



International Symposium: The Doors that Propaganda Fide has Opened since 1622

Abstracts

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Day One (August 24, 2022)

Missionary Work in Asia: Conflict and Dialogue

From Mission to Mission: Missionary Experience from the Korean Catholic Church

Fr. Michael Hak-Hyeon KIM

In the history of Christianity in East Asia, Korea was far from the activities of Western missionaries. Although East Asia had been a missionary field for the West, Korea was not directly related to Western missionaries before the founding of the Korean Church by lay people in 1784. With this historical event we can affirm that the Catholic Church in Korea was established, not by Western missionaries, but by the spontaneous efforts of the Korean people. However, in order to promote the propagation and deepening of their faith, the Korean church members saw a need for a missionary and tried to invite a priest. The Korean believers constantly appealed to the Holy See to send missionaries and wanted to have their own diocese. As a result, Propaganda Fide established the Joseon Apostolic Vicariate in 1831 and asked the Paris Foreign Missions Society (MEP) to accept the charge of supplying priests to Korea. Afterwards, the MEP missionary priests in Korea focused on evangelization, enduring several persecutions until the Hierarchy in Korea was formally established by Pope John XXIII in 1962. While it was Korean lay persons who began the faithful community without the cultivation of foreign missionaries, subsequent foreign missions to Korea from other Churches helped the Korean Church grow, and the Korean Church recently has changed from a mission-receiving Church to a mission-sending Church. In 2020, the Korean Catholic Church has 1,137 missionaries working in 80 countries beyond their own language and culture. In this article, following a brief history of foreign missions to Korea, I will focus on Propaganda Fide and the MEP missionary priests sent by Propaganda Fide. It then explores the Korean Missionary Society (KMS) as a pioneer group of the Korean Catholic mission. Finally, I conclude with some reflections on how the foreign mission vitalized and renewed the Korean Church.

**Padroado-Propaganda Entanglements at the End of the Christian Century in Japan:
Background to the Jesuit Visitor Antonio Rubino's Mission in 1642**

Mr. Takayoshi KISAKI

This year marks the fourth centenary of the *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*, an organization that was founded during the centralization of the Holy See. This followed the regulation laid down by the Council of Trent and remained inevitably in conflict with the *Padroado Real* of the two Iberian kingdoms.

In Japan, the Tokugawa shogunate's promulgation of the "Great Expulsion Edict" in 1614 had ushered the intensification of Catholic persecution. All along, under different Royal Patronages, the Jesuits and the Mendicant Orders were at odds over their missionary achievements and policies. The Franciscan Friar Luis Sotelo, wirepuller of the *Keicho* Embassy, had challenged the Jesuit monopoly stipulated by Gregorius XIII in 1585, as the former toiled to create a Diocese in Northern Japan and to appoint himself as its first Bishop. Around the same time, Diego Collado of the Dominican Order returned to Europe in 1622 and promoted the publishing of language books under the authorization of the newly established Propaganda Fide, by sermonizing the idea of creating multiple Dioceses with intentions to destroy the monopoly of the Bishop of Japan hailing from the Jesuit Order. In response to Collado's lobbying, the Jesuit *Procurador*, Sebastião Vieira, tried to strategically win the attention of European authorities by submitting various documents

signed by Japanese Christians which reiterated the accounts of martyrdom in Japan. Through such activities, the three respective Orders vied for funding as they petitioned for an extension/protection of their jurisdictions before the Papacy. “Unfortunately, this coincided with the failure of Diogo Correia Valente, S.J., Bishop of Japan (appointed in 1618), to reach Japan. Turning to Macao, Valente walked a tightrope in response to questioning by the authorities in Goa for his inability to reach Japan while attending to local diocesan matters. The issue remained unresolved with his unfortunate passing away in Macao in 1633 at the age of 65.”

Exactly in the same year in 1633, Propaganda Fide appointed and dispatched two titular bishops, i.e. *Episcopus in partibus infidelium*, Antonio de San Felice and Mateo de Castro Mahalo to Goa by land. These appointments implied that the assistance of the Royal Patronages of the Iberian countries was deliberately not solicited by the Holy See. Moreover, their arrival added to the existing pressure faced by the Jesuit Visitor Antonio Rubino’s suicidal Mission in 1642 which was already clutching at straws in the fading Japanese vineyard.

This presentation attempts to shed light on the Padroado-Propaganda entanglements as well as to extract a concrete understanding of how the path was laid for later missionaries like the French Jesuit Alexandre de Rhodes who ignited the movement to establish the Missions Etrangères de Paris.

Propaganda Fide and the Catholic Mission in Indonesia

Fr. Francis X. Eko Armada RIYANTO, CM

The study tackles the role of Propaganda Fide in the history of the mission in Indonesia. Willem Cardinal van Rossum, CSsR, the prefect (1918-1932) of the Congregation played a decisive role in the Indonesian Catholic Church. When Propaganda Fide was founded, Indonesia was in the grip of the Dutch colonialists. The territory of Indonesia which was famous in the world at that time for producing spices was under the control of the VOC or *Vereenigde Oost Indische Compagnie* (the Dutch East India Company, 1602-1798). By nature protestant, VOC became a sort of representative of the Dutch kingdom. During the rule of VOC, Catholic missions were banned; Catholic churches were burned down or changed to Protestant churches; Dutch Catholics were registered as Protestants; indigenous Catholic communities were destroyed, except for small ones in Flores. After VOC, the Netherlands appointed the Governor-General as the representative of the colonial government in Indonesia. The first Governor-General was Herman Willem Daendels (1808-1811). Along with the “defeat of the Netherlands by Napoleon,” the discriminative laws against the Catholics in the East Indies (Indonesia) were abolished. The Queen then sent several Catholic priests (two or three diocesan priests) to become chaplains for the Catholic Dutch military in Indonesia. One or two Catholic churches began to open. But in the mid-19th century there was not a single Indonesian indigenous Catholic family. The conflict between Mgr. Jacob Grooff and Governor General Jacob Rochussen caused the Catholic mission to return to difficult times. In 1900, at the time of the inauguration of the Church of the Nativity of Santa Maria in Surabaya in 1900, it was reported that there were only 10 Javanese Catholics. The Jesuits came first to Surabaya in 1859. The mission territory of the Jesuits covered the Eastern and Central Java, Borneo, Celebes (Sulawesi), Flores, and West Papua. When the Vincentians and Carmelites were invited by Propaganda Fide to do mission in Surabaya and Malang (1923) to continue the Jesuits, the Javanese (Indigenous) Catholics were only 40. So, for about a century after the “recovery” of the mission in Indonesia, the Catholic mission experienced a slow development in the conversion of the Indigenous people. Cardinal van Rossum, CSsR, the prefect of the Sacred Congregation made a decisive intervention. Thanks to his Dutch background, Cardinal van Rossum knew exactly how vast Indonesia's territory was. He thought it was necessary to “share” the Indonesian mission areas with missionaries from other congregations and religious orders, such as OFM, MSC, SVD, CM, O.Carm, OSC, SCY, MSF, and so forth. With the courage and wisdom of the Prefect of

Propaganda Fide, since then the Indonesian Church has developed very fruitfully. At the beginning of the third millennium, the Indonesian Church has shifted from a land of mission to a lively missionary Church in modern times. Indonesian Catholics, who are a minority among the majority of Muslims, have contributed thousands of missionaries to peoples of the five continents.

Propaganda Fide in History

The China Mission – between Portuguese Padroado and Propaganda Fide

Professor Claudia von COLLANI

During the early Qing dynasty, the situation in the China mission became more and more complex. At the beginning of early modern times Italian Jesuits like Michele Ruggieri (1543–1607) and Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) under the Portuguese Padroado succeeded in opening the China mission by the method of accommodation and in this way got into contact with Chinese scholars. The *Societas Jesu* and Portugal kept China closed off to other orders. Only after 1630 could Spanish Mendicants coming via the Philippines start their missions in Southern China. The foundation of Propaganda Fide in 1622 was done with the intention to free mission from national interests by creating the office of Vicars Apostolic in the Far East. The first Vicar Apostolic who could enter China, however, was François Pallu, MEP (1626–1684) in 1684. He started a new era of the China mission which became quite prospective with the Edict of Tolerance issued by the Kangxi Emperor (1662–1722) in 1692. More and more missionaries followed: Jesuits from Portugal, Italy and the Holy Empire of German Nation sent by the Portuguese Padroado, Spanish Mendicants from the Philippines, French Jesuits sent by Louis XIV, Italian Franciscans, Lazarists and members of the “Missions Étrangères de Paris” sent by Propaganda Fide. The good conditions and intentions to bring salvation to the Chinese people, however, did not bring success but caused new problems because of different national interests, theological backgrounds and ecclesiastical politics. In 1693 the Vicar Apostolic of Fujian, Charles Maigrot MEP (1652–1730) started anew the Rites Controversy which led to the disastrous papal legation of Charles-Thomas Maillard de Tournon (1668–1710) to the imperial court from 1705–1706.

“A Moribund Waiting for a Medicine from Rome”.

Documents in the Historical Archives of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples as a Reflection of Propaganda’s Missionary Organization in China from 1622 to 1830 (before the Opium Wars)

Professor Eugenio MENEGON

Manuscript reports, letters, translations, and transcripts preserved today in the Propaganda Fide Historical Archives reached Rome from many parts of the Chinese empire, from many individual and collective senders, and in manifold ways, mainly through the office of the Propaganda procurator in Macao-Canton. These papers reflect the religious, administrative, and daily issues that Catholic missionaries and Chinese Christians faced at the time. The scope of these materials is as vast as life itself.

While the original documents are reflections of Catholic life in China, the different archival series in which they are preserved today mirror, rather, the organization of labor within the administrative machinery of the Congregation of Propaganda Fide in Rome. If we want to comprehend both *why* the documents are housed in a certain archival series, and *what is their historical context*, we need to work on two levels, keeping them analytically distinct, but also conceptually connected.

First, we must gain some understanding of the general history of Propaganda as an administrative central organ of the Holy See, its organization, and its handling of documents and matters related to China. Second, we must contextualize these papers within the history of Catholicism in China, focusing on the specificities of the missions directly depending on papal authority.

By doing so, we will not only learn tantalizing stories and details about local conditions in China and global connections across the world, but also discern who was the intended audience in the Church hierarchy and get attuned to the bureaucratic mechanisms that governed this difficult intercontinental communication, which missionary Matteo Ripa described in 1717 with these exasperated words: “To wait for an answer from Rome is like the case of a moribund waiting for a medicine... We send letters, very few responses come back from Rome, and in the meantime the patient, that is the Mission, dies.”

Day Two (August 25, 2022)

Social Media: Communication in the Modern World

Influence of Social Media on the Quality of Public Communication

Professor Francis L. F. LEE

Communication scholars have spent much research effort on understanding the role of social media in various problematic phenomena in public communication and public opinion formation in the contemporary world, including the trend toward affective polarization and the spread of disinformation. Meanwhile, media organizations and civic associations have engaged in various efforts to counteract problematic online contents and promote more healthy communication on the Internet. Drawing upon the extant literature and the author's own works, this paper presents an overview of the possible negative impact of social media on public communication and the efficacy of counteracting efforts. On the one hand, the digital and social media environment does contain the affordances that facilitate the emergence of various problematic phenomena. These affordances include how digital and social media speed up the flow of information, weaken the gatekeeping role of credible news media, fragment the process of public communication, facilitate the formation of filter bubbles. The commercial imperatives behind the operation of digital media corporations have aggravated the problems. But on the other hand, much research has suggested that not all social media sites have the same consequences, and the influence of social media is context-dependent. The problematic impact of social media use can be alleviated where high levels of institutional trust and a strong social fabric are maintained. The paper then points to the utility as well as limitations of current fact-checking and content moderation practices. Overall, while not underestimating the challenges brought about by digital and social media, the impact of social media is ultimately dependent on user practices.

In the Age of Digital Social Media, What is the Role of the Catholic Church?

Professor Anthony LAM

“Go into all the World and proclaim the good news to the whole creation.” (Mark 16:15)

Our Lord Jesus Christ commanded his disciples (and thus us subsequently) to spread the news to all the peoples in the world. So we can say that the Christian Church has from the very beginning borne the mission of communicating to everybody. The Church can be seen as one of the earliest institutions established mainly as an institution for communication.

In 1622, when Propaganda Fide was established, the Church intended to equip herself to be a more professional body of communication, to meet the needs of the new communication model relating to the new world.

In the 21st century when social media become popular all over the world, Church members cannot avoid studying the important issues of the impact and the pros and cons of social media in the history of human communications. It is also the main approach of my paper here in this symposium.

Regarding the studies of communication, political and media ideologies are important issues which most mass media scholars will not neglect. Therefore, the studies of social media will reasonably bring us to the discussion of the question: What is the role of social media in the context of political and media ideologies?

Regarding media ideology, I would like to cite two important streams of thinking to enhance the discussion. One is the challenge to media ideology posed by Marxist scholars, and the other is the challenge to media ideology by Catholic Social Teaching. When we differentiate between “proclaiming good news” and “disseminating fake news,” it is necessary for us to work on the changing concept of the term “Propaganda,” which was treasured by the Catholic community at least dating from 1622 and until the new era after World War II. I will elaborate on why the Catholic Church eventually changed the name from “propaganda” to “evangelization of peoples.”

Through the above discussion, I hope to make certain suggestions in response to the following questions: What is the role of the Catholic Church in the digital age? What can we do to enhance true understanding through mass media? What can we do to enhance true understanding through social media? What can we do to enhance true understanding through human communication?

Iconographies of the Climate Crisis in Southeast Asian Film and Digital Media

Professor Elmo GONZAGA

Iconographs typically refer to images that are used to capture realities that cannot be fully represented or comprehended. Nixon (2011) has written about how environmental degradation transpires as a form of slow violence, which often remains invisible and ungraspable. This paper will examine how iconographies of extreme weather events, which are produced and circulated across different media platforms, help visualize the seemingly ungraspable threat of the climate crisis. It will analyze how media representations of typhoons, floods, subsidence, earthquakes, and haze in arthouse cinema, news reportage, satellite imagery, and social media delineate the scope of agency, responsibility, and vulnerability of local and national governments and institutions to respond to ecological disasters in East and Southeast Asia. Cultural geographers like Bankoff (2002 and 2004) have criticized how discourses in the international press tend to portray the Global South as unsafe and risky because of their recurrent experience of catastrophe and tragedy. This paper highlights how the landscapes of speculative Hollywood blockbusters set in an array of Asian settings contrast different locations according to a hierarchy of economic dynamism, social order, and technological innovation. Reproducing such stereotypes, news photos and videos of Southeast Asian environments disseminated via networking platforms such as Facebook and YouTube characterize them as zones of congestion, squalor, illegality, violence, and inertia. Featuring submerged houses, uprooted trees, and overturned cars, these images convey the impression that their infrastructures of residence, communication, and transportation lack durability and resiliency in withstanding devastation from natural calamities. The paper concludes by looking at examples of independent films from the Philippines and Vietnam, which, exhibited and acclaimed in the international festival circuit, envisage the dystopian impact of super-typhoons and dam-building on the everyday life of coastal communities.

Christianity and Social Media

Evangelization of the Christian Church in the Twenty-First Century: A Digital Theological Perspective

Dr. Calida CHU

The medium of evangelization has been evolving in the last four centuries. From oral, print, to digital media, the transmission of the Gospel progresses along with technologies. Outlining the

shift in these last few centuries, this paper highlights the increasing significance of digital media as tools of evangelization and examines the translatability of the Gospel in a different medium.

This paper employs the methodology of digital theology, that is, in what ways does digital media alter or transform theology, to examine the linkage between social media and Christianity. More specifically, this paper will evaluate in what ways evangelism is enabled or hindered by digital media in three aspects: (I) materiality; (II) authority; and (III) communications. Mindful of the debates about materiality online, especially those related to the Eucharist, the paper investigates the different responses of Christian congregations on this matter. Drawing studies from digital theologians, this paper also discusses in what ways the authority of the Church shifts due to equal participation from all parties—whether from pastoral leaders and lay persons. Building on this aspect, the paper also takes into consideration different forms of communications among Christians, both within and outside churches, that may shape the dynamics of evangelism. Finally, this paper employs the theology of Stanley Hauerwas, an American Methodist whose theology has been hugely shaped by Catholic ecclesiology, to argue for the importance of Christian witness online and reflect on the concepts of Church and world in the digital sphere.

The Communicating Church

Fr. John Shen MI

The Church is called and sent to continue God's Trinitarian communication in Revelation and Incarnation into the here and now of all times and places (Eilers, 2009, 31). This Church is born in the communicating act of God's Holy Spirit on Pentecost. And the Church community became a group of messengers of God's revelation to the whole world. Through the Church God's revelation and Jesus Christ's incarnation are to further unfold under the guidance of the Holy Spirit into the "koinonia" and "diaconia" of the faithful as a living experience and witness of the Word or the communication of God today. Therefore, communication is essential to the Church (cf. *Ad Gentes* #2).

Enlightened with this theological aspect of the Church and Communication, this paper aims to reflect on a deeper meaning of communication, not only as social media but more as a basic principal for theology. Communication is more than the expression of ideas and the indication of emotions; at its most profound level, it is the "giving of self in love," as it is defined by the life of the "Perfect Communicator," Jesus Christ (cf. *Communio et Progressio* #11).

This study will also demonstrate a historical development of the Church's approach toward social media so as to discover how the Church dealt with various communication ministries in the past. Through historical facts and documentary provisions in Church communications documents and messages, the researcher looks forward to formulating some guidelines on how to deal with the challenges in social communications ministry specifically through social media at present. A case study on the Church and Social Media in China will contextualize this challenge especially with the implementation of more strict regulations for online religious activities in China.

Propaganda Fide: Mission as Communication

Fr. Bernardo CERVELLERA

Propaganda Fide, the Vatican congregation established in 1622 to support the missions of the Catholic Church in many parts of the world, has always played an important role in communication and in the mass media. Born in order to support the freedom of missions from the interference and influences of the great Western powers, it has always had to find special ways of communication, free and alive. At the same time, needing a relationship to help and support the

missionaries, it had to find communication tools between the peripheries in the various Asian, African and Latin American countries and the center of Catholicity.

But the Catholic Church and the papacy have not always had good relations with communication. Before the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), although the popes had sympathy for the media (newspapers, radio, television), they often warned against the immoral use of such media, launching censures and prohibitions on their products, motivated by their attempts to defend ethics and orthodoxy. This has often created an image of the Church as an enemy of the modern world and of communication.

The Second Vatican Council was promulgated to renew the encounter between the Church and the contemporary world and find new ways of speaking to the world, understanding the world and making herself understood by it. One of the very first documents approved by the Council was a document on social communications (*Inter Mirifica*, 1963).

With Pope John Paul II the Church entered as an actor in the world of communication and mass media, considered not only as an instrument for spreading the Gospel and the word of God, but as the environment, the “areopagus” to dialogue in a pluralistic world. We owe above all to the Polish pope a use as protagonist of television in travel, in illness, even in his death.

With Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis, internet and Twitter have become the Holy See's normal communication tools among others.

The need for communication between Propaganda Fide and the missions around the world has pushed missionary institutes and congregations to make use of the mass media, helping the world to understand the political, social and religious situations of mission countries and soliciting mutual help and fraternity to face natural disasters, hunger, wars, persecutions. Some examples (AsiaNews, Eglises d'Asie, Ucanews, and others).

Day Three (August 26)

Science and Cultural Exchange

**Joachim Bouvet, the Kangxi Emperor, the Study of the *Yijing*
and the Theory of the Chinese Origin of Western Learning**

Professor Qi HAN

From late 17th century on, the theory of *Xixue zhongyuan*, that is to say, the Chinese Origin of Western Learning, was very popular and influential. Its main point is that Western astronomical and mathematical sciences originated from China. Some scholars have written articles on this topic, however they have not explained the Jesuits' role in the development of the theory. In this paper, I will confine myself to the theory during the Kangxi period (1662-1723). First I try to figure out when the Kangxi emperor proposed this theory. Based on some new Chinese and Western sources, I would also like to discuss the origin and development of this theory within its religious, scientific and social contexts.

**Knowledge Diffusion and Intellectual Change:
When Chinese Literati Met European Jesuits**

Dr. Chicheng MA

From 1580, the Jesuits introduced European sciences to China—an autarkic civilization whose intelligentsia was dominated by Confucian literati. Drawing upon prefectural distributions of the Jesuits and of Chinese scientific works, this paper demonstrates that the Jesuits stimulated Confucian literati to study science. On average, the literati's scientific works increased four times in prefectures with Jesuit scientists after 1580. But this effect shrank after the Jesuits were expelled by the emperor of China in 1723. Since China's scholar-official system remained unchanged, the literati's scientific research aimed to serve the needs of statecraft rather than translating into economic progress.

The Role of Jesuit Scientists in Missionary Work

Professor Agustín UDÍAS, S.J.

In the 16th to 18th centuries, before the suppression of the order, and in modern time after its restoration, Jesuit scientists played an important role in the missionary work in America, Asia, and Africa. Their work was an important complement in the missions. In early time in America, Jesuits studied and made known in Europe for the first time the fauna and flora of America and drew the first maps which serve to open these unknown lands to missionary work. In China they brought modern European astronomy and mathematics that opened the access of Christian faith to the learned and the imperial court. Jesuits astronomers became directors of the Imperial Astronomical Observatory. A similar work was carried out in India with Jesuit astronomers collaborating with the observatory of the Raj of Jaipur. In both cases through the Jesuits an important scientific interchange was carried out between East and West which helped mission work. They created also an observatory among the Guaranies in Paraguay. In modern time, after their restoration in 1814, Jesuits' scientific work helped the missions through the founding of observatories in Africa, Asia and in South and Central America, among them, those of Calcutta (India), Zikawei (Shanghai, China), Manila (Philippines), Tananarive (Madagascar), Ksara (Lebanon), Belen (Havana, Cuba), La Paz (Bolivia), and Bogota (Colombia). Jesuit observatories provided

important help to missionary work by their scientific prestige. In many countries they were the first scientific institutions to be founded. Research in biology, especially in Indian colleges, is another important contribution of modern Jesuit scientists in mission countries.

East Meets West in Cultural Exchange

Buddhism East and West: Mindfulness Meditation in America

Professor Yu XUE

This paper, based on the rising popularity of mindfulness meditation in America, reexamines the ideas and practice of decontextualization and recontextualization adopted by Buddhism in encountering with different cultures in the last 2500 years of history. This paper analyzes how mindfulness meditation in America today has shifted its goal from attaining Nirvana in traditional Buddhism to highlighting the pragmatic function of improving the mental health of practitioners. It further discusses Buddhist views of non-duality of the sacred and profane by examining how such a shift could result in the secularization of Buddhism and the sanctification of the secular.

A Century of Incoherent Missionary Policy.

Propaganda Fide and China: From the Accommodation Imperative (1659's *Instruction*) to the Condemnation of the Chinese Rites (1742).

Professor Gianni CRIVELLER, PIME

My contribution to the International Symposium on Propaganda Fide illustrates the inter-cultural features involved in the Chinese Rites Controversy, which had a devastating impact on the Chinese missionary endeavor.

The 1659 instruction by Propaganda Fide, also known as the Magna Charta of the Congregation, obliged apostolic vicars and all missionaries in eastern Asia, including China, to carry out the missionary practice of adaptation. Missionaries were prohibited from combating local customs and traditions, except when they were in obvious contradiction to faith or morals. The directives included also the invitation for the promotion of indigenous clergy.

The instructions were quite innovative, just as innovative was the missionary method envisaged by Francesco Ingoli, Propaganda Fide's first director. Sadly enough, the ground-breaking directives were not put into practice, quite paradoxically, exactly by Apostolic Vicars and missionaries sent by Propaganda Fide.

Subsequent pronouncements by Propaganda Fide and by the same Pontifices contradicted early openness. Proposals coming from China for the promotion of Chinese clergy and liturgical adaptation were disapproved. At the end of the Rites Controversy, Chinese Christians were forced to discontinue the practice of the traditional rites in honour of the ancestors.

The Rites Controversy was initiated in Fujian province in mid-1635. Dominican and Franciscan missionaries objected to the evangelization method introduced to China by Matteo Ricci and Giulio Aleni. Propaganda Fide and the Holy See were called in to declare whether or not the Christians were allowed to participate in the ancestral rituals. In contradiction with 1659's Instruction, Rome was unable to make a coherent decision, and the controversy dragged on. Pope Clement XI was determined to disapprove the Rites hoping, at the same time, to save China Mission from destruction. Sadly, the two objectives could not be achieved together. In 1742, Benedict XIV condemned the Rites in the most solemn fashion, putting to a definitive end China Mission as envisaged by Matteo Ricci.

**Promoting the Sinicization of Catholicism in Republican China:
the Role of Propaganda Fide in Canton**

Professor Thierry MEYNARD

In 1919, the Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud* marked the call of the Vatican to promote the local Church in the mission territories outside Europe and North America. Its reception and implementation in China proved particularly difficult, but Propaganda Fide greatly supported the efforts of Antoine Fourquet, MEP, Apostolic Vicar of Canton (1923-1947). Based on original documents of the Archives of the Propaganda Fide and of the Archives of the Diocese of Canton, we shall examine the general context of the Church in China at that time, and more specifically how the new policies made by Propaganda Fide were actively promoted in Canton by Fourquet, and how Propaganda Fide supported him in his conflict with the MEP. Despite many achievements in better inserting the Catholic Church within the Chinese society, the personality of Fourquet and his methods alienated many, especially the MEP, and finally Propaganda Fide ordered him to resign. Through this case study we shall reflect on the historical significance of the promotion of the local Church and the role of the universal Church as represented then by Propaganda Fide.