, but it was also inappropriate to subject royal children to the fate of kingship before they had had the chance to understand what rulership entails, and before it could be determined if they were competent and willing to assume its duties. What is more, unlike Xavier's ideal king, who cedes his seat above his subjects to sit among them or at their feet in the case of elders of paupers, the Mughal Emperor was almost always seated above all others, whether at court, or in visual representations. If one follows Xavier's reasoning, this outward demonstration of superiority may be indicative of an inward impoverishment.

Xavier's choice to juxtapose the critique of arrogant kingship with ideals shared by the Mughals allows the text to at once level criticism and show affinity. The kingship of Mughal Emperor, in other words, was redeemable. The objectives of universal peace and Jahangir's symbolic signalling of asceticism, however, were sabotaged by his concern with outward beauty, ephemeral pleasures, and projection of power. Jahangir's interest in ascetics echo Xavier's exhortation to cast desire aside, listen to the sage and abandon worldly riches altogether, for in the battle of desire and reason, reason is equated with light and the sun. Yet, the Mughal Emperor maintains the practice of sitting upon a throne while nobles attend from below, separated by rank and favour, and fenced off from the general public whose access to the inner circle is restricted. Xavier's ideal king has the greatness to let others, especially those who are older (*mardom-e sālkhurdeh*),<sup>420</sup> sit above him. Thus, the ideal king is the ultimate

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<sup>419</sup> Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign*, 208.

<sup>420</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fol. 64v.

slave, a servant not only to his state and his subjects, but to the art of kingship itself, seeking advice from counsellors at all hours of the night to ensure the welfare of his people. The ability to keep personal appetites in check, to ‘order one’s passions’ in order to ensure that service is rendered where it is due, is precisely what the Jesuit Spiritual Exercises were aimed at. These exercises constituted ‘a highly sophisticated marshalling of senses and passions as well as the reasoning faculties, for a systematic assault upon the habits of insubordination to God generated by pride.’<sup>421</sup> The portrayal of Jahangir as someone who is cruel and arrogant, unable to restrain his carnal appetites, is a mainstay of Jesuit accounts which prefigure later European characterizations of oriental despotism.<sup>422</sup> Far from serving as a slave to his people, Jahangir in this view is a slave to his own senses and whims.

Jahangir removed religious tax (*zakāt*) in some areas, but Xavier shows that as long as the emperor acts with knowledge and wisdom, the subjects would pay gladly, as had been the case with that great king Solomon.<sup>423</sup> And with knowledge and wisdom as principal sources of authority in a courtly context, it is understandable why the Jesuit, already portrayed with a book and a pair of spectacles in Mughal paintings, should attempt to assume the role of a scholarly man of letters. The issue of poverty and the imperial obligation to address it was a major theme of contemporary works at Jahangir’s court. Not only was it central in works like Xavier’s *Mir’āt al-quḍs* – which was read as a book of historical exempla – but in the veiled criticisms of works like the Braj Bhasha *Jahāmgīra Jasa Candrikā* by the Hindu poet Keshavdas (1612), an allegoric poem dedicated to Jahangir, in which he is ironically portrayed as the embodiment of failed promises to eliminate poverty, indeed appears to be himself the

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<sup>421</sup> Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c. 1540-1630*, 100.

<sup>422</sup> Flores, *The Mughal Padshah: A Jesuit Treatise on Emperor Jahangir’s Court and Household*, 6:56.

<sup>423</sup> Xavier, S.J., “Directorio de Reys,” fol. 64v.

very source of impoverishment.<sup>424</sup> Imperially sanctioned mirrors for princes, like Baqir Najm-i Sani's *Mu'izah-i Jahāngīrī* (1612-13) also foregrounded the king's duty to help the poor. After all, the promise of the Mughal kings, as messianic Renewers of the Second Millennium (*mujaddid-i alf-i thānī*), had been to create welfare for all. Baqir paints an idyllic picture of this ostensible regime of absolute justice.

In the period of Jahangir's eternal reign, the deer have no fear of the panther's claws; nor has a quail fear of the eagle's talons; the fierce wind dares defile none with dust; the high-flying falcon has no courage to even think of preying on a pigeon. During his ever-expanding empire, all creatures have come from the darkness of tyranny and oppression to the fountain of equity and justice. All classes of people (*tabaqat-i umam*) rest in meadows of peace and security and in gardens of repose and affluence.<sup>425</sup>

The failure to achieve this imperial utopia was the source of some anxiety on behalf of the Mughal emperors themselves, as is apparent from the paintings Jahangir commissioned from the foremost painter of his royal workshop, Abu'l Hasan, depicting his symbolic vanquishing of the embodiments of poverty and rebellion.<sup>426</sup> If the evil of poverty could not be eliminated in reality, it was to be vanquished symbolically in an allegorical painting in which Jahangir sent an arrow into the face of poverty itself, and if rebellions could not be quashed with ease, the painted rebel Malik Ambar at least would offer no resistance to the avenging Jahangir.<sup>427</sup>

The Mughals placed great emphasis on being perceived as the embodiments of generosity, in accordance with universal ideals of kingship. The provision of alms, and,

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<sup>424</sup> Keshavdas, *Moonlight of the Emperor Jahangir's Glory. Critical Edition and English Translation of the Jahangira Jasa Chandrika by Kesavadasa*, ed. and trans. Stefania Cavaliere (Napoli: L'Orientale Università degli Studi, 2010).

<sup>425</sup> Baqir, *Advice on the Art of Governance: An Indo-Islamic Mirror for Princes: Mu'izah-i Jahangiri of Muhammad Baqir Najm-i Sani*, 8a-8b.

<sup>426</sup> Abu'l Hasan, *The Emperor Jahangir Standing on a Globe Shooting Poverty*, c. 1620, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, M.75.4.28. and Abu'l Hasan *Jahangir Shoots Malik Ambar*, c. 1616, Chester Beatty Library, Minto Album.

<sup>427</sup> For the specific role of Catholic symbolism in Mughal painting and iconography, see Gauvin Alexander Bailey, "Counter Reformation Symbolism and Allegory in Mughal Painting" (Harvard University, 1996).

more notably, the ritual public weighing of the emperor – where he would match his weight in gold to be given away – are examples of this. Far from self-effacing, these occasions were elaborate public rituals aimed at elevating the image of the king as attending to the needs of his impoverished subjects. The ostentatious nature of these ceremonies provided Xavier an opening for further ‘counsel’. The instructions issued by the Father General Claudio Acquaviva had been to counsel kings only in matters of the spirit, and not to engage in worldly affairs – but what matter was more spiritual in nature than the question of modesty and generosity? Xavier writes:

The philosopher Sophocles discusses the science and logic governing anyone who claims victory in debate and dismisses the arguments of others as misperceptions. Such dominance gives pleasure and a sense of importance, but pride in the face of victory usually precipitates the person’s downfall. (...) The following holistic characteristics develop in the nature of a person who gives generously and does not keep count of what he gives. On the other hand, he is grateful to those who give him anything, and considers it a matter of great honour when he is the recipient. (...) When a king orders to give a gift and makes a big show of it, and projects himself as generous, in fact this constitutes mean-heartedness and immodesty. In truth it is extreme mean-heartedness to draw attention to your giving, point to your own generosity, and making others feel obliged. (...) In the same manner, if a person is brave and kind, he can be called large-hearted and brave, but on the condition that he does not boast of his good deeds and does not portray himself as honourable. In one of the treatises God ordered one of his messengers to wear an expression of gratitude on his face, whenever he gives something to a person. Only the ignorant make a show of their kindness. In fact, a gift from an ignorant and mean-hearted person will embarrass the receiver [rather than casting his eyes low, he will stare in astonishment]. Thus, it is said that when a gift is presented by an ignorant person, it becomes a source of shame and a disturbance for the receiver. The same divine messenger tells us that a gift which the giver brings up on every occasion is of no use (...) because having committed an act of generosity, he expects in return seven times what little he has given. And moreover, he exaggerates and extolls again and again his virtue of generosity. And this is what becomes somewhat painful for the beneficiary. (...) The reason I mention all this is that if someone is kind to a person, but makes mention of it, the favour becomes embarrassing for the other. In short, by giving we are bound to forget that we have given and should not expect anything in return. Silence decorates the kindness. As for the beneficiary, thanksgiving decorates his gratitude. It is large-heartedness and endless patience, which make one generous, as well as a modesty quite contrary to those mean-hearted ones who thrive on the glory and name of having once committed a small discretion. In fact, it gives them a bad name. (...) <sup>428</sup> There was a very rich person by the name Nicholas (Saint Nicholas) in the land of Greece. He heard about a man who was extremely poor and had three beautiful daughters. Somehow the father was bringing them up with whatever God provided. When Nicholas learnt of this,

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<sup>428</sup> Xavier, S.J., “Directorio de Reys,” 69v.



he felt embarrassed about this poor man struggling to make ends meet to bring up his daughters. He found it suitable to take some money from the treasure of Abraham (*kise-ye Ibrahim*) and put it into a small purse. He wrote a note, put it into the purse and sealed it. He then threw it into the air shaft, and this way the father was able to marry off his daughter. And on another occasion, he again filled up a bag of money and threw it into the air shaft, and now this poor man was able to marry off his second daughter. In the same manner, the third daughter also was married off, but it could not be known who is the helping hand. In fact, after he had married off his second daughter and was waiting for the kind person to offer help and assistance a third time, Nicholas, the kind gentleman, again filled up his pouch, filled it with money and threw it inside in the usual way, and wanted to escape. But his time, hearing the sound of that purse falling, the girl realized what was happening, and ran after that noble person. She was able to find him, and when he turned, she recognized him. She explained her pitiful state asked that this remain a secret. Nicholas replied that in fact this favour had not come from him and that he should not get any gratitude or appreciation for it. (...) Real kindness is that which come from a kind-hearted person who does not seek rewards or popularity and does not reveal his kindness. The extreme greatness of Solomon was his ability to be generous and have the capacity to give yet would reject the notion of his own kindness.<sup>429</sup> (...) The same is the case when you hear about the greatness and bravery of Alexander. It is said he had bestowed an entire city to one of his low-ranking soldiers, so he could marry off his daughter. And he bestowed many other rewards and grants on both his nobles and the general public (*khāss-o-amm*). I call him large-hearted because whenever he gave out of generosity, it never showed in his generous face. To him it was as though he was not gifting anything at all. Whatever he used to give, he would forget and never bring it up. This kind of large-heartedness and greatness is appropriate for kings.<sup>430</sup> This kind of giving, while maintaining silence and innocence, also applies to the Portuguese king Don João (*Don Shuan*). It is said that one day, when he was in his private chamber, a precious golden tray was brought before him. At that moment, one of the courtiers who was a pauper looked at the tray and thought of stealing it at any cost, so he could sell it and marry off his daughter. As soon as he got the chance he concealed it, but the king saw him. Since the man was otherwise trustworthy, the king who had observed this misdeed remained silent and instructed his people not to reveal the theft to anyone. The courtier smuggled the tray out of the court, as planned. When the cook enquired about the tray, and it was nowhere to be found, the king was told it had disappeared, and that they were not able to trace the thief. The king said, 'I know who the thief is,' and told them to stop enquiring about the matter. And as long as he was alive, he never revealed the thief's name.<sup>431</sup> (...) The king of England, Edward II, was resting on his *charpai* ['four legs', a traditional woven bed, or cot, used on the subcontinent]. His treasurer kept a purse full of *ashrafis* in the king's cashbox but he forgot to lock it before going out. An attendant was present among the nobles in the room and saw the unlocked cashbox. When all the nobles had left to return to their homes, this man remained. The king laid down to take a nap, and his man saw his chance to take out as many *ashrafis* as he could and withdraw. A while later he came back, took more money, and left again. The third time, thinking the king was still asleep, he had again taken money and was about to sneak out, when the king suddenly spoke: 'Oh, man of good character, be satisfied with the amount you have already taken. Leave quickly before the treasurer returns and catches you stealing money and disgraces you with a good whipping.' This man was surprised at the large-heartedness of the king. And before anyone could see him,

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<sup>429</sup> Xavier, S.J., 70r.

<sup>430</sup> Xavier, S.J., 71r.

<sup>431</sup> Xavier, S.J., 71v-72r.

he returned to his home. When after some time the treasurer came back and found the cashbox open, and realising money was missing, he became worried. His face showed his disturbed state of mind, and when the king found him in this state, he told him not to worry, for whoever had taken the money, must have had a greater need for it than he. He must have taken the money at an auspicious time and have spent it on good work. And whatever is left behind is enough for us.<sup>432</sup> The generous person gives away even when he has little. But a person who is a miser, will think even a large amount small, and out of greed will pretend to have less than he does. Such a person does not have the heart to spend it, and is never satisfied with the accumulation of money, no matter how much he amasses. It is out of greed and mean-heartedness that he thinks this way. But a person who is generous, will not attach value to what he possesses, and will not have watchmen and guard his wealth. We would rather give it away and spend it out of large-heartedness. And as per popular belief, a man who is in the habit of giving away his money, never runs out of it, because divine blessings provide him with ever more means. When an Arab dog (*sagetazi*) catches its pray, he does not eat it but brings it to his master. Thus, even when a king derives his wealth from his own land, if he is generous, he will spend only a small amount for his own benefit, and the rest on his subjects.<sup>433</sup> (...) The great Alexander was popular in this regard. The wealth he would acquire in victory, he used to return to its rightful owner, or gifted it to one of his servants. Nobles would ask him, 'Oh master, you strive so hard to conquer these cities, but what remains for yourself in the end?' 'What remains is my hands, with which to give away.' He knew the best part of the loot was this. It is surprising that some people are so greedy for silver and gold, that when they acquire it they become blind, and because of this trait, when a philosopher was asked why the colour of gold was yellow, he responded it was 'because it is terrified of people running after it!'

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<sup>432</sup> Xavier, S.J., 72r-73r.

<sup>433</sup> Xavier, S.J., 74v.



*Figure 3: Jahangir Shoots the Head of Malik 'Ambar. Folio from the Minto Album. By Abu'l Hasan, ca. 1616. Trustees of Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (In. 07A.15)*

According to Xavier, the king was to display modesty both in victory and in giving. On the other hand, he was to be grateful to those who would give him anything and consider it a matter of privilege to be on the receiving end of others' generosity. The capital sin, unbecoming of, and weakening a king was to give a gift and make a big show of it – in other words to project oneself as generous. In fact, to do so is mean-hearted

and immodest, where silent gratitude would be more appropriate.<sup>434</sup> The Greek Saint Nicholas insisted on remaining anonymous in his acts of generosity, King Solomon refused to acknowledge his own kindness, Alexander the Great gave away cities to his soldiers, his beloved to a fellow admirer, and rewards to nobles and commoners (*khāss-o-āmm*),<sup>435</sup> while Don João II,<sup>436</sup> and Edward II saw servants steal but said nothing to reveal the sin to others, indeed protected the thieves against repercussions.<sup>437</sup> Given frequent Jesuit descriptions of the extraordinary wealth of the Mughal emperor, and the rich decoration of his palace and body with precious metals, stones and fabrics, Xavier's observation that not all kings are like Alexander, as some are greedy for silver and gold, is an acerbic arrow that lands on Jahangir's perceived ostentation. In short, if his generosity were true, instead of making a spectacle of it he would deny it, would not have guardsmen watch his wealth, and would spend his riches on his people, not on palaces and possessions.

In Keshavdas' *Jahāmgīra Jasa Candrikā*, a direct appeal is issued to the emperor to save the Brahman from lethal poverty. The figure of Poverty, ironically, had arrived at the Brahman's home after being exiled from the *emperor's* palace, and proceeded to unleash its fury on the poor Brahman. Stefania Cavaliere has shown that 'the pathetic sense of this allegorical image is that the ascetic's misery should be blamed on the emperor.'<sup>438</sup> But while a Portuguese treatise (in the form of an intelligence report) on the Mughal court, which Xavier or his companion Pinheiro wrote shortly after the *Directorio* was completed, is also largely critical of Jahangir, his public image

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<sup>434</sup> Xavier, S.J., 70r.

<sup>435</sup> Xavier, S.J., 71r.

<sup>436</sup> Xavier, S.J., 71v-72r.

<sup>437</sup> Xavier, S.J., 72r-73r.

<sup>438</sup> Keshavdas, *Moonlight of the Emperor Jahangir's Glory. Critical Edition and English Translation of the Jahāmgīra Jasa Candrikā by Kesavadasa*, ed. and trans. Stefania Cavaliere (Napoli: L'Orientale Università degli Studi, 2010), 20.

is depicted as that of an almsgiver.<sup>439</sup> This tension between the image of a generous king, and the persistence of poverty is found under the surface of many of the works addressing Jahangir's kingship. This does not mean, at least according to the *Directorio*, that public displays are always anathema. It is one thing to immodestly ceremonialize one's charity, and quite another to bestow a generous endowment to building projects.

In regard of greatness there is also the case of an Egyptian king, the one who started the building of the pyramids, which are among the seven miracles. These pyramids are near Egyptian city of Cairo (...) This square building (...) is built of harder stone than marble, brought from Arab lands. The stone masons worked hard to chisel the stones, using rare technique. During the construction, every day three hundred sixty people were working, and due to the large amount of work, it took around twenty years to complete (...) The total expenditure per day works out to twenty-eight lakhs and eighty thousand [2.880.000] rupees. When one imagines that this amount was paid continuously for years, it is extraordinary how much wealth was spent! What more can I say about the construction of one of the miracles of the world (*emarat-e ebib-e elat*). What surprises people about this building is the daily expenditure, but also the size of the building, as well as its location in such a strange place, a desert, and the effort of bringing stones from mountains in distant lands, when there is not a single stone to be found where the building was built. There is not a single stone available in the desert, and creating such a building there, required the transport of stones over great distance and all this really is a matter of astonishment. What I am telling here shows what generosity meant and how money was spent. The survival of such monuments reminds people of the king's generosity, his large-heartedness, and patience.<sup>440</sup>

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<sup>439</sup> Flores, *The Mughal Padshah: A Jesuit Treatise on Emperor Jahangir's Court and Household*, 6:56.

<sup>440</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," 90r.



Figure 4: *Emperor Jahangir Triumphant Over Poverty*, attributed to Abu'l Hasan, circa 1620-1625; The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Nasli and Alice Heeramaneck Collection (M.75.4.28)

As Mughal imperial architecture was an extension of a projected image of ideal kingship on a monumental scale, Jahangir is reminded in the *Directorio* that more ambitious projects than the one he was currently undertaking at the tomb for his father Akbar were to be found beyond his domains, where wonders of the world had been constructed.<sup>441</sup> Not that the pyramids, whose construction Xavier extolls, would have been news to the Mughal audience, but it is interesting that shortly before the completion of the *Directorio*, Jahangir halts construction at the tomb, and commands that parts of the building be torn down and replaced with a new, more suitable design. The final result is a unique terraced structure, pyramidal in form. It was possible to

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<sup>441</sup> Xavier, S.J., 90r.

construct a symbol of wealth and good government in the middle of the desert, just as it was possible, the Mughals insisted, to convert the dry, sandy flatlands north of Agra into a paradisiacal garden housing a pyramidal tomb to symbolise ideal kingship. But while Xavier issues a nod to Mughal appreciation for monumental building projects as a public good, it comes with a warning.

Amongst the Jews there is a custom according to which, along with their dead bodies, they bury their possessions. In this way, people cannot lay claim on their wealth for the reverence they have for the dead body. Despoiling a corpse is an unspeakable act for them. And for this reason, the mausoleum of the Great David, king of the children of Israel, had eight strong rooms. These were filled with treasures. For almost five-hundred years, no one had laid a hand on them. But when the king of Jerusalem was imprisoned by the Syrian king, in desperation he took two lakh rupees from that treasure to obtain his release. Though his act was necessitated by the need of the hour, people condemned it. And they used to abuse and criticize him. Eventually the king again took from the treasure, but this time to build large public hospitals for the city, to preserve the health of the inhabitants. In this case, money from the mausoleum was being spent for the benefit of the people. The people appreciate this act, as it benefitted the general public, not his own release. It is good to keep accumulated money in a safe place. But it should not be kept under lock and key if there is a [public] need for it, be it to help the army or the subjects.<sup>442</sup>

Another king, Don Philip II of Spain, showed his chivalry and perfect generosity in his kindness to his nobles. In one case, the king addressed a person who had come from afar to serve at his court, and as they spoke, the king noticed this was a man of knowledge and intellect. The king allowed the man to make some expenditures, but not in the amount this man had expected of a king known for his kindness and generosity. Finally, because the king did not meet his expectation, the man wanted to take leave on the pretext of illness. In his wisdom and farsightedness, the king understood this illness was a sign of a deeper problem, but knowing that it was a mere pretext, he ignored it, and granted some amount for the expense of the journey. He also gave the man a horse and bid him farewell. But the king also sent one of his trusted servants to accompany and spy on the man, and to report whatever he says, whether good or bad. This servant set out as per the royal order. The man, being very intelligent, and a man of knowledge, one day passed a comment about the affair. As they were crossing a river, his horse stopped in the middle of the water and started urinating. The man commented, 'it appears my horse has the habit of the king. He is urinating at a place where there is already a lot of water, instead of a place where water is needed. In the same manner, our king also gives great rewards and gifts to the nobles and the wealthy, but not to the needy and the poor.' When he heard this, the attendant arrested him and brought him back, and reported the matter to the king. The king ordered to bring the man into his presence. When he came before him, the king ordered two boxes to be brought out. One was full of royal dress, diamonds, and gold. The other was full of old and rusty poor man's things. It was a test. The boxes were placed before the man, and the king said, 'I know that you are in anguish because I have not given you enough rewards. But what can I do, if luck is not on your side? When people received grants

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<sup>442</sup> Xavier, S.J., 69v.

from me, but you did not, this was not my fault. To prove this, I ask you to choose between these two boxes. The man picked up a box and when it was opened, it turned out it was full of rubbish. The king said, 'You see, your luck is not with you! If you were lucky, you would have taken the other box. You would have become rich, a man of wealth, but your bad luck cancelled out my greatness (*javānmardī*). Now, what if you took the other box as well? Whatever precious material is in that one, I will also bestow on you.' This scholar returned home a happy man. It is said the king did not himself believe in all this bad luck and superstition but concocted the notion out of generosity. Such a king will also show his goodness, his royal characteristic of greatness, (*alwehemat-e pādshāhāni*) in other affairs, and will recognize the needs of the people who are in his service. In recognising his people's needs he is like the sky: when foul odours rise from the lands of the poor to the sky, they are turned into a soft breeze. In the same manner, a king should be generous with his subordinates. The Almighty in his Perfection rewards those who are in service of the people.<sup>443</sup>

Xavier once again emphasizes the importance of the plight of the king's subjects. Crimes such as theft or levelling insults against the king are to be tolerated in the interest of helping his people, even where the ruler's pride may have been injured. The ability to see beyond these acts to recognise the underlying need is what makes a king great.

Such passages stand in stark contrast with Xavier's view of Jahangir's public display of generosity. Given that Jahangir was in the midst of building the enormous tomb of Akbar just as Xavier was levelling this criticism, one wonders if the memorial was perceived as constituting a burden on the subjects, or as somehow being built on their backs. The vestibule of Akbar's tomb is perhaps the most richly decorated room in all of Mughal architecture. It stuns with its ornate painted stucco decoration in blue, turquoise and orange, possibly once having been gold, and an elaborate floral program including flowers in vases, cypress trees and plane trees wrapped with grape vines. Xavier's reference to David's mausoleum's eight strong rooms immediately brings to mind this typical Persian and Mughal model of tomb architecture, called *hasht bihisht* ('Eight Paradises') referring to the floor plan of eight chambers into which tombs like

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<sup>443</sup> Xavier, S.J., 70r.



the Taj Mahal were divided, but it also offers the opportunity to reaffirm the precedence of the needs of the subjects. When poverty reigned, Xavier's anecdote referencing David's mausoleum shows, it was permissible to despoil the tomb and remove its riches to distribute them among the people.<sup>444</sup>

In his official autobiography, Jahangir only mentions poverty and the poor in the context of the distribution of symbolic gifts and food to local ascetics, dervishes, fakirs and other poor and needy people, typically on the occasion of the emperor's visit to a given locality.<sup>445</sup> However, a cursory glance at the period reveals that the discontented elements of the town and district poor regularly rebelled. In 1612, while Akbar's tomb was still under construction, Jahangir had to send one of his most senior nobles to 'conciliate the soldiery and cultivators' in Sindh and to 'exterminate [the rebels].'<sup>446</sup> Only two years earlier, in 1610, a noble was dispatched to Delhi to punish the rebels and disaffected in the neighborhood. The Jesuits too in their yearly letters report on Jahangir's struggles with riots in various provinces. In 1612, when a mob of discontented elements of the local poor took control of Patna and appropriated the treasury, Jahangir had their leader summarily executed, and humiliated the nobles responsible for the embarrassment to the crown. The men were 'publicly degraded and ridiculed at the imperial capital, being paraded through Agra on asses, heads all shaved and dressed as women.'<sup>447</sup> As in photography, where the paper darkens in proportion to its exposure to light, the *Directorio* addresses the issue of rebellion and the plight of the poor along other sources of anxiety for the Mughal throne, bringing into view the

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<sup>444</sup> Xavier, S.J., 69v.

<sup>445</sup> Jahangir, *The Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri Or Memoirs of Jahangir*, 48, 58, 74, 75, 81, 107, 121, 148, 160, 173, 180, 183, 189, 190, 204, 255, 256, 267, 282, 386, 387, 440 The one exception is the story of Kaukab, a noble who'd abandoned service for want of promotion, but even as a poor vagrant remained loyal and eventually returned into the fold and was rewarded by Jahangir.

<sup>446</sup> Jahangir, 171.

<sup>447</sup> Jahangir, 173–76.

dark image of a despotic king by illuminating the ideals he is yet to attain.

## 6. Reluctant Despots

New knowledge, history and the trope of a wise counsellor to critique Mughal kingship which was conceived as typically orientally despotic. By emphasizing the fundamental importance of spiritual self-improvement, Xavier positions himself as answer. By underlining the pride, wealth and boastfulness about acts of piety and kindness, he makes clear the urgency of a spiritual solution to problems that only on the surface appear political. In the previous chapter, we have seen that Xavier focused on themes which were already a source of anxiety about imperial legitimacy and led to ritual and symbolic demonstrations to represent the emperor as a spiritual leader, and ascetic, and vanquisher of poverty.

In this chapter I will discuss another aspect of the *Directorio's* strategy, namely the reinvention of existing Mughal ideals of kingship as 'new knowledge'. We have seen how the *Directorio* relies on similarities between Mughal and European ideals of kingship. Its themes closely reflect a body of Indo-Persian advice literature already in existence in Mughal India. Instead of making this correspondence explicit, however, the *Directorio* assimilates Mughal ideals into 'Western' wisdom arriving by way of the Mediterranean and Greco-Persian world. This allows the text to do two things at once: one, establish a shared political language, thereby enhancing the communicative force of its message, and two, claiming common ideals as exclusively its own, thereby endowing its anecdotes and advice with the aura of 'new knowledge'. Thus, the accommodational embrace is never far from the violence of appropriation.

The mechanism is reminiscent of the use of European mapmaking as part of an accommodational strategy in China, where the interest in a subject of European knowledge served a realignment, a recalibration, a 'putting back in its place' relative to

a European global perspective – in which China was no longer central.<sup>448</sup> Such strategies were certainly not unique to the Jesuits. Their inversion can be observed in Mughal representations of European cartography in imperial paintings, where the subcontinent is central, the Emperor and his lion symbolically set foot on neighboring empires in the name of peace, and Europe is rendered nearly out of sight.

A central scheme in Xavier's self-fashioning as political counsellor to Jahangir are a set of themes that shine a light on the implied inadequacies of his kingship. The currency used to address them is said to be the neutral category of 'new knowledge', which implies the addressees lack of knowledge about the proper conduct of statecraft. The notion that a sage from distant lands was required to provide the knowledge Jahangir might lack might give the impression the Mughals took little interest in the literature, scholarship and practices of other societies, but this is misleading in at least three respects. First, the Mughals had already taken a considerable interest in the political philosophy and political history of the West (*zamān maghrīb*); second, Xavier himself had had a hand in previous Mughal experiments in cataloguing Western political knowledge; and third, the trope of an outwardlooking, cosmopolitan, cross-cultural conveyor of knowledge was already in use in the body of advice literature existing in Mughal India.

## **Knowledge and Justice**

The administration of justice, which forms a central theme in Xavier's exempla, was also defined as a central duty of the king in *akhlāq* literature. As Ikhtiyar al-Din al-Husseini had noted in his mirror for the Timurid sultan Hussein Baykara of Herat, which he subsequently repurposed for the first Mughal emperor Babur:

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<sup>448</sup> Antonella Romano, *Impressions de Chine* (Fayard, 2016), 14, 133.

In consideration of justice [*ādī*] the king should in person investigate the conditions of the general public [*ri'āya*] and make sure they have direct access to him. If perchance he cannot be available every day, he must fix a day for the populace to approach him directly for the redress of grievances.<sup>449</sup>

The idea had been famously symbolized in the device of the '*ādī-i zanjīr*' ('chain of justice') suspended from the king's quarters for plaintiffs to pull to have their case heard. It harked back to the Sasanian king Anushirwan and, as a public display, it was particularly strongly associated with Xavier's patron, Jahangir, who discussed it in his autobiography, the *Jahāngirnāmā*.

After my accession, the first command issued by me was to have a chain of justice hung, so that if those charged with administering the courts were slack or negligent in rendering justice to the downtrodden, those who have suffered injustice could have recourse to the chain and pull it so that the sound would cause awareness. It is set up as follows. I ordered a chain to be made of pure gold, thirty ells in length with sixty bells. It weighs four Hindustani mounds, which is thirty-two Persian mounds. One end is attached to the crenellations of the Shah Tower of the Agra citadel, and the other end is stretched to the bank of the river [below] and affixed to a stone post erected there.<sup>450</sup>

In his discussion of this theme, Xavier chooses exempla that very closely mirror this Indo-Persian, Mughal ideal. Notably, it is the polytheist Roman Emperors Tacitus, Vespasian and Tiberius who are held up as examples of kings who placed hearing their subjects' concerns above all else.

[They would] not allow courtiers to sit in court until justice-seekers arrived without hesitation, and the needy without a veil on their pleas. The king went to many different places to hold court, so the people who were in need could put forward their demands. I do not know how he was able to conduct these campaigns to reach his plaintiffs, for this king never saw or recognised his near and dear [made no distinction between the general public and his intimates]. Indeed, they found it difficult to obtain an audience with him, as he surrounded himself with strangers and would treat his relatives no different from others. So devoted was he that on his deathbed, he continued to receive his subjects in order to hear their demands, so that the physicians were displeased with him for continuing despite his ill health, a carelessness they thought could kill him. But he dismissed their advice, and what is more, he insisted that instead of sitting, the king should stand when dispensing

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<sup>449</sup> "Akhlāq-I Humayuni," f. 30b as quoted in Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam: India 1200-1800*.

<sup>450</sup> Jahangir, *The Jahangir Nama: Memoirs of Jahangir, Emperor of India*, 24.

justice and welfare for the benefit of the people.<sup>451</sup>

Here we have Xavier's ideal of an itinerant, selfless king, embodying the very opposite of the dynastic nepotism the Jesuit rejected, yet also mirroring the model promoted by the Mughals themselves. As such, it forms an implicit criticism of Jahangir's failure to put in practice his own professed ideals, and a kingship which favours the court and courtiers above the general public. This might include the Mughal assembly (*darbār*) where, in spite of the pleasing symbolism of the 'chain of justice,' and ritual interaction with common people, access to the king was in effect severely restricted and hierarchical.

The association of perfect justice with non-Christian kings is an additional similarity with *akhlāqi* literature. In *akhlāq*, justice over time assumed an independent existence, with the objective of serving a real public interest. Muslim or non-Muslim, a ruler had to be just. A just ruler who was not a Muslim might be more beneficial to his subjects than a Muslim king who was not just. Justice, in other words, had an inalienable value irrespective of religion, exemplified by the extended rule of dynasties like the Sasanians, who ruled for millennia in spite of being infidels, and were revered as exemplary kings by the Muslim Mughals.<sup>452</sup> This *akhlāqi* principle, as we have seen, is central to the *Directorio*'s project of transcending the sectarian aspect of ethics to show that universal norms of kingship can effectively be adapted and transferred to different particular contexts, including the Mughal one. This transferability of ideals of kingship had been in effect in Mughal India since its inception, beginning with the work of Ikhtiyar al-Din al-Husseini.<sup>453</sup>

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<sup>451</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fols. 73r-73v.

<sup>452</sup> Khaqani, "Akhlāq-i Jahāngiri," fol. 274v; see also Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam: India 1200-1800*, 59.

<sup>453</sup> "Akhlāq-I Humayuni," f. 30b as quoted in Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam: India 1200-1800*.

One way of reading the *Directorio* is as a catalogue of Mughal failures to practice what they preach in the way government is exercised. Xavier repeatedly homes in on the idea of the king as the benevolent source of distributive justice, a central principle of Mughal political ideology. In one instance Xavier recounts the case of a king who aspired to be just and thus sent an envoy to get advice from a sage experienced in the art of statecraft. When the envoy arrived, the sage spread out a piece of hard, untanned cowhide, and sat on one of its corners. When he sat down, the other end would come up because the hide was dry, so he got up and sat on the other end. He repeated this whole shamle over and over again. At the end, the sage went and sat in the middle so that the whole thing was settled evenly on the ground. Then he let the envoy go without saying a word.<sup>454</sup>

In a precise restatement of the Mughal policy of *sulh-i-kul*, here advanced from a new and ‘Western’ perspective, Xavier’s king, being wise, was able to decipher the moral, namely that fair and just treatment of all segments of society was vital to maintain peace and harmony. Not that Xavier would ever, here or elsewhere, in the *Directorio*, refer directly to Mughal policies or ideology. Instead, Mughal ideals of good government were consistently rearticulated using his own, Western examples. Thus, his efforts to save the Oriental sovereign from temptation echo the rhetoric of Mughal ideologues such as Abu’l Fazl when he invokes Plato’s two imperatives of kingship, as recounted by Cicero: first, never let the betterment of the citizens leave your mind and never consider your own interest; and second, protect people of all standings, and do not prefer some over others.<sup>455</sup>

If Keshavdas wrapped his criticism of Mughal government in ambiguous poetic

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<sup>454</sup> Xavier, S.J., “Directorio de Reys,” 70v.

<sup>455</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 72r.

language, Xavier relies on the luxury afforded by the genre of historical exempla, and the safety of a critique that remains indirect. When the *Directorio* marshals historical examples to show that affairs need to be arranged in such a way as to free the king from natural human desire and allow him to assume the robe of kingship – not because it is adorned with gold and jewels, but because it is dignified by service to the people – the advice operates on two planes.<sup>456</sup> On the one hand it offers an oblique criticism of the Mughal propensity for vainglory and luxury, but at the same time it addresses his patron's explicit political ideal (of spiritual service to the people), however compromised in practice. After all, even ideal kings need reminding of proper conduct. Without Aristotle, where would Alexander be?

At times Xavier's ventriloquial model of reasserting Mughal ideals of kingship against his patron – by changing the voice so it appears to come from elsewhere – travels so far East as to converge with Mughal political geography. For instance, Xavier puts the ideals of kingship, as opposed to the sins of Oriental despotism, in the mouth of King Porus (*Pūrū*), a king of Paurava between the rivers of Jhelum and Chenab in the Ancient Punjab, as he addresses his captor, Alexander the Great.<sup>457</sup> When Porus was put in chains and brought before Alexander, the latter asked how Porus expected to be treated now that he had been conquered. To which Porus responded that he hoped Alexander would give no room to anger, pain or tyranny, and none to grudge – only to justice and fairness.<sup>458</sup> The encounter of Alexander and Porus held great symbolism for the Portuguese in Goa, who identified with the Alexandrine conquest of

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<sup>456</sup> Xavier, S.J., fol. 71v.

<sup>457</sup> It is clear that al-Tabari, the most common source for Persian references to Porus, knew the name of the Indian king defeated by Alexander (al-Iskandar), as a king named Fūr (Porus). But the Ms. gives the name as Pūrū, suggesting that Xavier was unaware of Tabari's Fūr, nor was the scribe aware of the correspondence between the figures. Alternatively, the use of Pūrū may derive from the Sanskrit form of the name.

<sup>458</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fols. 71v-72r; Xavier reproduces the account from Plutarch, *The Parallel Lives*, vol. VII, Loeb Classical Library Edition, 1919, 399.



India, but Xavier reassigns the roles of imperialist and his object of desire. As the Mughal Alexander takes possession of India, Mughal and Jesuit fantasies of conquest momentarily converge.<sup>459</sup>

To the implicit recognition of these principles of Mughal political ideology, with which Xavier is in continuous dialogue throughout the *Directorio*, we may add the references to a mutual responsibility between the sovereign and subjects. The pactist undertone in much of Xavier's account, whether or not inherited from his uncle Azpilcueta, had been made quite explicit by Abu'l Fazl many years prior in terms that appear familiar to modern Western readers because of their similarity to subsequent ideas in John Locke and Thomas Hobbes.<sup>460</sup> Irfan Habib has shown that a combination of Greek sophist theory of social contract and Ibn Arabi's pantheistic philosophy allowed Abu'l Fazl, the man Xavier would later describe as a 'close friend,' to suggest the sovereign and his people were engaged in a mutual covenant. If in the *Akbarnama* Abu'l Fazl laid out a vision of divine predestination that cast Akbar as the Millennial Sovereign, he here appears to reject the theory of divine right of kingship, and claims that in return for their taxes, the sovereign has a duty to protect the general public. Failure to do so, Abu'l Fazl claims, would effectively disqualify him from office and release the people from any obligation to him.<sup>461</sup>

Xavier echoes Abu'l Fazl's proposition by repeating that the king should set aside his own interest and pursue the betterment of all his subject. The only obstacle

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<sup>459</sup> In 1546 Dom João de Castro had asked for an Alexander Romance, probably the Iskandernama in the Khamsa by Nizami, and was sent one from Hormuz, see Joao Teles e Cunha, "Portugal i. Relations with Persia in the Early Modern Age (1500-1750)," *Encyclopædia Iranica* (New York, 2009), <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/portugal-i>.

<sup>460</sup> Thanks in part to the works of Xavier's uncle Martin de Azpilcueta – whose books incidentally formed part of the imperial Mughal library – Spain had seen the neo-Visigothic and Isidorian heritage insist on a submission of the king to the law, and the notion of a contract, or 'pact,' between the king and his people under the name of 'pactismo.'

<sup>461</sup> Irfan Habib, "For a Political Theory of the Mughal Empire: A Study of the Ideas of Abu'l Fazl," *Proceedings of Indian History Congress*, no. 59th Session, Patiala (1998): 333–34.

to this end, according to Xavier, are the king's own 'selfishness and desire' which are an 'enemy to the welfare of the people.' He issues a warning to the king who is ungrateful for the goodwill of the people, even though his kingdom arises from their union. A specific anecdote is recounted of an ascetic who comes face to face with a beautiful woman adorned with jewellery, their eyes locking. The expectation is that the young woman is the one who should show deference to the older man, especially one who has withdrawn from worldly temptations. Indeed, the ascetic reprimands the woman for daring to look him in the eyes. But Xavier's woman responds that it is he who was made from soil whereas the essence of women derives from God, so it would be more appropriate for him to avert his gaze, as it befits her to look at men.<sup>462</sup>

In another slight of Mughal courtly ritual, Xavier then equates this to the relation between a king and his people. The nobles as well as the general public should observe the comings and goings of the king, and not grovel before him in gratitude, for it is the king's responsibility to repay their loyalty by advancing their interest. Echoing the Aristotelian cardio-centric metaphor of the king as the heart of the body politic, found in Marsilius,<sup>463</sup> Aquinas<sup>464</sup> and others, Xavier adds that 'a physician would say that a king among people is like a heart in the body, from which all organs benefit. In this way a king should be kindness personified among people.'<sup>465</sup>

## **The *Samarat al-falasafa* and Mughal Cosmopolitanism**

The idea of the oriental despot as insular, introverted and ignorant, popularized by Botero and discussed in Chapter 4 above, provides a powerful backdrop for Xavier's

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<sup>462</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," 71r.

<sup>463</sup> Marsilius of Padua, *Marsilius of Padua: The Defender of the Peace*, ed. Annabel Brett (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 92.

<sup>464</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate* (Rome: St. Thomas Aquinas Foundation, 1973), 860.

<sup>465</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," 71v.

self-fashioning as the harbinger of new knowledge. However, it also obscures the eclectic intellectual interests of Akbar and Jahangir. Xavier was well aware of these interests. A year after presenting Akbar with the *Mir'āt al-quds*, he was charged with helping Abdus Sattar compile the *Samarat al-falasafa* ('The Fruits of Philosophers'), completed on 8 August 1603, even boasting of having written it himself. This work can be viewed as a Mughal mirror-image of Miguel de Luna's *Historia verdadera del Rey Don Rodrigo* ('True History of King Rodrigo'), published a decade earlier, which had chronicled the Muslim conquest of the Iberian Peninsula, the history of Muslim rulers and kingdoms in the East and West, and issued an appeal for religious non-discrimination (see Chapter One).

Commissioned by Akbar, the *Samarat* takes the form of a traditional Arab-Persian topographical biography (*tazkirah*) and deals with the political and philosophical histories of the Roman empire (*Salatin-i Rum*). Among other works, Abdus Sattar used the New Testament (*Injil*) and the *Summa Historialis* by St. Antoninus of Florence (*Kitab Sant asnin*). In the preliminary introduction, Sattar suggested that the reason India and Europe had been kept in the dark about each other's histories were the geographic and linguistic obstacles. There simply had been no translator (*mutarajjim*) skilled in Persian as well as Latin.<sup>466</sup> Abdus Sattar remarked in the introduction to the *Samarat* that he was commissioned by the emperor Akbar to learn the European languages (*zaban-i firangi*) in order to discover the secrets of those people (*millaf*) and to know about their kings, as well as in order to write an account of the Greek philosophers and Roman sages (*hukma-i yunan zamin*

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<sup>466</sup> There exist a number of manuscript copies of the *Samarat al falasafa* in the libraries of Europe and the Indian subcontinent; cf. B.L. Pers. MSS. Or. 5893. Here the references are made to the Aligarh collection: Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, "Samarat Al-Falasifah," fols. 1–2; this and all subsequent translations from the *Samarat al-falasafa* are taken from Gulfishan Khan, "Text in Focus: Samarat Al-Falasifah," *Kriti Rakshana* 4, no. 5–6 (2009): 17–21.

*wa latin*) into Persian. Abdus Sattar mentions that he learnt the European languages from Jerome Xavier (*padri zeronemo shivar*), a prominent European scholar (*danayan-i farang*) who was living at Akbar's court. He acquired the necessary skills to read and translate these works but could not converse in any European language. Thus, he used the following method of translation: Father Jerome Xavier translated orally and dictated the meaning to Abdus, who then wrote it down into Persian.<sup>467</sup> The work is divided into two major parts with a number of sections and sub-sections apart from an introduction (*muqaddima*) and a conclusion (*Khatima*).<sup>468</sup> In the introduction, the author carefully describes the methodology, subject matter sources, and scope of the work. The purpose of the work is laid out as follows.

So that the *Khedive* of those who revere God, and the *Shahinshah* of the God-knowing, the Darius of the age, king in appearance (*surat*) and reality (*mani*), on account of his knowledge and his excessive generosity towards the people, expressed the desire to have the secrets of religions (*kishha*) and accounts of rulers of every land and the revelation of mysteries of all eminent philosophers continuously described in royal courts ... And this group of Christians (*giroh-i-Nasara*) who are always there in attitude of submission in the exalted court might also gain some solace in their hearts as a consequence. I raised the skirt of my courage and became totally dedicated and sought close association with Padre Jerome Xavier (*Padri Zeronemo Shivar*), one of the select among the knowledgeable European scholars (*danayan i farang*), who had recently arrived and kissed the threshold. I began to acquire the language and with firm determination which got strengthened day by day within six months of receiving the royal assignment, I acquired the ability and strength to comprehend scholarly matters (*ilmi*) and practical wisdom (*amali*) in that language. Because I have spent most of time in producing translations, and did not have the opportunity to speak much, I am still not capable of conversing with much confidence.<sup>469</sup>

Second part of the work is on the European philosophers: 'I made chapters for each of the important philosophers and organized them on the basis of the rulers of the age.' Abdus Sattar's account of the Greek and Roman sages and their ideas was chiefly derived from the *Summa Historialis* (1454-9) of Saint Antoninus Pierozzi but also

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<sup>467</sup> Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, "Samarat Al-Falasifah," fols. 2r-3r.

<sup>468</sup> Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, fols. 55v-56r.

<sup>469</sup> Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, fol. 2r-v.

supplemented from Maqsud Ali Tabrizi's *Tarikh-i hukama*, an abridgement of a thirteenth century work by a disciple of Suhrawardi (d.1191) the Persian philosopher of illuminated kingship influential in Mughal ideology.<sup>470</sup>

Countries such as Italy, Spain, Albania, Castile, and Germany are noted for the high status of Latin throughout the nations of the Western hemisphere – ‘all the books pertaining to scientific matters (*ilmi*) and practical wisdom (*amali*) are written in this language – and grouped together under the banner or ‘the West’ (*maghrīb zamin*).<sup>471</sup> Greece is given special standing as the land of learning and mother of philosophers, while Spain is highlighted as the frontier of this ‘people of knowledge’ and the Arab-Bereber Muslim conquerors Tariq bin Ziyad under the Umayyad Caliph Walid bin Abd al-Malik. The bond with ‘Western’ political philosophy thus is not only of the Perso-Hellenic kind, but the Arabo-Muslim one, too.

By the seventeenth century, the characterization of the Mughals as particularly insular and introverted, or in any case ignorant of Western knowledge, was increasingly out of step with imperial commissions such as the *Samarat* and Xavier's Mughal opus, the exchange of letters with foreign, including European kings, the study of European cartography and obsession with European painting.<sup>472</sup> The interest in Persian culture went as far as wholesale appropriation of language, political norms, aesthetic standards. In different ways, Mughal interests spanned stretching from South-East Asia to Western Europe. When Xavier delivered his Mughalized mirror-for-princes in 1609, the Mughals were not only familiar with the highlights of Western political and philosophical history, but also with the history of Islamo-Christian rivalry

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<sup>470</sup> Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, fol. 43.

<sup>471</sup> Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, fol. 3r.

<sup>472</sup> For another example that pushes back against what Alam and Subrahmanyam call the cliché of the Mughal elite's supposed lack of cultural curiosity, see the chapter on Tahir Muhammad Sabzwari in Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Writing the Mughal World*, 88–122.

in Xavier's home-country – a part of the West which historically was neither wholly Christian nor Muslim, Greek nor Arab, but some amalgam of both. It was Akbar who put books from his library – Aquinas' *Summa Contra Gentiles* for the *A'ina-i-Haqq-nama* and Antonino's *Summa Historialis* for the *Samarat al-falasafa* – at the disposal of the authors.<sup>473</sup>

Finally, Abdus Sattar's account would not be complete without situating Alexander in his discussion of Western knowledge. Six years later, Xavier would use Alexander as the lynchpin of his mirror-for-princes for Jahangir. He would have been well aware of Alexander's stature in Mughal imperial ideology, and indeed had already collaborated with Sattar on a work that discusses it. The section on Plato is followed with a discussion of his faithful disciple Aristotle, portrayed as a rationalist thinker but also a sober and energetic politician whose life including social and political activities are treated with an avid interest. The philosopher is described as a man of universal learning, with philosophical as well as political affinities. Abdus Sattar gives ample attention to Aristotle's advice to his royal pupil Alexander on the art of diplomacy, statecraft and warfare.<sup>474</sup> Prefiguring the portrayals of Aristotle in Xavier's work, the Greek philosopher is presented as an ideal pedagogue and preceptor for his world-conquering pupil. Indeed, Alexander owes his greatness in large measure to the education received from Aristotle. Alexandrine episodes, such as his war with Persian King Darius III, invasion of the Indian subcontinent and capture of King Porus, as well as learning from the Book of David in Jerusalem about the prophecy concerning an impending attack by a Greek ruler, are discussed by Sattar in the *Samarat al-falasafa*

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<sup>473</sup> Xavier discussed the European works in the Mughal imperial library in Jerome Xavier, S.J., "Letter to Aquaviva from Lahore," September 8, 1596, Goa 46, ARSI.

<sup>474</sup> Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, "Samarat Al-Falasifah," fols. 40–44.

and repeated by Xavier in the *Directorio*.<sup>475</sup>

Tellingly, the *Samarat* leaves out the biography of Jesus Christ initially announced in the preface, preferring to simply refer to the translation – the *Mir'āt al-quds* – he [Abdus Sattar] had completed the previous year on the orders of Emperor Akbar.<sup>476</sup> This indicates that unlike the *Directorio*, which appears to have been composed without Abdus Sattar's involvement, there was an interest in limiting the *Samarat* to political philosophy and history in a narrower sense, without reference to Biblical history. The work was less popular than the other works produced by Xavier and Abdus Sattar such as the above mentioned *Mir'āt al-quds*, but several copies survive in Hyderabad, Rampur, King's College Cambridge, Manchester, the British Library, and Mashhad in Iran. The *Samarat al-falasafa* also reveals that from an early date, Abdus Sattar and Jerome Xavier had competing claims of authorship over their collaborations, each presenting the work as his own, reducing the contribution of the other to a footnote. Presumably referring to the *Samarat al-falasafa* in a letter from 6 September 1604, Xavier claims he 'wrote for him [Akbar] a book in Persian containing sayings of some of our philosophers and curious things, which he had asked me for. He and his chiefs enjoy it very much and it is in great request.'<sup>477</sup>

## **Jahangir the Destroyer (of Tyrants)**

The undercurrent of oriental despotism running through Xavier's *Āīnayi Haqq-numā* and the *Directorio* obscures the rich tradition of arguments advanced against despotism in Muslim political philosophy, and its specific Mughal varieties. Some of these arguments anticipated the economic reasoning found in later European

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<sup>475</sup> Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, fols. 44v-52r; cf. Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fols. 11r, 71v-72r.

<sup>476</sup> Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, "Samarat Al-Falasifah," fol. 52r.

<sup>477</sup> Xavier, S.J., Jerome, September 6, 1604, fol. 12r.

observers by several centuries. Six centuries before François Bernier, Al-Ghazzali had warned against the ruinous effect of despotism on the economy. He added that far from preferring servitude, as Aristotle had suggested, subjects would simply vote with their feet: ‘people would not achieve stability with tyranny and injustice, cities and areas would become ruined, the people would flee and go to another kingdom, the treasure would become empty, and the livelihood of the people would dry up.’<sup>478</sup> In his account of nightly assemblies at Jahangir’s court, Abdus Sattar specifically refers to Jahangir as the one who not only ‘loves the weak’ and ‘protects the poor’, but ‘makes green and fertile the dark and miserable earth,’ and is himself the ‘justice-spreading *destroyer of tyrants*.’ In this image, Jahangir is a man of conquest, but a conquest not in the name of subjection, but of spiritual guidance (*murshid-i rāhnimā*), thanks to the world-seizing Sufic leader (*pīr-i jahangir*).<sup>479</sup>

Historians during the reign of Shah Jahan would criticise the age of Akbar and Jahangir, and the royal cult of *Din-i Illahi*, for reasons diametrically opposite to the complaints coming from European observers of Mughal despotism. According to one Mughal historian, rather than being afflicted by irrationality and superstition, the Mughal nobles under Akbar and Jahangir tended too much to the reasonable: ‘the custom of reading the comments of the Koran and the science of religion and law were laid aside, and in their place astronomy, physics, arithmetic, mysticism, poetry, and chronology became current ... it was ordained that the Ilahian may not apply to any other science of the Arabs but to astronomy, arithmetic, physics, and philosophy, and

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<sup>478</sup> Muhammad bin Hamid Ghazali, *Nasihāt Al-Muluk [Counsel for Kings]*, ed. Jalal Homai, trans. F.R.C. Bagley (London: Oxford University Press, 1964); quoted in Ann K.S. Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam: An Introduction to the Study of Islamic Political Theory: The Jurists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 106.

<sup>479</sup> Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, *Majalis-i Jahangiri: Report of Night Assemblies at the Court of Nur Al-Din Jahangir, From 24 Rajab 1017 to 19 Ramadan 1020 A.H. / 24 October 1608 to 15 November 1611 A.D.*, 1–2.



not spend their life-time in the pursuit of what is not reasonable.’<sup>480</sup>

The Mughals’ own anxieties about peace and justice, the elaborate court ritual of the chain of justice, the iconography of the Emperor as impartial arbiter with the sole aim of establishing harmony among a diverse population, the promotion of sectarian non-discrimination and the official policy of *Sulh-i-kul* (‘Universal Peace’), of the admission of the general public to court assemblies and giving hearings to common plaintiffs. All these correspond to a carefully constructed ideal of government, often unimplemented, but encapsulating a certain political morality that was undergirded by an elaborate philosophical and literary tradition and was notably reproduced in the visual language of imperial art and architecture. While it is true that we still have little sense of how most Mughal subjects perceived their own regime, we are not completely in the dark. The Mughal analogues to intellectuals or divines such as Botero and Xavier produced a considerable body of histories, manuals and biographies, as well as the occasional travel account, representing a variety of views that are given no court in the analyses, characterizations and classifications of our Jesuit counsellor. Indeed, these views revealed the complexity of a sub-imperial discourse on Mughal sovereignty that could at times be highly critical, as demonstrated by the satirical poem Keshavdas addressed to Jahangir.

## **The Price of Scholars and Artists**

Mughal imperial culture was the product of an amalgamation of a diverse set of elements ranging from Uzbek astronomy and Iranian philosophy to Bengali architecture, Flemish art and Chinese technology, to name but a few. In the decades

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<sup>480</sup> Mubad Kaikhusrau Isfandiyar, *The Dabistan, or School of Manners*, ed. David Shea and Anthony Troyer, vol. 2 (Paris: Oriental translation Fund, 1843), 85–105; for the value of the Dabistan, cf. Rieu, *Catalogue of Perisan Manuscripts in the British Museum*, vol. 1, n.d., 141b.

preceding Xavier's arrival at court, it had formed a refuge for poets, painters, philosophers and others, particularly from Iran. In particular, this had to do with the lavish patronage of the Mughal court, which commissioned books, ran workshops, carried out monumental building projects, and famously held religious debates among representatives of a wide range of religions at court. Ironically, Xavier was anxious about his ability to be heard at court in spite of, or perhaps because of, this cosmopolitanism. When he appeals to Jahangir to open up to the salutary effects of foreign wisdom and to patronise scholars and artists this anxiety takes the form of preaching to the choir.

In the *Directorio*, Xavier extolls the importance of welcoming experienced astronomers and other sages from distant lands and settling them in every part of the realm, as European rulers had drawn wise men from around the Mediterranean and with their help expanded their knowledge and developed new calendars that eventually became widespread. In addition to Roman Emperor Sulla, Xavier gives the examples of Charles the Great, who brought intellectuals and 20,000 students to Paris, King Don Juan of Portugal who established the Universities in Coimbra and Evora with experts on every subject, and another king who established the University of Salamanca with a residential college of 8000 students with great endowments (*be tārikhe edrār*).<sup>481</sup> Apparently echoing his collaboration with Abdus Sattar, Xavier also recalls how useful foreign sages had been to Ptolemy II, the Greek King of Egypt, who had seventy-two Jewish sages come to Egypt to render the Torah from Hebrew into Greek, so the work could be entered into the Library of Alexandria.<sup>482</sup> As so often in the *Directorio*, it was Alexander who excelled in this aspect of good government above all others, bringing

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<sup>481</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fols. 76r-76v.

<sup>482</sup> This story is found in the pseudepigraphic Letter of Aristeas to his brother Philocrates, and is repeated by Philo of Alexandria, Josephus and by various later sources, including St. Augustine, Xavier's most likely source.

people of learning from many countries to Greece, and richly rewarding them: ‘the seeds of science he scattered yielded a garden of knowledge.’<sup>483</sup>

Xavier connects the king’s relationship with artists and people of learning with his spiritual self-improvement, the *sine qua non* of good kingship. As we saw earlier, according to the *Directorio* it is the glory of overcoming oneself, of subduing one’s baser instincts that separates despotic kings from their opposites. In order to be a great ruler, Jahangir would have to go against the Muslim nature as portrayed in the *Āīnayī Haqq-numā* and deny himself what he desires most. To illustrate this, Xavier uses the example of Alexander’s continence, and the favor bestowed on his painter Apelles:

Alexander had a beautiful woman in his harem [Campaspe], and he was also deeply in love with her. He hinted about his deep affection for her to his painter, Apelles, and asked him to make a portrait of the woman’s face. In order to make a portrait of her face, it was essential for him to see her. When he got permission to look at her, at first sight of her beautiful and attractive face, he too fell in love with her, and fainted. And he forgot what task he had been assigned. When Alexander was informed about this situation, knowing that Apelles too had fallen in love with her, he bestowed the woman upon him.<sup>484</sup>

In the *Directorio* Xavier includes Apelles in the wider category of scholars, artists and wise men whom the ruler should shower with kindness. In the original story recounted by Pliny, Apelles had been asked to paint Campaspe in the nude.<sup>485</sup> In painting, the scene became an allegory for the powers of the art of painting itself, with the naked Campaspe standing in for the ‘naked truth’.<sup>486</sup> In order not to offend, Xavier refers only to the face, but her significance as the object of Alexander’s desire, whose heart she had captured, is unmistakable. The story is a metaphor of Alexander, and therefore a would-be Jahangir, overcoming himself in what constitutes the epitome of self-

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<sup>483</sup> Xavier, S.J., “Directorio de Reys,” fols. 76v-77r.

<sup>484</sup> Xavier, S.J., 52v.

<sup>485</sup> Pliny the Elder, *Natural history*, trans. Harris Rackham (London: W. Heinemann, 1938), 35.85-86.

<sup>486</sup> Stelios Lydakis, *Ancient Greek Painting and Its Echoes in Later Art* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2004), 156–71.

transcendence, the victory of reason over desire, kindness over fear, continence over lasciviousness, generosity over despotism, in short of Xavier's new Alexander over his oriental alter ego.<sup>487</sup>

## **Absolutism and Popular Sovereignty**

On the one hand, the Jesuits had provided an important counterweight to facile dismissals of non-European societies as incapable of providing, or being disinterested in receiving, good government. In 1589, the Jesuit José de Acosta in his comparative ethnology allowed for an ideal type of literate barbarians with good judgement (*recta razón*) living in stability under a non-Christian king, possessing public laws and magistrates, and amenable to rational argument and superior European science. In contrast to Xavier, who would repeatedly lament that the Mughals could not be persuaded by rational reasoning, De Acosta here includes not only China and Japan, but also many parts of India.<sup>488</sup> The inversion of the relation of ruler and subject was also present in Bellarmine's idea that any servitude between rulers and the ruled pertained to the ruler and not the subject, an idea he took from Aquinas. Subjects were to be treated as citizens, whom the ruler served, not as animals, whom he exploited.<sup>489</sup>

However, there is a schizoid tension between these forays into social contract theory and an undiminished support for absolute monarchy. While De Mariana, for instance, rejects the comparison between kings and fathers because the former do not

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<sup>487</sup> Gregory Minissale has noted the similarities between the story of Apelles and Campaspe and Iskandar as arbiter between the artists Chin and Rum in the Khamsa of Nizami, playing on the trope of truth and illusion. See Minissale, *Images of Thought*, 205.

<sup>488</sup> José de Acosta, *Historia Natural y Moral de Las Indias* (Juan de León, 1590).

<sup>489</sup> Saint RObert Bellarmine, "De Laicis," in *Roberti Bellarmini Opera Omnia, Ex Editione Veneta*, ed. Justinus Fèvre, photomechanical repro., vol. II (Frankfurt: Minerva, 1965), 319.

have despotic rule,<sup>490</sup> he compels kings, in the very next chapter, to nurture ‘unlimited’ fear in their subjects, ‘for we suffer in proportion to what we have to bear, but we fear in proportion to what we are capable of suffering.’<sup>491</sup> Even Francisco Suárez defended the use of tyranny in establishing kingship: ‘Empires have often been established and usurped by tyranny and force (*per tyrranidem et vim*). But we deny that this has anything to do with the intrinsic rationale or nature of such a principate.’<sup>492</sup> Future Jesuits would go further and reject any opposition to absolute monarchy, with only the weakest of references to tacit consent, effectively endorsing a monarchy without institutional restraints. Still, Suárez’s notion of a social contract – harmonizing the accounts of Vitoria, Soto, Azpilcueta and Bellarmine, but going further – where authority emanates from the people as a choice or by freely giving away collective liberty, appears alive in Xavier’s vision of an ideal Mughal emperor utterly dependent on the approval of his subjects.

Before a definitive Jesuit turn to a more unequivocal promotion of absolute monarchy, Xavier can also be understood as heir to a tradition of thought elaborated by Suarez and his uncle, Azpilcueta. The *Directorio*, a work that at first sight has all the trappings of a conciliation with, indeed an assimilation of Mughal political language, emerges as a reproduction of familiar complaints against Mughal government, articulated against a received and relatively fixed idea of Oriental despotism. As such, it is a muted version of the explicit attack levelled in the *Fuente de Vida*, mediated by the literary regime of *akhlāq*. To the extent that the tools and strategies of the Jesuit mission had gained in sophistication since Xavier’s arrival, its substantive message and purpose remained very much the same.

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<sup>490</sup> De Mariana, *De Rege et Regis Institutione Libri Tres*, bk. 1, chap. 8, p. 74.

<sup>491</sup> De Mariana, bk. 1, chap. 9, p. 92.

<sup>492</sup> Quoted in Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c. 1540-1630*, 195.

Nonetheless, the *Directorio* has to contend with an opposition between, on the one hand, a body of Jesuit thought that is at best sceptical of any notion of popular sovereignty of the sort advanced by Xavier in his advice to Jahangir and, on the other hand, the circulation of norms in Mughal India which anticipate Xavier's advice and subvert its claim to novelty. Mughal political ideology, while often not the practice, was in many ways explicitly anti-despotic. These Mughal ideals were known to Xavier, who argued with them, rather than against them – appropriating them into Western examples to hold up political values that were recognizable, and that could at the same time be claimed as somehow new and violated under the present Mughal dispensation.

Finally, the broad agreement on the existence of a negative model of despotism outside of Europe which reflected in Xavier's literary output at the Mughal court, has to be read in parallel to a highly ambiguous attitude among European observers, and especially Xavier's Jesuit colleagues, to absolutism, including its more despotic tendencies, and the reciprocity of a social contract. In other words, an ambivalence between fear and kindness as the animating power of sovereignty. The unresolved struggle with the political and moral identity of the Oriental other, ranging from wilful ignorance of the other's own discourse to a schizoid projection of the Western observer's own philosophical and moral ambivalence on the canvas of an imaginary Orient, is reflected in the portrayals of Mughal despotism in the works of Xavier and other European observers. Their observations, their empirical knowledge, must be read against the constraints imposed by their beliefs and desires.

## **A Dialectic of Opposites**

My purpose in highlighting the strong presence in Xavier's work of the stereotypes that informed the development of the concept of Oriental despotism long before and after his tenure at the Mughal court is not to idealize Mughal principles or practice of

government, or to make normative claims about Muslim rules of kingship. Rather, it has been my goal to look closer at Xavier as an example of a kind of selective marshalling of empirical observations and historical examples to bolster a paradigmatic way of seeing the Oriental, and specifically Muslim, other. Additionally, I hope it has become clear that what animated these strategies often had as much to do with ideological programs that transcended the Mughal situation, as it did with the full gamut of observable knowledge. Thus, in revisiting Xavier, my purpose has been to push back both against the figure of the progressive accommodationist, as well as that of the dispassionate empiricist.

That Botero, who was expressly developing a philosophy of Christian kingship, did not openly engage with the Muslim universal histories and mirrors-for-princes already in circulation in Europe, is hardly surprising. Already in Botero's account, the contention that European states were superior to Oriental ones coincided with religious fault-lines which, though never made explicit, nonetheless had the effect of elevating Christian governments over non-Christian, especially Muslim ones. This, of course is in line with Botero's preoccupation with the conduct of the Christian king as such. Excessive concentration of power and revenue, and the arbitrary will of the despotic ruler, became the implicit remit of an imaginative Eastern geography, where unlike in Europe, intimidation of the military establishment, the abuse of the population, and the starvation of their troops, appeared to be the preferred method of government. In a vicious circle of Oriental fragility and violence, this tendency toward abuse had as its direct consequence ineffectiveness and disarray, requiring evermore coercion, 'against the interests of society and the economy.'<sup>493</sup>

Despite the parallels, however, the *Directorio* is a vastly different exercise.

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<sup>493</sup> Rubiés, "Oriental Despotism and European Orientalism: Botero to Montesquieu," 126.

While the tailored advice it issues to the Mughal emperor has all the trappings of a case against an Oriental despot, its critique remains oblique. It never explicitly condemns any aspect of Mughal kingship. What is more, its drawing on cautionary tales from the subcontinent to Portugal suggests an underlying supposition of a universal natural law, reflective of a belief, shared with the *akhlāq* tradition, in both the existence of certain general norms of kingship, as well as the importance of their adaptation to particular environments. Guided by the need to distinguish the Jesuit divine and historian as the source of hitherto unknown wisdom, the *Directorio*'s interaction with Mughal ideals of kingship and the body of advice literature already in existence in Mughal India is as silent as it is palpable.

By the time Xavier delivered the *Directorio* into the hands of the Mughal emperor, it had become apparent not only that the mission as a whole had little prospect for success, but that whatever success was won by religious literary activity, had done nothing to advance the appreciation of the Christian faith. As the Mughal accounts of the debates at court show, the religious literature that formed the basis for Xavier' translations was viewed with great suspicion, its authenticity questioned and rejected, its genre recategorized as history. According to Abdus Sattar, the Gospel was not merely misinterpreted, but was quite clearly a corrupted text. In his letters, Xavier's rather facile response to the Mughals' skepticism – at the center of which lay the question of authenticity – was down to the Muslims' lack of any amenability to logical reasoning. This, of course, was wishful thinking, as the debates recorded in the *Majālis-i Jahāngīrī* show the eminently logical nature of the objections used to dismantle the claims of the *Padres*.<sup>494</sup>

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<sup>494</sup> Lefèvre, "Le Livre En Acte à La Cour Moghole : Le Cas Des Littératures Historique et Religieuse d'après Le Majālis-i Jahāngīrī (1608-1611)," 313.



The *Directorio* pursues Mughal appreciation for the Jesuits as scholars and possessors of new knowledge outside the realm of religion, in the face of an apparently futile missionary effort. As such, the work is a reflection of the Jesuits' own political fortunes at court, the debates in which they more or less actively participated, and their witnessing of other courtiers' thriving in disputes surrounding political questions and skillfully using these to advance their position at court. The eclecticism of such debates is expressed in the striking intertextuality of the nightly assemblies, with the use of a wide variety of contemporary texts in these discussions for comparison and contrast. Corinne Lefèvre's parallel reading of the *Jahāngirnāmā* and the record of the assemblies, the *Majālis-i Jahāngīrī*, shows the substantial overlap in the accounts and topics of these two parallel discourses. But a wide range of other texts too, across geographical provenances, periods and genres, like the epic *Shāhnāma*, history books like the *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, religious works like the *Suhuf-i Ibrāhīm*, the Tora or the Gospels, Shiite religious works, Sufi works by the Iranian philosopher of 'illuminated kingship' Suhrawardī, as well as Hanafi legal works, formed subjects of discussion or were referred to in the arguments advanced by the participants on subjects including the rules that apply to the proper conduct of kingship.<sup>495</sup> Xavier's religious translations also came up, but far from being hailed as containing religious revelations, they were relegated to the disappointing if politically useful category of history, or morality tales by way of historical exempla.

Compared to the predicament of Matteo Ricci, Xavier's famous contemporary in China, the Mughal missions were by nature oppositional. Ricci was concerned with

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<sup>495</sup> Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, *Majālis-i Jahāngīrī: Report of Night Assemblies at the Court of Nur Al-Din Jahangir, From 24 Rajab 1017 to 19 Ramadan 1020 A.H. / 24 October 1608 to 15 November 1611 A.D.*; for a list of the works discussed in these debates see Lefèvre, "Le Livre En Acte à La Cour Moghole: Le Cas Des Littératures Historique et Religieuse d'après Le Majālis-i Jahāngīrī (1608-1611)," 308.

complementarity, of finding ways to rearticulate Christianity using Confucian vocabulary, whereas Xavier's was mired from the beginning in the dialectic of opposites and alternatives in which Islam and Christianity appeared to be trapped. Hence while Ricci could completely assume the role of the scholar-official, including the robes donned by the Chinese literati, Xavier's assimilation remained far more ambiguous as a courtier who was not offering a reinterpretation of existing thought, but a patent religious alternative. The *Directorio*, however, complicates this understanding of the Mughal-Jesuit interaction by abandoning the established missionary paradigm, and going somewhat off-grid.

However, the apparent ease with which Xavier's text navigates the topics, genres, and traditional lore, while delivering a stinging critique of Jahangir's rule, is not simply the result of a mutual interest in each other's cultures and knowledge systems set against an enduring vision of Oriental despotism. It was not, in other words, merely a question of Xavier's program and the particular micro-climate of the Mughal court. The very existence of the mirror-for-princes genre, both in Europe and in India, was predicated on a series of translations, retranslations, circulations, borrowings and oral transmissions throughout the Eurasian, and to some extent African worlds, of a number of books of political advice, which only connecting so-called European and Muslim traditions, but contested the very notion of such a distinction, or the possibility of separating one from the other. To better understand the extraordinarily wide-ranging fabric that made it possible for a Muslim ruler of the Mughal empire to commission from his Jesuit courtier a set of codified, universal norms of kingship, we will have to, in the next chapter, assemble the loose historical threads connecting the cultural expanse between the Iberian Peninsula and South Asia, which formed the imagined geography of the *Directorio* and its chameleonic protagonists.





## 7. From India to Spain, and Back Again: A Connected History of Advice Literature

The ability of a mirror-for-princes from the pen of a Navarrese Jesuit to resonate with the genre of political advice on Muslim kingship in India, is not simply the consequence of the coming together, in a kind of historic cross-cultural encounter, of visionary men of tolerance. It has been the state of the field to portray the Jesuit accommodationists from Ricci to Nobili as bridges, defying the irreducible difference between civilizations clashing, the incommensurability of disparate worlds colliding. However, none of their translational achievements (I use translational not just in the linguistic, but cultural, and religious sense) would have been possible if it were not for existence of shared conceptual, and ideational pools. This goes beyond the notion of a shared morphology, because it concerns parallels that are not merely formal but narrative: harbours of meaning in which the ships of translation could dock. The continuum which existed between shared vocabulary, and strange or foreign ideas, was mirrored by an actual continuum of local micro-métissages from the Pacific to the Mediterranean, and beyond. After all, the most geographically distant exponents of this continuum were separated by nothing more than a chain – broken at times, but a reconstituting itself in new ways – of intermediary neighbors, transmitters and translators. When Ricci proffered his book on friendship to his Chinese patron, the maxims may have carried the heading of Western knowledge, but the subject (in this case friendship or fellowship) had been discussed among the Ming learned literati for decades, making it possible for Ricci's work to be assimilated into an existing discourse. His book found correspondence with existing works such as Zhang Jusheng's *the Emperor's Mirror*

(*Dijian Tusho*, completed in 1573), an illustrated manual on kingship on rulership for the newly minted Wanli emperor of Ming China.

In spite of the fact that the popularization of the mirror-for-princes genre in the sixteenth century in Europe, especially in the aftermath of Machiavelli's *Prince* which unleashed an intense, and hugely consequential debate of principles of governance across the continent, and the subsequent tendency to understand the moral principles (and examples) of those debates as essentially European inventions to be exported the world over for the betterment of humanity, the mirror-of-princes genre is in fact the site of a deep connection between the supposedly dissociated traditions of Europe, and the Indian subcontinent as the 'Ultimate Other' and ostensible cradle of Oriental Despotism. One source of this connection is the ancient Sanskrit *Panchatantra*, composed between 100 and 500, and incorporating many order fables. One of Europe's most influential mirrors-for-princes, John of Capua's *Directorium Vitae Humanae* (c. 1270), and the exceedingly popular fifteenth century Persian-language *Anwar-i Suhayli* by Husain ibn Ali al-Waiz Kashifi and its abridged edition by Akbar's chief ideologue Abu'l Fazl, the *Tyari Danish* (1587-8), are both based on Hebrew and Persian translations of the same the eighth-century Arabic translation of the *Panchatantra*, Abdallah ibn al-Maqaffa's *Kalila wa Dimnah*, itself based on a Pahlavi translation of a Sanskrit original.<sup>496</sup>

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<sup>496</sup> For an example of a connected history of literary translation and religious conversion that follows the thread of an individual work across cultures, see Ronit Ricci, *Islam Translated: Literature, Conversion, and the Arabic Cosmopolis of South and Southeast Asia* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

## The Mughal *Anwar-i Suhayli* and the Spanish *Exemplario contra los engaños y peligros de mundo*

In Spain, the *Kalīla wa Dimnah* circulated not only in Arabic, but also as a translation of De Capua's Latin version, the *Directorium*, under the title *Exemplario contra los engaños y peligros de mundo*. The latter was published repeatedly in the decades preceding Jerome Xavier's education in Alcalá de Henares and Toledo, with at least fifteen editions published between 1493 and 1547 in Zaragoza, Burgos and Seville.<sup>497</sup> A few decades after Xavier's *Directorio*, Vicente Bratuti, Philip IV's Ragusan interpreter of Turkish, translated an Ottoman translation of al-Maqaffa's Arabic *Kalīla wa Dimnah* into Spanish as *Espejo politico y moral para príncipes y ministros y todo genero de personas*.<sup>498</sup> An old-Spanish translation directly from the Arabic *Kalīla wa-Dimna* under the name *Calyla e Dimna* had already been produced at the court of Alfonso X in Toledo in 1261 as part of the king's famous vernacular translation project. Xavier refers to this project in the *Directorio*.

A large library was built and housed a variety of books. Scholars and wise men acquired many books and in particular a book comprising beautiful decorations the size of sixty *gaz*. The decoration of each sheet had cost one hundred and fifty rupees. The library comprised mainly printed religious books in the five languages: Hebrew, Syriac, Chaldean, Greek, and Latin. More than three lakh [300.000] rupees were spent on these. Inside the church there were many solitary places and rooms, especially for worshippers and ascetics who had abandoned worldly desires. Around one hundred fathers used to live there. The building constructed for these fathers was so elegant, beautiful and strong, as if it had been intended for a king. The king also constructed mausoleums for himself and his offspring and on these more than four hundred lakh rupees, or four crore [40.000.000] were

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<sup>497</sup> In Zaragoza by Pablo Huros in 1493 and 1494, and Jorge Coci in 1509, 1515, 1521 and 1531, as well as Bartolomé de Nájera in 1547; in Burgos by Fadrique de Basilea in 1498 and 1499; and in Sevilla by Juan Cromberger in 1534, 1537 and 1541, and Jácome Cromberger in 1545 and 1546. Alexander S. Wilkinson, ed., *Libros Ibéricos: Libros Publicados En Español o Portugués o En La Península Iberica Antes de 1601* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010), 91.

<sup>498</sup> Vicente Bratuti Raguseo, *Espejo Politico, y Moral, Para Principes, y Ministros, y Todo Genero de Personas* (Madrid: Domingo Garcia y Morràs, 1654).

spent.<sup>499</sup>

Xavier's description of the kingly ideal, here embodied by Alfonso X, of patronising the work of scholar translators from near and far, and working in different languages, appeals to the policies of Akbar and Jahangir themselves, with the production of beautifully decorated translations of the Sanskrit *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana*, or indeed the *Panchatantra*. The various European recensions of the *Panchatantra*'s Arabic translation, the *Kalīla wa Dimna*, had by the end of the seventeenth century been rendered into Italian, German, Danish, Dutch, Yiddish, French, English, Czech, Old Slavonic as well as Spanish. These works, with roots in Indian lore, inspired a slew of key books in the European canon, from *Conde Lucanor* and *Don Quixote*, to the *Canterbury Tales*, *Decameron* and La Fontaine's *Fables*.

In the Muslims world, its circulation was equally impressive, with manuscripts 'made in more places and periods than any other literary text ever produced in the Muslim world ... from India and Central Asia, in the East, to Syria and Egypt in the West.'<sup>500</sup> The corpus of about ninety Persian manuscripts produced from the thirteenth century onward, like their Spanish analogues, trace their origin to Ibn al-Muqaffa's Arabic translation of a Pahlavi version. Crucial for our purpose are Husain Wa'iz al-Kashifi's *Anwar-i Suhayli*, an ornate Persian text produced for the Sultan Husayn Baykara of Herat, and subject to repeated editions at the Mughal court, including a copy in 1570. Further copies of the *Anwar-i Suhayli* was produced in the imperial workshop immediately after Xavier's arrival at the Mughal court in 1596-7, and under Jahangir between 1605 and 1611. Similarly, copies of the *Iyar-I Danish*, Abu'l Fazl's

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<sup>499</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fol. 24v.

<sup>500</sup> Ernst J. Grube, "Introduction," in *A Mirror for Princes from India, Illustrated Versions of the Kalilah Wa Dimnah, Anwar-i Suhayli, Iyar-i Danish, and Humayun Nameh*, ed. Ernst J. Grube (Bombay: Marg, 1991), 2.



reworking of the *Anwari-i Suhayli* into an abbreviated, more accessible style, were already being produced before 1600. But a copy was also produced in 1609, the very year Xavier completed his *Directorio*. What is more, The *Mau'izah-i Jahāngīrī*, one of the most important contemporary mirrors for princes produced for Jahangir (1612-13), contains many verbatim passages from Abu'l-Ma'ali Nasrallah Persian version of the *Kalīla wa Dimna* or Kashifi's *Anwar-i Suhayli*.<sup>501</sup>

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<sup>501</sup> Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam: India 1200-1800*, 75.



*Figure 5: Single leaf from Abu'l Fazl's 'Iyar-i Danish (late 16<sup>th</sup> century) depicting The Tale of the Man in the Well. The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (W.692)*

These works lay out a powerful model that would become a mainstay in mirrors-for-princes. It concerns that of a scholar and sage (Burzoy), well-regarded and patronized by the king (Khosrow Anushirwan), who travels to the distant land of India to find books on the art of statecraft. In these books, there are mountains which in truth are

sages and scholars, shrubs which are seeds of God's wisdom, and medicines which are books of counsel and learning, and the dead to be brought to life who are in effect the ignorant who need enlightenment. This secret knowledge is a treasure to be brought by sages like Burzoy from the distant land of India, and its books of wisdom rendered into Persian. The Arabic frame-story to the original, itself a (lost) Pahlavi translation of an (equally lost) Sanskrit original, is very confusing, as it in turn contains multiple frames. The first is that of a Chinese king in conversation with his counsellor. The subject of that conversation forms the second frame and concerns an Indian king's eastward search for the source of the stories, the Indian sage Bidpai. Burzoy is sent to India to recover these stories.

Thus, when Xavier sets about the task of composing the *Directorio* for Jahangir, he forms part of a longstanding tradition that was as alive in Mughal India as it was in his native Spain. A tradition, which was, in the true sense of the word, shared. Thus Xavier, in the guise of a scholar and sage, takes on the cloak of a Navarrese Burzoy, esteemed and patronized by Jahangir, by issuing a book that reports on the sages and scholars of the past, conveying kernels of wisdom plucked from the hand of God himself, all for the enlightenment of an audience hitherto ignorant of these stories. Like Burzoy, he brings the secret knowledge of statecraft from distant lands, but instead of carrying them forth from India, he brings them to her. Both scholars translate their books of wisdom into Persian for their king's benefit; one from the 'language of India,' the other from the language of Europe (Latin).

The Burzoy model also has some overlap with the *rihla* ('journey') genre, exemplified by Ibn Battuta's travel through the Islamic world (*dar al-Islam*) shaped as a journey in search of religious knowledge. The Persian chronicler Abd al-Razzaq Samarqandi, for instance, travels to Vijayanagara as Shahrukh Mirza's ambassador from his Timurid capital in Herat to Calicut in the 1440s. He there collects knowledge

on the ideal government and administration of justice, which he presents to his sovereign, as a model for conduct.<sup>502</sup> Notably, it is the infidel Hindus of Vijayanagara who become teachers of Justice for the Muslims of Herat. As in Burzoy's case, what we see is the transfer of knowledge of statecraft from an idealized foreign court to a problematized court of the patron.<sup>503</sup> But Abd al-Razzaq goes further, by making the link to Burzoy explicit.

In all of Hindustan there was no ray (raja) more absolute than he. The kings of those areas are called ray. In his presence the Brahmins have great status. The stories of the book *Kalīla and Dimna*, which is the most eloquently expressed book that has come into the Persian language, and which narrates of a ray and a Brahmin, are indeed a product of the wisdom of that kingdom's learned men.<sup>504</sup>

## Alejandro and Iskander

In the end, however, the *Directorio* draws most copiously on the strength of another body of stories to ensure its currency in Mughal political language: the *Alexander Romance*.<sup>505</sup> For roughly the two millennia preceding the composition of the *Directorio* readers between the subcontinent and the Mediterranean shared a pool of complex networks of interrelated texts in a vast array of languages which has been referred to as the Ancient Novel. Daniel Selden has characterized the place of the

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<sup>502</sup> Joan-Pau Rubiés, "Late Medieval Ambassadors and the Practice of Cross-Cultural Encounters, 1250-1450," 2009, 68.

<sup>503</sup> Rubiés, 71.

<sup>504</sup> Rubiés, 71.

<sup>505</sup> Subrahmanyam had long ago called for a closer look at Alexander as a millenarian keystone of Eurasian connected history, but focused on his West, South, and South-east Asian perspectives, while leaving out their European connections. See Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories: Notes TOwards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia," 755; see also Subrahmanyam, "Turning the Stones Over: Sixteenth-Century Millenarianism from the Tagus to the Ganges," 3; For the South-east Asian angle, which unfortunately remains unexplored in my analysis, see Denys Lombard, "La Conquête Du Monde Par Alexandre: Un Mythe Aux Dimensions Eurasiatiques," in *Asia Maritima: Images et Réalité, 1200-1800*, ed. Denys Lombard and Roderich Ptak (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1994); and Su Fang Ng, "Global Renaissance: Alexander the Great and Early Modern Classicism from the British Isles to the Malay Archipelago," *Comparative Literature* 58, no. 4 (September 1, 2006): 293-312; Paul Wormser is currently conducting research into the sources of the Malay version of the Alexander Romance, the Hikayat Iskandar Zulkarnain.

Alexander Romance in these networks.

Alongside the *Life of Ahiqar*, the most prominent of these works included *The Confessions* and *Prayer of Aseneth*, *Kalila wa-Dimnah*, the *Acts of Pétros*, *Baarlaam and Joasaph*, the *Seven Wise Masters*, *Alflayla wa-layla*, *Vis o Ramin*, the *Life of Aisopos*, *Leyli o Majnun*. If we look, however, for the most popular and widespread work of this period – the ‘supreme fiction’, as it were, of the Levantine-Mediterranean tributary state and its attendant ideology of metaphysics – it does not turn out to be the Bible, or the Aeneid, or the Qur’an, nor indeed any of the expected texts that continue to circulate today: in fact, it is the *Alexander Romance*, which Ken Dowden accurately singles out as ‘antiquity’s most successful novel.’<sup>506</sup>

From the thirteenth century onwards, we see that Spanish romance novels begin to show a clear influence of Arabo-Islamic culture.<sup>507</sup> It is marked by the genre of doctrinal and moral advice, and examples of proper conduct, typical of *adab*. One of its characteristics was its function as an encyclopaedic collection of knowledge for the adornment of the spirit; an objective Xavier himself states clearly in passages of the *Directorio* quoted above. Spirit here is not necessarily meant in the religious sense, and it is an ambiguity skilfully exploited by Jesuits who acted as confessors to kings, in ways that resembled worldly counsellors to kings.

At Spanish courts, these books accelerated a secular curriculum. Indeed, the first literary writings in these courts, often based on Oriental examples, constituted the first European philosophical works in the mirror-for-princes genre – which in the Spanish case is referred to as the *Espejo* genre – in any vernacular language. In effect, the entire *Espejo* genre as Xavier would have come to know it in mid-sixteenth century Spain draws its life-blood from Muslim roots. *Adab* normatively codified certain aspects of culture, including what it meant to be an ideal Muslim king, whose moral qualities were now transposed beyond Islam.

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<sup>506</sup> Daniel L. Selden, “Mapping the Alexander Romance,” in *The Alexander Romance in Persia and the East* (Groningen: Barkhuis Publishing & Groningen University Library, 2012), 33–35.

<sup>507</sup> Rafael Ramón Guerrero, “El Pseudo-Aristóteles Árabe y La Literatura Didáctico-Moral Hispana: Del Sirr Al-Asrar a La Poridad de Las Poridades,” in *Pensamiento Medieval Hispano: Homenaje a Horacio Santiago-Otero*, ed. Jose María Soto Rábanos, vol. 2 (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, CSIC, 1998), 1041.

One excellent example of this Christian-Arab symbiosis of genre is the compilation of mirrors known as *Livre de Saviesa*.<sup>508</sup> However, the mirror with by far the most impressive diffusion was the *Poridat de las poridades*,<sup>509</sup> which first appeared in Spanish in the middle of the thirteenth century, at the end of the reign of Fernando III or the beginning of Alfonso X. The *Poridat de las poridades* was a translation of Aristotle's *Secretum Secretorum*, and, as such held a major role for Alexander. Along with St. Augustine's *City of God*, the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secretum Secretorum*, taking the form of a letter from Aristotle to Alexander while he was engaged in conquering Persia, is the major source of influence on medieval western mirrors. The Latin *Secretum* is itself a translation of the *Kitab Sirr al-asrar*, supposedly found in a remote temple by a ninth to early tenth century Christian translator at the service of Muhammad al-Nasir (the fourth Almohad caliph from 1199-1213). We may recall that Marcos Dobelio, the Kurdish-Syrian librarian at the Escorial, had relied on the *Kitab Sirr al-asrar* in his treatise on the falsity of the Lead Books.

In another instance of framing political advice as sourcing ideas from the subcontinent, and perhaps influenced by the reverberations of the *Panchatantra* itself, Aristotle explains that he has learned the secrets of his trade from India and the rules of governance and the power of counsel from the Persians.<sup>510</sup> In addition to the Latin and Arabic recensions, the Spain of Jerome Xavier's time could rely on Spanish translations such as the fourteenth century *Secreto de los Secretos* by the Navarrese-Aragonese Juan Fernández de Heredia. Numerous edition of the *Secretum* had been published during the first half of the sixteenth century, including *Secreta Secretorum* by Tripolitanus Philippus in Salamanca in 1495, followed by *Utilissimus liber*

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<sup>508</sup> J.M. Sola-Solé, *El Llibre de Doctrina Del Rei Jaume d'Aragó* (Barcelona: Hispam, 1977).

<sup>509</sup> Pseudo-Aristotle, *Poridat de Las Poridades*.

<sup>510</sup> Giles of Rome, *Giles of Rome's On Ecclesiastical Power: A Medieval Theory of World Government*, ed. R.W. Dyson (Columbia University Press, 2004), 247–67.

*Aristotelis de secretis secretorum* in Burgos by Adrés de Burgos in 1505 and again in 1526, but also *De mundo seu de cosmographia libers unus ad Alexandrum* in Alcalá de Henares in 1538.<sup>511</sup>

The Arabo-Islamic Alexander of Pseudo-Callisthenes, the earliest version of the *Alexander Romance*, in the so-called *Hadith Dhi'l-Qarnayn* – also known in its Spanish recension as *Leyenda de Alejandro*<sup>512</sup> – and several versions of the *Qissat Dhi'l-Qarnayn* by Abu 'Abd al-Malik (al-Malshuni), in Arabic and al-Jamiado. All of these texts only partially represent Pseudo-Callisthenes.<sup>513</sup> In these books, Alexander had a standing as a sage and philosopher, as is made clear in another example of a Spanish version, the thirteenth century *Libro de Alexandre*: 'King Alexander, treasure of heroism, arc of wisdom, exemplar of nobility ... as the king was wise and literate, he was very ingenious, a well-adorned master, he was a good philosopher, a consummate teacher, he was well-adorned with all virtues.'<sup>514</sup>

The Islamic tradition has its own way of tying Alexander into the fabric of its legends, histories and religion. Besides Aristotle, Plato and Hippocrates, he is associated with Muslim holy men like Loqman, Khizr and Elias; and, while Xavier repurposes him for a Jesuit-missionary role, his missions had previously included the conversion of all peoples to Islam; it is prophesied that he will one day be called *Dhi'l-Qarnayn* (the two-horned, piercing the East with one horn, the West with the other); he visits the tomb of Adam, and Mecca (where he built the wall of the *Ka'ba*) and

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<sup>511</sup> Wilkinson, *Libros Ibéricos: Libros Publicados En Español o Portugués o En La Península Iberica Antes de 1601*, 45–46.

<sup>512</sup> Emilio García Gómez, *Un texto árabe occidental de la leyenda de Alejandro: según el manuscrito Ár. 27 de la biblioteca de la junta para ampliación de estudios* (Madrid: Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan, 1929).

<sup>513</sup> Faustina C.W. Doufekar-Aerts, "King Midas' Ears on Alexander's Head: In Search of the Afro-Asiatic Alexander Cycle," in *The Alexander Romance in Persia and the East*, ed. Richard Stoneman, Richard, Kyle Erickson, and Ian Netton, *Ancient Narrative, Supplementum 15* (Groningen: Barkhuis Publishing & Groningen University Library, 2012), 65.

<sup>514</sup> Cañas, *Libro de Alexandre*, vv. 1557, 2160.



Jerusalem and hears a prophecy of the life of Mohammed; has a conversation with the *simorgh* (the benevolent Iranian flying dragon); and is compared with Solomon.<sup>515</sup>



Figure 6: Illustration from 'La geste ou histoire du noble roy Alixandre, roy de Macedonne [translated from a] livre rimer, ... intitulé 'Istore Alixandre. (1401-1500). Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des manuscrits (Français 9342)

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<sup>515</sup> Stoneman, Richard, "Persian Aspects of the Romance Tradition," in *The Alexander Romance in Persia and the East*, ed. Stoneman, Richard, Kyle Erickson, and Ian Netton, Ancient Narrative, Supplementum 15 (Groningen: Barkhuis Publishing & Groningen University Library, 2012), 15.





*Figure 7: Alexander is Lowered into the Sea, a folio from a Khamsa (Quintet) of Amir Khosrow Dehlavi. Attributed to Mukunda. This copy was made for Emperor Akbar in 1597-98. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (Islamic Art, 14,473)*

The stories about him which were often included in courtly books, mirrors for princes, were of interest to both powerful and minor sovereigns for the mixture of political advice and cosmographical information that could inspire or even support their ambitions of expansion. Nizami explains this very clearly in his dedication to the Seljuk prince of Mosul, 'Izz al-din Mas'ud ibn Arslan, at the end of the *Eqbalname*, 'Book of

Fortune', the second volume of his *Eskandar-nameh*:

In that harmonious symposium nothing else than this book has its place:  
For gazing through it at the world, and drawing the maps of mountains and seas,  
And now riding up to Teraz, now raiding Ethiopia's land.  
This the world offered to the one who longs for world dominion, sitting still, the  
rule of its own horizons.  
For him this blandishing book has opened the door of the seven countries, as a sign  
of victory.  
And with this book the king's assembly has become joyfull, full of visions from the  
world's circle.  
Bless you, o heir of Key Khosrow's symposiums, your arm is the strength of the  
state,  
Look into this world-showing cup and find what you ask from the world's God.<sup>516</sup>

Alexander appears in over forty anecdotes in the *Directorio*.<sup>517</sup> In some ways he is the ideal candidate for Xavier's project which requires religious ambiguity while exploiting the crucial commonality of Islam and Christianity: monotheism. In his quest for consummate knowledge, Alexander exchanges letters across the Ganges with the naked Brahmans, who admonish him to abandon his polytheistic ways, and 'serve the one God, who alone reigns in heaven.' Not only in Christian, Judaic, and Islamic versions of the text does Alexander emerge a monotheist, but also in recensions that are basically pagan too.<sup>518</sup>

## The Mughal Alexander

Alexander was the protagonists of many of the books most popular at the Mughal court. Even where Alexander does not play an explicit part, his stories re-emerge in new and

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<sup>516</sup> Mario Casari, "The King Explorer: A Cosmographic Approach to the Persian Alexander," in *The Alexander Romance in Persia and the East*, ed. Richard Stoneman, Richard, Kyle Erickson, and Ian Netton, Ancient Narrative, Supplementum 15 (Groningen: Barkhuis Publishing & Groningen University Library, 2012), 176–77. 18<sup>th</sup> century map drawn in India with Persian and Devanagiri writing representing Alexander's legendary exploits, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Museum für Islamische Kunst.

<sup>517</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fols. 4r, 12r, 14r-14v, 15v, 53r-53v, 73r, 76v, 78r-78v, 80v-81v, 88v, 90v, 93v-94r, 95v-96r, 97r-97v, 99r-99v, 101r, 104r, 105r, 131r, 132v, 160v, 164r, 185r, 200v-202r, 205r, 208v-209r, 210r, 215v, 218v-219r, 224v, 230r-230v, 240v, 245v-246r.

<sup>518</sup> Selden, "Mapping the Alexander Romance," 39.

ever different guises, such as the talking trees in *Amir Hamza* or *Vis o Ramin*. The wonderstone that loses power when covered in dust is found in the Qur'an, but also in Sa'di's *Gulistān* and *Būstān* and Tarsusi's *Darab-nameh*.<sup>519</sup> Firdausi's *Shāhnāma*, Nizami's *Eskandar-nameh* (*Sharafnameh* and *Eqbalname*), Amir Khosrow Dehlavi's *A'ina-ye Eskandari* which forms part of his *Khamsa*, Jami's *Haft Orang*, and *Eskandar-nameh* by Nizami-e Ganjavi, all these are books which were read out aloud to the Mughal emperor, a spectacle Xavier may well have observed on more than one occasion. Indeed, we know that Xavier too had intended for the *Directorio* to be read out to the Emperor in this way, 'so that by listening to them [Jahangir could] see, and they can illuminate [his] far-seeing eyes and comfort [his] sapient mind.'<sup>520</sup>

The 'King and the Hermit' theme in Mughal painting, which was based on the model of Alexander visiting the sage Plato in his cave, painted by the great master Behzad for the Timurid ruler Husayn Mirza Baykara in Heart in 1494, and intended for an *Eskandarnama* by Nizami, reached new levels of popularity under Jahangir. It served as a blueprint for Govardhan's famous painting of Jahangir visiting the yogi Jadrup.<sup>521</sup> In the original painting, the figure of Alexander resembles a portrait of the Sultan Baykara, but under Jahangir, the emperor has subsumed the figure of Alexander entirely.<sup>522</sup> The idea of the perfect emperor as having to rely not only on philosophers, but ascetic sages – a role Xavier himself attempts to assume as a divine proffering wisdom on kingship – had been laid out in Nizami's *Eskandarnama*.

Alexander, as the founder of the ancestral Mughal city of Samarkand, was

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<sup>519</sup> Stoneman, Richard, "Persian Aspects of the Romance Tradition," 4.

<sup>520</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fols. 4r-5r.

<sup>521</sup> Dipanwita Donde, "The Mughal Sikander: Influence of the Romance of Alexander on Mughal Manuscript Painting" (International Conference on Greek Studies: An Asian Perspective, Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2014).

<sup>522</sup> Eleanor Sims, Boris Il'ich Marshak, and Ernst J. Grube, *Peerless Images: Persian Painting and Its Sources* (Yale University Press, 2002), 55.

precedential also in his conquest of India, though as far as the Mughals were concerned, he did so as a Persian emperor, not a Greek king. But it was also the continuity of Indo-Islamic rule that led successive Muslim kings, such as Ala' al-Din Khalji, to call themselves 'the Second Alexander,' both in coinage and in the Friday sermons in the congregational mosque.<sup>523</sup>

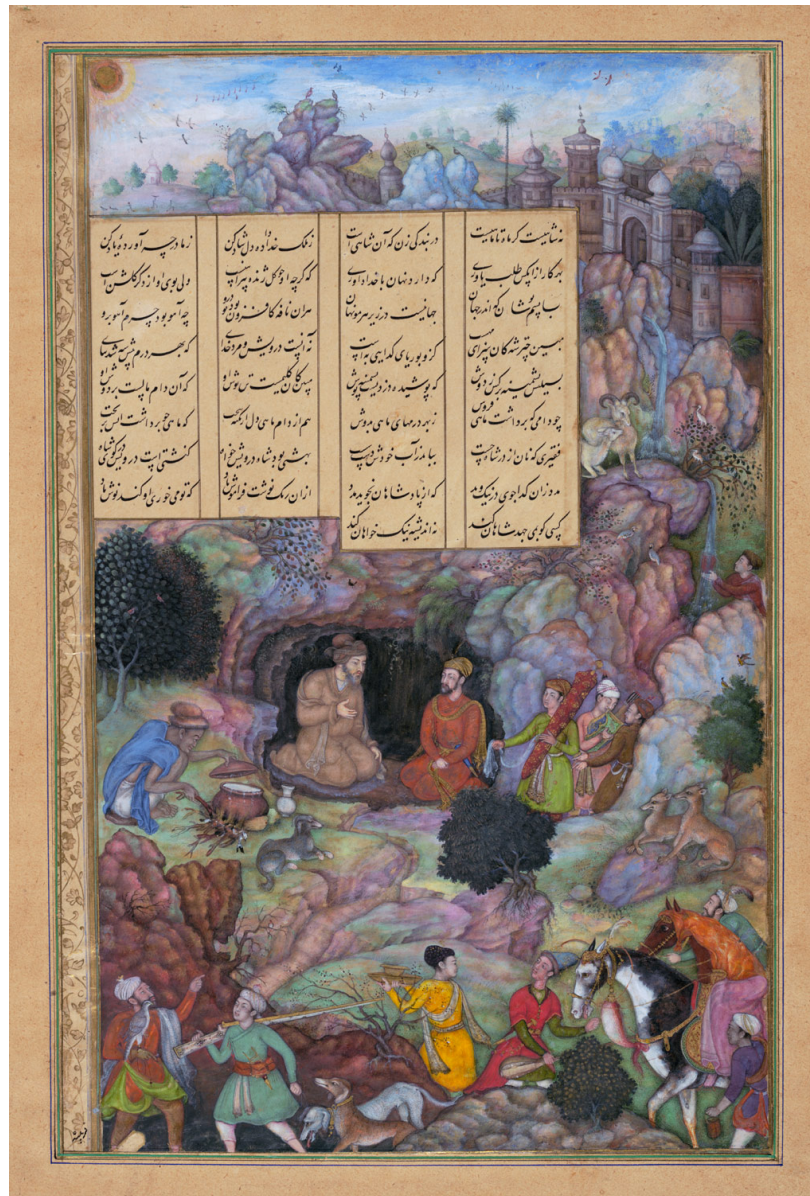


Figure 8: Alexander Visits the Sage Plato in his Mountain Cave, a folio from a Khamsa (Quintet) of Amir Khosrow Dehlavi prepared for Emperor Akbar in 1597–98. Attributed to Basawan. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (13.228.30)

<sup>523</sup> Ernst, *Eternal Garden: Mysticism, History and Politics at a South Asian Sufi Center*, 44.





*Figure 9: Jahangir visiting de ascetic Jadrup by Govardhan (ca. 1616-1620). Musee Guimet, Paris*

Moreover, Alexander, like Jahangir, was the emperor of science and knowledge par excellence. As Owen Cornwall has noted, ‘the cosmopolitanism of the emperor and the philosopher were intimately connected, for the universal knowledge of the philosophers appeared to explain and therefore justify his universal rule.’ In the Persian epics popular at the Mughal court, Alexander is portrayed as able to ‘negotiate

cultural difference within his empire through science and technology.<sup>524</sup> This of course extended to the preeminent science of the age, astronomy, with the Delhi Sultan Feroz Shah (1351-1388) placing Alexander's supposed invention, the astrolabe, on a pillar in the middle of Firozabad.

At the time of the *Directorio*'s composition, Jahangir was engaged in the biggest architectural project of his reign, a monument that to this day remains the biggest sepulchral complex in South Asia. The mausoleum built for his father Akbar was the site of a political statement expressed through extraordinary artistic innovation, elevated to the monumental scale of a dynastic imperial tomb. Adorning the main gate of the mausoleum, located at Sikandra near Agra, Jahangir had the following inscription engraved: Jahangir has the 'grandeur of Darius, the Triumphs of Alexander ... and the splendour of Sulaimān,' adding that 'the fame of his dispensation of Justice has reached the highest heavens.'<sup>525</sup> Furthermore, as Azfar Moin has shown, the title adopted by Akbar, Jahangir and their successor Shah Jahan in commemoration of their ancestor Timur, *Sahib-Qiran* ('Lord of Auspicious [planetary] Conjunction') was astrologically associated with the 'world conqueror Alexander, the Two-Horned.'<sup>526</sup> Finally, Cornwall has now shown their use of this epithet was derived from Nizami's *Khamsa*.

In the *Shāhnāma* by Firdausi, after visiting the Ka'ba, Alexander led his troops to Egypt. Queen Qeydāfeh (Candace) sent a spy to make a portrait of him. Alexander came to Qeydāfeh's court disguised as his ambassador, but the queen recognised him

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<sup>524</sup> Owen Cornwall, "Alexander and the Persian Cosmopolis, 1000-1500" (Columbia University, n.d.), 102-3.

<sup>525</sup> E.W. Smith, *Akbar's Tomb, Sikandarah Near Agra, Described and Illustrated*, ASINIS 35 (Allahabad: Superintended Government Press, United Provinces, 1909), 33-34; For an interpretation of the tomb's iconographic program see Zver, "King, Sufi and Messiah: The Tomb of Mughal Emperor Akbar (r.1556-1605)."

<sup>526</sup> Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign*; Cornwall, "Alexander and the Persian Cosmopolis, 1000-1500," See also Cornwall 92-93.

and he had to admit his true identity. In the *Majālis-i Jahāngīrī*, Abdus Sattar reports a discussion of a similar anecdote regarding Alexander the Great entering the enemy encampment. In that anecdote, Alexander had entered Darius' encampment in disguise and, like with Qeydafeh, had barely made it out alive. Jahangir commented that this was reckless, a criticism which had previously been levelled at Alexander for this stunt by the Ghaznavid historian Bayhaqī, whose work is also discussed in these evening sessions at Jahangir's court.<sup>527</sup> Xavier, however, cast the hero in a different light in his book.

The great Alexander had shown favour to queen Candace from a place towards Habesha [Abyssinia]. Alexander's men had saved the queen's son from the hands of a torturer. Later on, Alexander wanted to pay a visit to this queen. He changed into simple clothing and pretended to be one of his nobles, Antigonus, and that he had come to negotiate peace on behalf of his master. Since the queen had seen Alexander's face before, she eventually recognized him and said, 'you are not Antigonus, but Alexander!' He denied it, but when the queen brought out a portrait of him, he could no longer deny it and feared he might be killed. But the queen reassured him, 'you did right by my son, so I will always be indebted to you.' She offered him gifts, signed the treaty, and bid him farewell. In short, showing respect to kings and obliging them, does not go to waste. Services rendered to kings, whose conduct and service is appropriate to their position, is bound to bear fruits.<sup>528</sup>

Xavier, true to his promise of new material, provides a different example of the masquerading Alexander. Here Alexander is in the position of providing a service to another monarch, and the lesson is the usefulness of treating kings in accordance with their position. Those who are rulers themselves, are not exempted from this moral. Could this be a veiled reference of the importance of establishing proper relations with Philip III and Pope Paul V to whom Jahangir considered sending a mission headed by Naqib Khan? But the example has the added benefit of another layer, which is the portrait of Alexander, revealing his true identity.

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<sup>527</sup> Lefèvre, "Le Livre En Acte à La Cour Moghole : Le Cas Des Littératures Historique et Religieuse d'après Le *Majālis-i Jahāngīrī* (1608-1611)," 310; see also Julie Scott Meisami, *Persian Historiography to the End of the Twelfth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 83–84.

<sup>528</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fol. 40r.

## The Image and the Mirror

Pictures, and more specifically the portrait, were imbued with rich symbolism in Mughal political language. ‘What we call form leads us to recognise a body,’ Abu’l Fazl had written of pictures, and ‘the body itself leads us to what we call a notion, an idea.’<sup>529</sup> Images, including portraits of the self, or mirror-images, conveyed a meaning, typically a hidden one. In Persian culture the author Khvandamir, read at the Mughal court, had written about God as the *naqqash-i azal* (‘the immortal painter’) and his creation as ‘an album with heaven as its leaves.’<sup>530</sup> Xavier’s discourse, quoted in the previous chapter, on internal moral refinement as the only thing worthy of external revelation, was echoed in descriptions of Akbar himself in the Akbarnama as the ‘lord of the World, depicter of the external, revealer of the internal.’ The mirror-for-princes, then, was the truth-revealing picture above all others. A life-sized portrait of Jahangir, from 1617 has an inscription that reads: ‘When he sees his lustrous likeness, it is as if the excellent king is looking at a mirror [...] whoever sees his image becomes an image worshipper, whether a dervish who cultivates virtues, or a king.’<sup>531</sup>

European art was considered to be especially accomplished in this sense. Abu’l Fazl considered that ‘a picture leads to the form it represents and this leads to the meaning just as the shape of a line leads one to letters and words and from there the sense can be found out. Although in general they make pictures of material appearances, the European masters express with rare forms many meanings of the creation and thus they lead those who see only the outside of things to the place of real

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<sup>529</sup> Abu’l Fazl, *A’in-i Akbari*, 1997, vols. I, 96–97.

<sup>530</sup> Minissale, *Images of Thought*, 240.

<sup>531</sup> Quoted in Minissale, 172.



truth.’<sup>532</sup> This description by Abu’l Fazl is taken up almost verbatim by Xavier in his

*Ā’inayi Haqq-numā:*

The speech [of an image] is an abbreviated book and brief worship. It is something that speaks without talking and is heard without the ear; something written that everyone understands; a letter that everyone can read; a book for the learned; an attribute that makes manifest things which are past and ancient. It is a *mirror* that reflects things held in trust ... an assistant to the temperament, a teacher of the intellect; and it depicts intention.<sup>533</sup>

The notion of books of advice on kingship as mirrors that guide the king to self-correction is of course explicit in the genre’s name, but it nevertheless merited reiteration, including in medieval Spain, of the mirror as the ultimate metaphor for knowledge:

King Fernando ordered this book to be written so that he and other kings who would possess it would arrive at the Treasure and advice that is superior to any other available to them, and to better understanding, and so they might glean, as though from a mirror, how to correct their errors and those of others and to straighten their actions and conducted in proper and perfected way.<sup>534</sup>

Xavier himself writes in the *Directorio* that the ‘beauty of the mirror is not that it should be studded with diamonds but that the reflection is like a real person.’<sup>535</sup> We have seen above that the need to know and be true to oneself is fundamental to his exhortation to self-correction, or self-improvement.

Alexander provides fertile ground for the symbolically rich theme of images, appearances, revealed truth, and knowledge, as the coordinates of discovering the key to ideal kingship. It does not mean, however, that the metaphor is always employed to praise the patron. Alexander may have represented an ideal of kingship Jahangir and

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<sup>532</sup> Abu’l Fazl, *A’in-i Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, vol. I (Calcutta, 1872); the translation is from Ebba Koch, “Jahangir as Francis Bacon’s Ideal of the King as an Observer and Investigator of Nature,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland* 19, no. 3 (2009): 293–338.

<sup>533</sup> Jerome Xavier, S.J., “Ayine-Ye Haqq-Numā” 1609, 282r, Harley 5478, BL; the translation is from Bailey, “The Truth-Showing Mirror: Jesuit Catechism and the Arts in Mughal India,” 388.

<sup>534</sup> Alfonso X, *Setenario*, ed. K.H. Vanderford (Buenos Aires: Instituto de Filologia, 1945), 25.

<sup>535</sup> Xavier, S.J., “Directorio de Reys,” 61v.

Xavier could agree on, but the World-conqueror could not shield Jahangir from reproach for what Xavier considered mortal sins of kingship. The status of Jahangir as the Messianic Renewer, Lord of the New Age, a second Timur, and indeed a second Alexander, were highly ritualised in courtly literature, art, and ceremony that identified Jahangir with the sun, and saw him worshipped as his celestial analogue. Given the status of the sun as the supreme authority, and source of prosperity and equity in the philosophy prevalent at court, these ritualised beliefs imbued the emperor with a level of divinity that made many of his Muslim contemporaries uncomfortable. Xavier was aware of the anxiety this provoked, and used the language of painting and Alexander to make the point, once more using an anecdote featuring Apelles:

In the time of Alexander, a portrait-maker by the name of Apelles (*Eblis*) used to be able to depict any object with such precision it was difficult to distinguish between the original and the painted object. He painted a basket full of grapes and figs in such a way that they looked like they were real. Not realizing it was just a painting, observers thought they could eat the fruit! Another painter, named Zeuxis (*Ziuisis*) made a beautiful portrait of a pigeon and hung it on a pillar. It was so realistic even pigeons would come sit with it, chirping. Countless paintings of these two painters were so close to the original subject that even birds and animals failed to distinguish between the two. In the same manner, some have attempted to equate the sun in the sky and the king on earth by making them look identical. Even among the wise men of this world many used to fail to distinguish the real god from the person on earth. It is well-known that across many regions, countless peoples worship the sun as a divine object. And now, let me turn to the king himself. (...) The people of Macedonia considered Alexander the Great to have undisputed authority, and power that inspired fear. They wore the ring of subservience on their finger and the earring of obedience in their ear and mistook him for a god.<sup>536</sup> With loud voices, they hailed him as the real God. At first, he enjoyed hearing this. But when finally, the arrow of divine destiny pierced his body, and he was badly wounded, he opened the eyes of his subjects: 'You consider me to be a god, but this arrow has put me on the right path, for I am as weak as you are.'<sup>537</sup>

Recounting the story of Alexander's painter Apelles (*Eblis*) and another ancient Greek painter Zeuxis (*Ziuisis*), whose paintings were so precise as to render the portraits indistinguishable from their subject, Xavier illustrates the effective deception in

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<sup>536</sup> In Ganjavi's *Iskandarnama*, Alexander is also raised to the status of God.

<sup>537</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fol. 13v.

equating a sun-like king with the sun itself.<sup>538</sup> This example resonates powerfully with Jahangir's performance of *darshan*, the purpose of which was precisely the establishment of an equivalence between the emperor and the sun. Xavier then has to account for Alexander's mistaken divinity, by showing that the ideal king quickly rejected the treatment of him as a god, no doubt intended as a lesson for Jahangir:

The people of Macedonia considered Alexander the Great to have undisputed authority, and power that inspired fear. They wore the ring of subservience on their finger and the earring of obedience in their ear and mistook him for a god.<sup>539</sup> With loud voices, they hailed him as the real God. At first, he enjoyed hearing this. But when finally, the arrow of divine destiny pierced his body, and he was badly wounded, he opened the eyes of his subjects: 'You consider me to be a god, but this arrow has put me on the right path, for I am as weak as you are.'<sup>540</sup>

Xavier then moves from the power of painting, to the patronage of artists and the realism of their paintings. Under Jahangir, realism had become a distinguishing feature of imperial production, with nature studies of strange new animals like turkeys or zebras by his painter Mansur still considered among the great masterpieces of the period. Jahangir himself too had a keen interest in painting technique and boasted of his ability to discern which one of his painters had painted which part of a miniature, just by looking at it. Jahangir's and Akbar's identification with the sun was given new symbolic meaning in paintings like *Jahangir's Dream* by Abu'l Hassan showing Jahangir, superimposed on a giant sun and standing on a globe embracing his rival Persian emperor Abbas I. The jewellery worn by Macedonian subjects as tokens of loyalty to Alexander in Xavier's passage mirror the miniature images of Akbar and Jahangir worn by the disciples (*murids*) of their Sufi-styled restricted spiritual circles. The comparison to Alexander's usurpation of divinity stands as a cautionary tale for the emperor with boldly publicised messianic pretensions. The criticism is not based

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<sup>538</sup> Xavier, S.J., fols. 13r-13v.

<sup>539</sup> In Ganjavi's *Iskandarnama*, Alexander is also raised to the status of God.

<sup>540</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fol. 13v.

on the claim's falsity or its Christian opposite or alternative, but on a universal notion that deception by claiming divinity is opposed to the rules of proper kingship and can have mortal consequences.<sup>541</sup> According to Xavier, Akbar and Jahangir greatly enjoyed this adoration and were assiduous in the rituals, which the Father had to attend.<sup>542</sup> Yet, Alexander (and thus Jahangir) is allowed to save face, or at any rate retain the status of an ideal king – the greatest, perhaps, of all – in spite of committing errors and giving into human temptations. It is not without reason that Xavier makes reference to the sun in his introduction but subordinates it to knowledge. Only new knowledge can dispel the misapprehensions that lead to foolish usurpation of the place of God.

### **The Padre as *murid* – and *murshid***

The Persianate *adab* – as Xavier had been able to witness firsthand in courtly assemblies during the composition of the *Directorio* – reflected a highly conservative moral system, emphasizing social hierarchy.<sup>543</sup> The Christian interventions and religious books were seriously debated, but ultimately relegated to the category of 'history.' The mission was patently dependent on the political exigencies of its Portuguese and Mughal masters. Sacred iconography the mission had brought to court, had been put to ulterior, worldly uses. Xavier himself had reached the conclusion that 'it was not possible to get into the Muslims' head or heart.' He felt isolated and forgotten, as his old friends did not write. 'My occupation is going and coming to the King and throwing the bate in the water hoping the fish will bite.'<sup>544</sup>

The *Directorio* was an unusual, unconventional attempt, because it was made

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<sup>541</sup> Xavier, S.J., September 8, 1595, fol. 25.

<sup>542</sup> Xavier, S.J., fols. 27v, 28–29.

<sup>543</sup> Lefèvre, "Le Livre En Acte à La Cour Moghole : Le Cas Des Littératures Historique et Religieuse d'après Le Majālis-i Jahāngīrī (1608-1611)," 311.

<sup>544</sup> Alcázar, S.J., *Chrono-Historia de La Compañía de Jesús de La Provincia de Toledo*, 210.

in desperation. Loyola had offered a way out of the dark. To use the enemy's own evil stratagem to win him over. Enter though 'the other's door and leave through your own.'<sup>545</sup> Was this a way to assimilate Loyola's four pillars of activity into existing Mughal discourse? Abu'l Fazl tells us the imperial library was divided into separate sections for prose, poetry, and works in Hindi, Persian, Greek, Kashmiri and Arabic, from which books were read to the emperor each night. There had hardly been a famous book that had not been read during these sessions – indeed many were read repeatedly -- or historical, scientific or philosophical questions the emperor had not learned of.<sup>546</sup> Was there no room for a beguiling Alexandrine whisper, entreating the emperor to dream of a sacred future 'for the greater Glory of God'? What Plato had been to Dionysus, Aristotle to Alexander, Solon to Sparta, Seneca to Nero, could Xavier not offer this service to his King of the Age, Jahangir?<sup>547</sup>

Xavier recounts another story, this time of Alexander's prophesied conquest of the East. For this he turns to Josephus, and his *Antiquities of the Jews*.<sup>548</sup> Josephus had written about Alexander leaving Greece after a dream in which a holy man had exhorted him to set forth to conquer Persia. In Jerusalem, Alexander recognises Jaddua, the high priest of Jerusalem, as the face in his dream, and relents in his demands for surrender. Josephus then included Alexander being acquainted with the Book of Daniel, which Alexander understood to confirm the prophecy of his impending conquest over the Persians. In Xavier's hands, the anecdote acquires new meaning.

He who had conquered the whole world and had made many great kings bow before him, when he saw a divine light he offered all humility and submission before him [Jaddua]. (...) One day, Alexander took Daniel's book and put it in the trunk with the holy edicts of god on his way to India. He was dancing and singing in celebration of this book. (...) They took this trunk, dancing and singing, reciting

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<sup>545</sup> Young, *Letters of St Ignatius of Loyola*, 51.

<sup>546</sup> Abu'l Fazl, *A'in-i Akbari*, 1997, vols. I, 109–110.

<sup>547</sup> Xavier, S.J., "Directorio de Reys," fol. 3r.

<sup>548</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, trans. William Whiston, 1981.

holy verses like minstrels.<sup>549</sup>

Rather than just being shown the book of Daniel and granting privileges to the Jews in gratitude, Xavier has Alexander carry the book with him in celebration, ‘on his way to India.’ These appear to be Xavier’s own adaptations, for I have not been able to discover a source other than the *Antiquities*, which make no reference either to Alexander’s adoption of the holy book, nor India as its destination. But if Alexander’s world-conquest was granted by the God of the Jews, and paved his way to take India, with Jahangir as the ‘Second Alexander’ now ruling India, could the overtures of the Jesuit European Fathers (*padaryan-e firang*) not have been the work of some prophetic mechanism, an auspicious conjunction of a king and his counsellor?

Xavier appears to have hoped so, but just as the religiously unbending *Nisihat al-Muluk* of Ghazzali, Fakhr-i Muddabir’s *Adab al-Harb wa’l-Shuja’a* and Ziya al-Din Barani’s *Fatawā-i Jahāndārī*, Xavier’s work ultimately lost traction in the hostile and infidel context of India, and the *Directorio* vanished into the dusty bowels of European archives. The authors of those Persian mirrors had appealed to the Mughal Emperor not only across time but across religious obstacles and limitations, which proved unsurmountable to rulers such as Akbar and Jahangir, who were forging their own brand of sacred kingship, transcending the sectarian ties that bind and constrain. The *Directorio* does not appeal for men of religion, or various religions to be welcomed at court and entertained in discussion. Nor is it religious tolerance, or the importance of religious counsel that Xavier is seeking to impress. Rather, it is spiritual guidance in the form a worldly kind of erudite knowledge of history and moral philosophy, and a request to be admitted into the circle of wise men, alongside the likes of Abdus Sattar, Naqib Khan and others, whose contribution to the assembly is their scholarship. It is

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<sup>549</sup> Xavier, S.J., “Directorio de Reys,” fols. 11r-11v.

an appeal where the religious illusions would ultimately give way to illusions of a different kind. Xavier devotes much attention to the treatment of scholars and artists at court yet cautions against neglecting to honour them with proper compensation.

It is said that in the time of Alexander many scholars and intellectuals came to Greece (*Iunan*), because Alexander would show them great kindness. And the same has been the case in many other lands where scholars arrived and sowed the seed of knowledge, and watered the soil they planted, and worked hard to achieve results, they received whatever reward they wanted. As the philosophers have said, in various countries men of intellect have scattered the seeds of science so that, with the patronage of the kings, gardens full of fruits have ripened to perfection. When a physician cured Augustus from a very serious disease, the emperor gave him great rewards and gifts and honoured him. This became a precedent, and scholars and physicians and men of wisdom thronged to his court and came into his service. People tried their best to become men of knowledge. In his reign, poets too endeavoured to compose poetry of a higher calibre and the sweetest poetry emerged, ensuring this group of persons were also patronised. The poet Terentius was rewarded one lakh rupees for three or four verses of his finest work, and another poet received the reward of 80,000 rupees for a small collection of his own poems. Likewise, emperor Sulla gave 80,000 rupees to a painter, namely Aristides, famous for his two portraits (*do majlis-i taswir*) which the painter had brought as gifts before him. In the time of Alexander, there were painters highly skilled with a wonderful touch, like Apelles. Much attention and much patronage was given to them.<sup>550</sup>

When a scholar (*hakim*) presented him with a book on the virtues and characteristics of his judgements (*be asafe adalat*) the cruel old king Antiochus said, 'Even though you have no knowledge of my cruelty and treachery to my own people, still you have compiled a book on my justice system and have come to tell me the rules of proper judgement!'

So, you see how in different times men of art and scholarship from various places have come to the courts of cruel people, kings who are ignorant and unjust and do not patronise wise men, and who pay no attention and offer no rewards to men in their service. How can that garden of knowledge, scholarship and wisdom flourish!

Why, under such kings, it dries up and fades away and even the grass does not grow. In short, whenever kings have proper regard for men of wisdom, philosophy, scholarship, and various arts, each day the arts and knowledge enhance the name and popularity of the king, and the sympathy of the people. (...)

I have already given you countless examples of events in which Alexander bestowed rewards and honours. In brief, for the emperor to honour and reward men of arts and knowledge, and to elevate them, is to elevate himself. And this is the reason why the king must populate his country with scholars and men of art. They should be given various kinds of benefits. But how can the tree of knowledge be nurtured in a place where there is no rainfall or dew of reverence showering on the plants of art? When the kindness and patronage of the king end, the sciences see a loss of salience.<sup>551</sup>

The passage vividly echoes the Mughal policy of offering patronage to Iranian poets,

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<sup>550</sup> Xavier, S.J., 50v.

<sup>551</sup> Xavier, S.J., 52v.

leading to the emergency of a new style of poetry (*Sabke Hindi*), as well as the many Iranian painters in Mughal workshops poets. Indeed, Xavier issues appeal after appeal for the ideal king to attract and patronise sages and scholars from many countries, like Alexander had.<sup>552</sup> Even if some of these scholars (*hakim*) were to present him with a book on the virtues and characteristics of his judgements (*be asafe adalat*), he should accept them with gratitude, and not react in the cruel manner of the ignorant and unjust king Antiochus who said: ‘Even though you have no knowledge of my cruelty and treachery to my own people, you have compiled a book on my justice system and have come to tell me the rules proper judgement!’ Under such kings, Xavier warns, the land dries up and fades away and even the grass does not grow. Reflecting Babur’s similes in his characterization of the dry and infertile landscape of India, Xavier wonders how the ‘tree of knowledge [can] be nurtured in a place where there is no rainfall or dew of reverence showering on the plants of art.’<sup>553</sup>

As it happens, the sciences under Jahangir showed no sign of slowing down, even as the Jesuit fortunes declined. The Jahangiri ideal of an empire as a paradisiacal garden of peace and prosperity is located in Alexander’s Greece and predicated on the condition of royal patronage of scholars, artists and other intellectuals and skilled craftsmen. Indeed, painting and portraiture continued to flourish in the 1610s, as did Jahangir’s self-fashioning as a naturalist, whose systematising mind established order in the variegated landscape of his empire. A landscape, in which the Jesuit enterprise was already over the hill, and whose attempt at ‘political conversion’ was fast receding into oblivion. It must have been with a certain sense of despair and melancholy for the Spain in which an intellectual interest in Islamo-Arabic culture did not preclude the

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<sup>552</sup> Xavier, S.J., 50v.

<sup>553</sup> Xavier, S.J., 52v.



religious triumph of the Catholic Church, that Xavier wrote to Acquaviva about San Vicente Ferrer's conversions of many Muslims in Spain, in Cordoba, Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia.

According to Abdus Sattar himself, the *Majālis-i Jahāngīrī* – in some ways a work of *adab* effectively concurrent but far more consequential compared to the *Directorio* – is effectively a *malʿuzat*, a genre typically denoting a record of the sayings of a Sufi *pir*, or spiritual guide, to his disciples.<sup>554</sup> The activity of Sufic *pirs* in the wider Persianate world took on a preeminently political character, adducing their spiritual authority for political purposes. This also had the ability to imbue political ideas with the cultural eclecticism so characteristic of Indo-Persian Sufism. The fortunes and ambitions of kings and Sufis were thus often intertwined, with kings, including Akbar and Jahangir casting themselves as Sufic guides, and Sufic *pirs* taking up arms to seize worldly power. It is an image reminiscent of Xavier's patron saint Saint Aemilian, the ascetic who emerged from his cave to mount his horse and charge against the oncoming Muslim enemy with his sword lifted high. Perhaps the *Directorio* could only have succeeded if Xavier had given more currency to Jahangir's project of spiritual leadership and sacred kingship, which lies at the heart of the mirror he wrote for him. For that to have been possible, the confessor might have had to don the cloak, or wear the pin, not of the foreign sage, but of a spiritual disciple (*murid*). Xavier's entire literary opus had been unstable, a constant renegotiation of terms, eventually leading even to him acting as the emperor's diplomatic representative in a peace treaty with the Portuguese. But for the protégé of Saint Aemilian, the sword-wielding ascetic, self-fashioning as a Sufic *murid* was a bridge too far.

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<sup>554</sup> Abdus Sattar ibn-i Qasim Lahori, *Majālis-i Jahāngīrī: Report of Night Assemblies at the Court of Nur Al-Din Jahangir, From 24 Rajab 1017 to 19 Ramadan 1020 A.H. / 24 October 1608 to 15 November 1611 A.D.*, 1–2, 113–14.



## 8. Epilogue

When Xavier wrote about good government, and its absence under Muslim kingship, claiming that viciousness and superstition debased Mughal India far below the magnificence of its Western counterparts, he was not merely recording his individual observations of Mughal rule. In effect, he was using the Mughal empire as a canvas upon which he sketched his impressions of the religious, political, and economic changes which were taking place in the world around him. He certainly did not ‘apply a blanket category without regard for historical particularity,’ to use Rubiés words. What he did do, is come to the particularity of the Mughal case with either a conviction about the nature of Islam, the systems of rule they saw as Oriental and despotic or was guided by ulterior political exigencies in his interpretation of those circumstances. Highlighting their perceptions simply as wishing to advance a Christian vision of good government, clouds over the effect of the concept of Oriental despotism and associated ideas as a lens through which the Mughal ruler was perceived, analysed, and broadcast to audiences in Mughal India and Europe – an effect to which Xavier was not immune.

This line of argument has been a response to three dominant tendencies in considering the Mughal-Jesuit encounter. First has been the recent tendency to overstate – in light of recent attention for Mughal-Jesuit literary collaboration as a complement to the well-known Jesuit provision of Christian iconography for Mughal self-fashioning – the extent of Jesuit accommodation in the Indo-Islamic context. As we have seen, the situation was quite distinct from the possibilities offered by missionary encounters with Buddhism, Confucianism and Hinduism elsewhere in Asia and India. The second tendency is the older but persisting glorification in today’s scholarship of empiricism of the (early) Enlightenment, and the Jesuits as its

antecedents. In its most surprising iterations this unyielding tendency reproduces rather than critiques the discourse and claims of the historical subjects themselves. Third, the insular understanding of cross-cultural missionary encounters and strategies as operating in a vacuum of theological dispute produced a myopia of its own. This narrow framing has shielded the exchanges between the Mughals and their missionary guests from the revealing echoes of surrounding philosophical and scientific debates, and literary cultures. Crucially for our case, this applies to political concepts that over time would articulate, not only in parallel but *through* the exchanges of our Mughal-Jesuit protagonists, a European Christian political identity that was in contradistinction to the Orient of an almost-fantasy, made almost true.

In the *Directorio*, the specific examples Xavier chooses for Jahangir are indicative of the lessons the Father believes his patron needs. They can be read not only as a form of thinly veiled criticism of Jahangir's perceived inadequacies, but as an echo of established European views of Muslim rulers as lacking in modesty, generosity, fairness and justice. Instead, depicting them as lascivious, oppressing subjects, dispensing unequal treatment, governed by self-interest, and imposing a desire-induced tyranny instead of a justice governed by reason. It is important to situate Jerome Xavier's literary output, from the overtly polemical *Fuente de Vida*, down to the apparently more anodyne *Directorio*, as embedded in this deeply entrenched culture of discourse that would eventually find its most extravagant expression in Montesquieu's famously eroticised portrait of the Oriental seraglio. The archetypal Muslim king of that vision, whom the European observer could resurrect to interpret the Mughal despot, was the embodiment of a state in disarray at the root of which were unbridled material and sexual desires.<sup>555</sup> It is this diagnosis of an innate incapacity of

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<sup>555</sup> Charles de Secondat baron de Montesquieu, *Lettres persanes* (chez Pierre Marteau, 1754).

the Muslim mind to exercise sovereignty over body – including its body politic – reiterated in the *Fuente de Vida* with such relish, and for which the *Directorio* prescribes the medicine of emulating ‘Western’ examples. In doing so, Xavier joins a long line of observers and theorists who identified in the East a chronic lack of societal development and backwardness, attributed to a constitutional infirmity of an imagined Muslim psyche. This argument would be rehearsed more or less explicitly by Montesquieu, William Jones, Herder, Hegel, Marx, through whom its residual deposits have managed to persist to this day. While Jahangir’s Jesuit counsellor did bring some complexity to the theme of Mughal despotism, his account did not challenge these existing images, which had been consistently reproduced by European observers of and at the Mughal court.<sup>556</sup>

To the extent that Xavier and his Mughal audience were ships passing each other in the dark of the night of incommensurability – exchanging signals but oblivious to the shapes or sizes of their respective vessels, to use Sanjay Subrahmanyam’s simile – the connected history thesis must account for its tendency to constrain historical actors with visions of connectedness that, however appealing to us, may not have been theirs. In retrospect, the Jesuit charge against the Mughals’ cynical pragmatism of prolonging an interfaith conversation without a sincere interest in conversion was prescient, if somewhat embittered. Yet something very similar can be said of Xavier’s own ‘evolution’ as scholar-historian and divine in the Mughal courtly assembly and his apparent rapprochement with Mughal political culture: that it was merely formal, never compromising the strategy of advancing the Greater Glory of God, its purpose

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<sup>556</sup> Rubiés, “Oriental Despotism and European Orientalism: Botero to Montesquieu,” 132–33; *Evenemens Particuliers*, n.d., 277; and François Bernier, *Abregé de La Philosophie de Gassendi* (Lyon, 1684), vol. 7, book 2, chaps. 5, 246–49; both quoted in Rubiés, “Oriental Despotism and European Orientalism: Botero to Montesquieu,” 141, 148.

always to assert rather than resolve difference, albeit using the other's terms. Being in this sense unyielding, it was antithetical to the idea of a discovering, or creating, connectedness. Official engagement within the Mughal courtly environment in a tainted activity such as for instance astronomy for would by its very nature have jeopardised this position of moral distinction and superiority and have pulled the missionary too close to the gravitational field of an imagined Oriental mentality. Xavier's original exasperation over 'these Moors ... rightly abandoned by God for the great sins they commit' and the misfortune of having to swim in their abominable 'stream of all vices', is never unthought, whatever the depths of Xavier's immersion into the Mughal world over the ensuing decade.

An Orient that is in Spain, men of the cloth who are political animals, a would-be Provincial receding into oblivion, a Muslim emperor forever on the verge conversion, religious books that are mere history, two-horned kings who pierce at once the East and West, harbingers of knowledge that is distant yet familiar, cave-dwelling ascetics who are guides to world-conquest, an Oriental canvas that documents a Western fantasy, a rapprochement which exists to assert a difference – these were the impossible short-circuits of our subjects as they entered through the door of the other only to leave through their own. We have come some way from a history of connectedness and have waded into murkier waters. But while the parties to our Mughal-Jesuit encounter may be like Rumi's boats, 'dashing together; their eyes darkened,' the historian is in clearer water.

The door framing the Mughal elite's interaction with Jesuit missionaries leads to an extraordinary archive of artistic and literary testimonies. They speak to a cross-cultural conversation that defies the patent dualism of opposites or alternatives. This archive, which holds up a mirror to Jahangir, yet reflects the idealized self-image of the author's own world, speaks with two tongues. It addresses not only a mutual interest

in understanding something of the alien other, but the ways in which our actors respond to a more or less unwanted rediscovery of the other within oneself. At the very moment of his own expulsion from Spain, Xavier's Muslim other rejects the Spanish missionary's entreaties halfway across the globe, in the East's 'Moorish backwaters of vice'. That rejection follows on the heels of another othering; that of the missionary's own homeland as the 'moor' of Europe, and of the talented missionary in Goa as unfit for government on account of being Spanish.<sup>557</sup> A Spaniard thrice rejected. How suitable that our introduction to Xavier's Spain should have been by way of *Don Quixote*, foretelling Xavier's quixotic suffering, his temporal displacement, his taking for real that which the contemporary world considers an illusion.

The mirror – both in the literal sense of Xavier's book and as metaphor for the encounter – has also been a symbol of impossibility: the impossibility of seeing beyond one's reflection. Mughal accommodation of the Jesuits at court was moved by a profound interest in the theological intricacies that separated the two faiths, but also in a philosophical tradition the Mughals recognised as emerging from a Greco-Roman world they considered 'Western', and in some ways, under the purview of their European guests. Not least, the appropriation of European Christian iconography for Mughal imperial ideology in painting and architecture cannot be dismissed as mere curiosity. The matrix of spiritual authority marshalled by the courts of Akbar and Jahangir drew on dynastic, millenarian and Sufic registers that held real power over its participants. The penetration of Christian art into this regime of sacred meaning, even if attributed to cynical pragmatism, means the iconic image of Mughal power was nonetheless moved and changed in the process. Gestures of interest in the Jesuits may

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<sup>557</sup> For a discussion of Spain's cultural debt to Muslim culture, and the deliberate casting of Spain as the exotic racial other of Europe, see Fuchs, *Exotic Nation: Maurophilia and the Construction of Early Modern Spain*, chap. 5.

have been animated by a combination of pity and desire to humiliate, but never veered from rejecting the main course offered on the missionary's menu. This Mughal intransigence was never made explicit, giving cause to perceived ambiguity and a series of short-circuits and misperceptions: the emperor will convert; he will accept the religious works prepared for him as containing revealed truth; the mastery of Indo-Persian *adab* will imbue our words with spiritual imperative. Yet, these doors were only imagined openings and remained forever closed.

Meanwhile, and unbeknownst to the Mughal hosts, the Jesuit regime of reality, to continue with Bertrand's Foucauldian terminology, included a specific and intensely debated ideology of politico-religious counsel aimed at kings. The Mughal court observed only its practical manifestation, the purpose of which was to give to that which was distinctly political the appearance of being merely spiritual, philosophical, or historical. Spiritual counsel was exploited to enter worldly affairs by a measure of obfuscation, that is deception, even if practiced for the Greater Glory of God. The purpose of entering through the door of Mughal mirrors-for-princes was never to assimilate to, or to converse with the other's moral essence, but to leave through the door of the independent, ulterior motive of conversion. Yet, beyond the door of the Mughal mirror-for-princes, inviting for a missionary who had exhausted the weapons of theological persuasion, was a highly constrained space, made tighter by the looming implications of Oriental despotism. If any affinity with the courtly cabals of European courts was considered as anathema, the far greater sin of emulating Oriental courtly culture was surely irredeemable.

Nonetheless, it is important also to dispel a persistent myth or misapprehension concerning the Jesuit accommodationists. Highly pragmatic attempts to ensure conversions did not preclude the mobilization of the private passions that animated



the individual missionary, or the development of genuine appreciation for and emulation of certain aspects of the host culture. Yet, the figures involved should not be taken as pre-eminently enlightened by a modern spirit of tolerance. The soft method did not preclude a reciprocal and deep-seeded disdain between the missionary and his host, while both maintained an inflated sense of cultural superiority. The acknowledgement of diversity, indeed the celebration of it by both Mughals and Jesuits, does not necessarily mean acceptance, and certainly not acceptance as equals – even where certain protections were extended to all, as in the Mughal policy of Universal Peace (*sulh-i-kul*). Moreover, while the Jesuits did pioneer the study of other religions in the sixteenth century, and knew some of their complexities, their understanding was at times simplistic. The surprisingly stubborn notion, for example, that Akbar had abandoned Islam, was based on such incomplete understanding.

Thus, in spite of its cultural fruits and inevitable cross-pollination, the encounter can also be thought as governed by mutual inhibitions, stemming from an unwavering rejection of the Muslim or Christian other as antithetical to one's cultural and religious integrity. From the Mughal perspective, the Jesuit proposition remained at all times irreconcilable with the imperial self, and the intense interaction surrounding the issue was effectively an extended prelude – beguiling for the modern observer – to an impossible kiss. Nor was it conceivable for Xavier to seriously entertain or lend credence to Muslim voices, even if his venture was one of Mughal *adab*. Constrained by the unconscionable, the parties to our encounter could only see what was in their line of sight – while that of the other, and the shift required to glimpse it, was repressed out of view.

The confident switching between confessional and advisory roles observed in Europe and promoted by Jesuit authors as well as the Society's official policy on spiritual guidance to kings is much more recalcitrant in Agra. If the price for political

interference in the style of the Alexandrine Aristotle in Europe had been the accusation of being a 'politico' and a Machiavellian, the consequences of crossing over into the political realm of a Muslim court carried with it the danger of being tainted by association with the positively demonic: the Oriental-despotic. Xavier's retaining of a critical posture, emphasis on the primacy of Alexander (whose wisdom by the Mughals' own account was Greek), taking issue with the specific royal sins of greed, pride, and injustice, and his refusal to put Jesuit astronomical and mathematical knowledge at the service of Mughal soothsaying, are all instances of enforced resistance, distinction, and separation. They are at once a recognition of Mughal ideology on its own terms, in its own political language, as well as a judgement of its failed implementation. Accommodation, in this sense, is little more than an adjusted epistemological and linguistic register that allows Xavier to convey an intelligible but damning verdict, and to underline European superiority in the implementation of shared codified norms of kingship, from which Islam has lead the Oriental despot astray. It reproduces the idea that the Mughal ruler, by virtue of being Muslim, is incapable of enacting the public good, because the intemperate interior of Muslims corrupts any effort, however well-intentioned. It is a way of saying, you and I are not so different, because we are made by the same God and share a common past, even some ideals of conduct, but today we stand worlds apart *morally* – and in terms of applied ethics of good government – because I chose the righteous (Christian) path, and you the way of damnation (Islam).

## **The Elephant and the Ass**

The parallax gaps created by metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony are illustrated in Xavier's story of the 'Elephant and the Ass', describing an episode which

occurred around the time he completed the mirror-for-princes for Jahangir, in 1609. It was in general use in the Mughal Empire to carry new converts to Islam through the streets of the city seated on an elephant. And so, we learn that in 1609, an Armenian Christian who had joined Islam was – by order of Jahangir – placed on the back of an elephant and paraded through the capital in celebration. Seeing this, Xavier went to the Emperor and asked him to grant the Christians the same privilege for their converts. The Emperor's answer was somewhat comical, for he allowed the Christian converts to be received with public festive joy, but, instead of permitting them to be carried on the back of an elephant, he ordered that they be led about on an ass in honour of the Lord Jesus, who on the day of His triumphal entry into Jerusalem gave preference to that animal over all the others. On hearing that, Xavier turned the Emperor's attention to the fact that in Portugal and in other European countries this manner of proceeding was more a disgrace than an honour. In response to Xavier's protestations, Jahangir adjusted his command and ordered the Christian converts be carried on elephants but added that, in imitation of the Lord Jesus, the Father had to precede them, riding on an ass. Without further ado, and while usually rather slow to respond to Jesuit requests for favourable edicts, the Emperor immediately told one of his ministers to draw up a *farman* (royal decree) of this 'favour'.<sup>558</sup>

What are we to make of this snapshot of the ruler and his Jesuit counsellor in the shadow of attempts to offer the emperor stylized political advice in the Persian tradition? Why does Jahangir jump at the occasion to parade the Father on an ass? And if the ass was considered a disgrace in the eyes of the Spanish missionary, where does it shift in the Mughal gaze? We may recall that when Jahangir had wanted to humiliate

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<sup>558</sup> Gonsalvus Sebastianus, "Annuae Litterae Provinciae Goanae Anni 1609," December 27, 1609, fol. 307v, Goa 33, I, ARSI.

the nobles responsible for the embarrassment to the crown by failing to prevent the rebellion in Patna, the men were publicly degraded and ridiculed at the imperial capital, by being paraded through Agra on asses.

There is an infamous anecdote featuring the oral use of Sa‘di’s verses at the Mughal court in the seventeenth-century. The biography of Chandar Bhan ‘Brahman’ (d. 1662-63) is dominated by an anecdote of heresy.<sup>559</sup> At court, emperor Shah Jahan had asked a Brahman to which he responded:

Mine is a heart so acquainted with unbelief that several times  
I have taken it to the Ka‘ba and brought it back still a Brahman.

Shah Jahan was so offended that he almost had the Brahman killed. But Shah Jahan’s chief minister, who was the Brahman’s patron, quickly intervened:

This verse that Shaykh Sa‘di has said is appropriate to [describe] his [Brahman’s] state: If Jesus’ donkey should go to Mecca / when it returns it will still be an ass.

The clever riposte pleased and pacified Shah Jahan who ‘smiled and became engaged in another direction,’ telling the Brahman he was free to go. It is questionable whether interpreting the Brahman of this anecdote as representing a synoptic Hindu adequately reflects another, perhaps more salient factor: ‘a timeless Muslim disdain and mistrust of Hindus (...) or a more specific bigotry according to which the rise of Hindus in the Mughal system evoked anxieties in Muslim elites?’<sup>560</sup> Indeed the response is that, on one level, the point of this anecdote is precisely to remind the presumed Muslim reader that Brahman, a learned Persianate courtier though he may be, is still an infidel.<sup>561</sup>

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<sup>559</sup> I follow here the discussion in Rajeev Kinra, *Writing Self, Writing Empire: Chandar Bhan Brahman and the Cultural World of the Indo-Persian State Secretary* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2015), 259–73; and in Kia, “Adab as Ethics of Literary Form and Social Conduct: Reading the Gulistān in Late Mughal India.”

<sup>560</sup> Kia, “Adab as Ethics of Literary Form and Social Conduct: Reading the Gulistān in Late Mughal India,” 292.

<sup>561</sup> Kinra, *Writing Self, Writing Empire: Chandar Bhan Brahman and the Cultural World of the Indo-Persian State Secretary*, 259–73.

Does this in any way articulate the kind of anxieties among Muslim elites that may have accompanied Xavier's attempt to embody and proffer idealized notions of ethical conduct to the Mughal monarch? Was Xavier's mediated attempt at conversion, disguised as a work of *adab*, dead on arrival? As Mana Kia has shown, when form and substance were incongruous, mastery of Persianate *adab* (moral action) did not equal the presence of the necessary Muslim *akhlāq* (moral essence). Perhaps this is also, in the end, a clue to why the *Directorio* came to be referred to and known as a work of *adab*, rather than *akhlāq*, as reflected in the Persian title *Adab al-saltanat* that was attributed to it.

That the practice of Persianate *adab* did not amount to Muslim *akhlāq* is particularly apparent when we read the Brahman's anecdote alongside the original, which the verse evokes. The original passage is from the section on 'The Effects of Education' in Sa'di's *Gulistān*:

A vizier had a stupid son. He sent him to one of the learned, saying, "Give him some education. Maybe he will become intelligent."  
He taught him for a long time, but it had no effect. He sent someone to the father to say, "He will not become intelligent, and he has driven me crazy."  
When the base is essentially receptive, education will have an effect. No one knows how to polish iron that is essentially bad.  
Don't wash a dog in the seven seas, for when it is wet it is even more polluting.  
If Jesus' donkey is taken to Mecca, when it comes back it will still be an ass.<sup>562</sup>

Xavier may have mastered the Persian *adab*, but he does not embody the Muslim *akhlāq*. Jahangir may seek to embody the virtuous ideal of Alexander, but as a Muslim, he is essentially 'bad iron'. All the education, European or otherwise, will be in vain as long as the royal vessel remains by its Oriental nature insular and unreceptive. Xavier, meanwhile, can write all the bismillahs he wants, can excel in Persianate form, he can even journey to Mecca itself, yet as a Christian he will remain what he is, essentially

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<sup>562</sup> Kinra, 273.

corrupted like his Gospels, and seated like his Jesus on an ass, incapable of delivering Revealed Truth, or embodying the religious morality of Muslim *akhlāq*, which the substance of good counsel. Being of an infidel substance, his accommodative meanderings have only made the Father, like Sa‘di’s dog, ‘more polluting’.

Xavier and Jahangir face each other through this double-sided mirror. Their mutual recognition gives life to a reciprocal fluency in the forms, but not the substance, of the other. As a reflection, it is self-referential. The episode of their encounter is an instance of the all too common, all too human, history of looking beyond our horizon as a way of asserting our own identity and place in that world. The Jesuits were an extraordinary force in the production of knowledge in and about the world outside Europe, and yet this was an Enlightenment whose principal beneficiary was the Society itself, and its European heartland. The Mughals’ omnivorous appropriation of other cultures and practices as mere iterations of their own brand of imperial ideology mirrors the Jesuit inclination toward a universalism that is really a creative fashioning of the world in their own image. By recognizing the mutual self-interest that governed their cross-cultural encounter we are no longer constrained to see the intricate construction of their interaction – the religious debates, artistic exchanges, literary collaborations – as once formidable bridges we are not called upon to repair. As Jerome Xavier and his Mughal counterparts reified the vague contours of each other’s languages, literatures, and spiritual sensitivities, what they were building were not bridges, never to be crossed, but windmills meant to be engaged in battle, and with whose spoils they dreamt of making their fortunes in God’s good service. It would be out of place if as historians we were to turn those windmills into giants only to grant our protagonists the glory of vanquishing them.







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