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# Francesco Ingoli's *Relazione delle Quattro Parti del Mondo*: Charting New Pathways in the History of Political Thought

Alberto Fabris

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**Abstract:** In this paper, I explore new research paths to reevaluate the significance of Francesco Ingoli as a political thinker. This reassessment is conducted through a philosophical and conceptual analysis of his work as the General Secretary of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide. I focus particularly on his *Relazione delle Quattro Parti del Mondo* (circa 1631), a text where Ingoli merges data from missionary reports and scholarly treatises with his own insights on global geography, politics, and anthropology proposing an innovative perspective on newly discovered regions. Despite the importance of Ingoli's work, attesting to the deep resemantisation of political space that resulted from 16th and 17th-century geographical discoveries, an in-depth assessment of his political thought from the perspective of political philosophy is still largely missing. In particular, by means of an enquiry into the Church's efforts in adapting evangelization strategies across different regions of the world, including the development of a cosmopolitan and multilingual clergy, and the gathering of detailed information on the geographical, cultural, and ethnic characteristics of each area, sometimes even through indigenous correspondents, I intend to point out possible ways to explore the global interconnections that emerged at the dawn of early modernity. Finally, this paper aims to shed new light on the impact of extra-European contributions on Western culture, as well as on Early Modernity as a global and multipolar phenomenon, characterized by cultural hybridization and reciprocal transfer.

**Keywords:** Francesco Ingoli; Congregatio de Propaganda Fide; Counter-Reformation; Political Thought; First Globalization; Cultural Hybridization; Ethnogeography.

## 1. Introduction: "A Comprehensive Ecumenical Vision of the Universe"

On June 5, 2022, a pivotal shift occurred within the Catholic Church's structure for global evangelization: the Apostolic Constitution *Praedicate evangelium* came into effect. This significant reform, initiated by Pope Francis, led to the dissolution of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples and the establishment of the Dicastery for Evangelization. This change superseded the *Immortalis Dei* bull of 1967, enacted by Pope Paul VI, which itself had transformed the ancient Congregatio de Propaganda Fide. The latter was originally founded by Gregory XV in

1622 through the bull *Inscrutabili Divinae*. Despite the Congregation's critical role in shaping and managing missionary activities across varied political, cultural, and religious contexts globally, a comprehensive historical analysis of the Propaganda Fide had not been undertaken until recent years.

The lack of a holistic history of the Congregation was noted as early as 1935 by Giuseppe Monticone in his article for the *Enciclopedia Italiana*.<sup>1</sup> This gap was only bridged in 2018 with Giovanni Pizzorusso's seminal work, offering the first thorough reconstruction of the Congregation's inception, structure, and operational mechanisms. Pizzorusso's research also illuminated the Congregation's influential figures and its extensive global communication networks<sup>2</sup> Although these studies are contributing to the historiographical debate on the government of the missions at the time of the Counter-Reformation, much remains to be done in the field of intellectual history and the history of political thought.

For example, it would be worth reconstructing the impact that the term 'propaganda' – a neologism introduced by Gregory XV – had on the intellectual lexicon of the 17th century, its evolution that led Niccolò Tommaseo to criticize its degenerate use in the vocabulary he edited in 1861<sup>3</sup> and the attempts to attenuate its meaning that appeared increasingly compromised by the Church in the 20th century.<sup>4</sup> This lacuna is even more remarkable as Propaganda's input was fundamental in promoting a truly global apprehension of the world and in forging conceptual and administrative tools to ensure a government (expressed certainly not as *imperium*, but as *cura*) of universal – and therefore authentically Catholic – scope. In this way, the new curial dicastery fully embodied that correlation between geographical knowledge and political discourse that had been maturing since the 16th century (particularly in Italy)<sup>5</sup> and that led Jean Amsler to argue that "around 1600, it is likely that only Church leaders had a truly ecumenical vision of the universe".<sup>6</sup>

Similar considerations apply to Francesco Ingoli, the man who led the Congregation from its foundation for three decades until his death shortly after the end of the Thirty Years' War.<sup>7</sup> Educated as a civil and canon jurist, with a doctorate in Law from Padua in 1601, Ingoli was also a polyglot, proficient in French, Spanish, Greek, and Arabic, as noted by his contemporaries<sup>8</sup> and a keen student of astronomy. After having taught law in Ravenna, he served as secretary to prominent cardinal families, in-

cluding the Caetani, Lancelotti, and Ludovisi. This role facilitated his move to Rome, immersing him in the city's prominent academies and astronomical circles.

Ingoli's intense polemical activity began with his 1616 work *Disputatio de situ et quiete Terrae*, in which he challenged the theories of Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo. Historiographical focus has often been on this aspect of his career, particularly his refutations, drafted frequently as an advisor to the Index, of scientific positions considered heterodox, especially after the 1616 condemnation of Copernicanism. Critiques have often highlighted Ingoli's perceived lack of competence compared to the scientists he opposed.<sup>9</sup>

However, his intellectual contributions extend beyond these polemics. Following the ascension of his patron Alessandro Ludovisi (Gregory XV) to the papacy, Ingoli was entrusted with key responsibilities, including collaborating on Conclave reform, reorganizing court ceremonial, and notably, serving as Secretary-General for the Congregatio de Propaganda Fide. In this capacity, Ingoli's role has often been undervalued, portrayed merely as a bureaucratic functionary, without due recognition of the significant impact of his initiatives.

Among these initiatives were the establishment of the Polyglot Typography and the Urban College,<sup>10</sup> the creation of an archive for comprehensive understanding of various evangelization contexts, and the authorship of the *Relazione delle quattro parti del mondo* (Report of the Four Parts of the World). Each of these contributions played a critical role in the propagation and management of missionary activities, showcasing Ingoli's multifaceted and influential role within the Congregation and the broader intellectual and ecclesiastical spheres.

This research agenda starts precisely from these gaps and intends to present some avenues of research that, building on the intellectual figure and work of Ingoli, could offer new elements for reflection on early modern political thought. More specifically, the intention here is to seek insight into 17th-century political thought through the lens of a *practise-orientated* text with considerable operational and conceptual repercussions on the Church's approach, rather than to do so through the frame of one of the main contemporary theoretical formulations. Furthermore, by means of an enquiry into Ingoli's efforts to adapt evangelization to the various regions of the world, provide the Church with a cosmopolitan and polyglot clergy, and collect data about the geographical, cultural and ethnic specificities of each province (even through indigenous correspondents), I intend to point out some possible ways to explore the global interconnections underlying early modern political thought. Finally, I would like to draw attention to some methodological aspects that emerge when the historian of ideas focusses on texts where the conceptual drive is combined with unquestionable practical aims, just like the *Relazione*. The selection of sources and interlocutors, their categorizing in the Propaganda archive that his secretary was carrying out and their exposition in a text that had the dual ambition of describing the state of an ever-expanding world and constructing the gaze necessary to contemplate and govern it offer an unparalleled testbed for studying the continuous tension between conceptual apprehension of reality and the operational dimension that it discloses.

Ultimately, the goal is to demonstrate how a text such as Ingoli's serves as an exemplary case study for applying critical analytical tools. This approach resonates with perspectives like those in Yves Lacoste's *La géographie, ça sert, d'abord, à faire la guerre* (Geography Serves, First of All, to Make War), which advocates for an examination of the operational and ideological power of knowledge. Ingoli's work, reflecting the challenges and tensions of early globalization, offers a valuable framework to understand the dynamic relationship between knowledge, power, and global expansion in the early modern era.

## 2. Francesco Ingoli's *Relazione delle quattro parti del mondo*: science and 'care' of the new *terra universalis*

The outcome of a long gestation, the *Relazione delle quattro parti del mondo* is particularly intriguing for its editorial history. Fabio Tosi,<sup>11</sup> who edited and published the text in 1999, posits that the *Relazione* was finalized around 1631. Ingoli, in this process, compiled and organized numerous letters detailing the progress of Catholic missions worldwide, initially directed to Capuchin Valeriano Magni, the nuncio to Emperor Ferdinand II. The work comprises five letters, with four dedicated to different continents and a fifth focusing on "the efforts accomplished in Rome for the Promotion of the Faith" This compilation was a refinement of the Secretary's correspondence, undertaken with the assistance of Giovanni Battista Agucchi, the apostolic nuncio to the Republic of Venice. The latter, according to Ingoli himself, was a man well versed in eloquence and politically very prudent (as evidenced by his diplomatic career and duties at the Serenissima) and would have amended his friend's writing on several occasions. Magni's interest in garnering economic and political support from the German princes for Rome shaped the *Relazione's* initial purpose. It was intended as a pamphlet to advocate for missionary activities, especially in regions where political-religious tensions underscored the necessity of rallying rulers to the Catholic cause. The initial version of the work, based on correspondence between Ingoli and the imperial nuncio, examined challenges faced by Catholic missions, including widespread heretical influence among sovereigns and populations, internal resistance, conflicts between orders, and political disputes necessitating compromise and "reason of State" strategies.

Concerns arose within the Congregation regarding the publication of such a sensitive document, which risked becoming a tool for Rome's adversaries. Ingoli, in fact, highlighted with great lucidity the fragilities and fault points on the European and world chessboard, suggesting a shrewd policy of infiltration and instigating divisions in Protestant countries such as Holland or England, but also clashing with the resistance to Roman intrusions into Spanish and Portuguese colonial policy.

Despite these concerns, the Secretary's insights on global evangelization and the Congregation's innovative missionary strategy garnered significant interest within the Curia. Ingoli's correspondence with Agucchi reveals that the cardinals' eagerness to review the manuscript drafts led to numerous delays, with many urging the

transformation of what was initially a simple pamphlet into a more comprehensive and ambitious treatise. It is precisely this transition – from a public writing aimed at gaining the Church the political support of the imperial establishment to a restricted document for the Curia itself – that explains the current status of the text and is crucial to understanding its use and influence.

In the first place, therefore, the *Relazione* is a report for the internal use of the Congregation, acting as a confidential document that shaped the thoughts and practices of ecclesiastical hierarchies well into the 18th century. Comparable to the ambitious cartographic projects of the era – such as the Gallery of Maps commissioned by Gregory XIII – Ingoli's text aims to present a detailed portrayal of the world. To do so, it theorizes and applies a specific paradigm, aligning with the efforts of cartographers, literati, and thinkers (emblematically labelled 'Worldmakers' by Ayesha Ramachandran)<sup>12</sup> who, from the most diverse perspectives, endeavored to 'shape the world' in those years. If, as we shall see, the importance of Ingoli's writing deserves to be examined for the peculiar world-mapping it performs and for the specific discourse on geographical knowledge it deploys, the operational horizon in which the text is situated also needs to be investigated. Indeed, the *Relazione* offers the historian of ideas and the scholar of 17th-century political thought the opportunity to confront a work whose influence on the mindset and practical functioning of an institution has few parallels in contemporary literature. In this regard, a careful analysis of this writing may shed new light on the importance that works often excluded from conventional expositions on the history of political thought, such as the treaties of the secretariats, diplomatic legations, or missionary reports, also had on a theoretical level, and may offer new insights into the mutual relationship between intellectual production and administrative activities promoted by the bureaucratic apparatuses that became increasingly important with early modernity.

In this regard, reconstructing the intellectual profile of Francesco Ingoli is indeed a worthwhile endeavor. Ingoli, as the first secretary, left a lasting impact on the Congregation, ensuring its endurance as noted by Metzler.<sup>13</sup> Beyond his vital role in the institution, he also served as a consultant to the Index and was a dedicated proponent of the cultural policies of the Tridentine Church. Even though scholarship has mainly focused on his epistemological controversies – analyzed, it must be said, exclusively from the point of view of the scientists he intended to oppose – Ingoli actively collaborated with the main ecclesiastical congregations he often helped to reform and was one of the figures most capable of combining the intellectual effort the Reformed Church took on with practical commitment.

For Ingoli, the utility of scientific knowledge became paramount for the Roman Church as it faced opposition from various political and cultural fronts, a reality that became particularly evident during the Protestant Reformation. This period was marked by a heavy reliance on philology and history from the Protestant side,<sup>14</sup> which necessitated a strategic response from the Catholic Church. In reaction, the Catholic world began to employ the sciences in an openly ideological manner.

This strategic use of science was part of a broader his-

toriographical effort by the Church in territories newly discovered by Europeans. Here, Rome undertook early cultural assimilation, which included not only the development of historical accounts (for peoples who had previously not conceptualized their history in such terms) but also the appropriation of indigenous pasts.<sup>15</sup> This process of 'colonizing the imaginary' and the pursuit of innovative geographical knowledge by the Church's intellectuals were critical aspects of this approach. In line with Antonio Gramsci's keen observation, the Counter-Reformation heralded a shift in the role of prelates, increasingly transforming them into "politicians of the Catholic religion".<sup>16</sup> Francesco Ingoli epitomized this transformation.

The aim of this study is not to juxtapose Francesco Ingoli's roles as an ecclesiastical reformer and a culturally attuned secretary of the missionary Church against his function as a polemicist and advisor to the Index. On the contrary, it is essential to grasp the unity of his profile to understand how attention to the circulation and control of ideas and the need to promote a careful cultural policy were essential aspects of missionary activity, which often, it must be remembered, took the form of a *reconquista* against the ground lost under the pressure of new ideologies. Such unity of purpose emerges fully in the *Relazione delle quattro parti del mondo* and can be highlighted from several angles.

Firstly, the *Relazione* serves as a comprehensive mapping of cultural geography on a global scale. It examines the influence of ideas across different socio-political landscapes, turning the Catholic *Kulturkampf* into an effective tool for penetrating various territories. An illustrative example is Ingoli's thoughts on the role of seminaries in training Irish clergy in exile, not just as educational institutions but also as centers for fostering national consciousness among communities oppressed in their homeland.

Secondly, the work provides key insights into some of Propaganda Fide's initiatives under Ingoli's leadership, particularly the establishment of the Polyglot Press and the Urban College. These institutions aimed to position Rome as a global hub for training an intellectual elite, centralizing knowledge and ethno-geographical information from around the world and cultivating a culture capable of engaging with all peoples in their languages. Investigating Ingoli's contributions offers fresh perspectives on how Counter-Reformation Rome sought to develop new tools for becoming the epicenter of cultural globalization. Finally, from a different angle, this paper highlights the importance of placing the *Relazione* within the broader political and cultural discourse of its time. Given the work's practical significance and its direct impact on the leadership of the Congregation, it is valuable to explore the intricate network of connections linking the *Relazione* to other contemporary political theories. This exploration can enrich the ongoing debate about the influence of theoretical works by figures like Botero, Bodin, Ramusio, or Sansovino on governing bodies, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of the interplay between theoretical ideas and their practical applications in governance.

This latter point, in particular, necessitates an in-depth analysis of how Ingoli organized the multiple sources – coming from diverse contexts and ethnic and intellectual backgrounds – that constitute the *Relazione*. Based, for

example, on recent scholarship in the field of History of Knowledge (Burke, Lässig, Blair), it will be interesting to reconstruct how Ingoli gathered, examined, and organized *information* from different types of sources (first-hand correspondents or erudite treatises) to create *knowledge* capable of guiding and supporting the Church's political and ideological project. As its compositional process shows, the *Relazione* offers a peculiar example of a heteroclitic text combining the author's personal analyses with missionary correspondence (received from very different intellectual profiles), geographical treatises and theological and political texts. In light of the growing awareness of the fact that data configuration inevitably creates biases that affect the results of data analysis, a systematic study of the *Relazione* would contribute to highlight the importance of methodological attention to data organization in the study of political doctrines. Rather than simply collecting heterogeneous materials, Ingoli has always been interested in the organization of his sources, which he sorted out and combined to build the archive of the Propaganda. This operation unveils an implicit but unmistakable political vision, in the form of an overall (biased) gaze which acted as an ordering principle looming over his considerable and composite corpus. This gaze deserves to be reconstructed and situated among contemporary works of political theory, especially since the *Relazione* had a notable practical impact thanks to its use as a handbook for the evangelizing mission of Propaganda around the world.

Finally, far from being a mere collection of texts and correspondences, Ingoli's work presents original theoretical insights, often inseparable from the practical implications they aimed to promote. In this regard, it is worth quoting in full one of the opening passages of the text, where the Secretary reflects on the nature and specificities of pastoral governance in a rapidly expanding global scenario.

The vigilance and pastoral care of the Congregation embraces the whole world and will increasingly extend to parts of it hitherto unknown and unvisited. Certainly, since the world was created, no special and diligent care of a single head and a small number of members, such as that of our Congregation, has been extended to the whole world at the same time.<sup>17</sup>

Extracts such as this one, and others that could be cited, fully testify to the degree of awareness of functionaries in an administration that, for the first time, considered the entire world within its operational purview, a scope further anticipated to encompass imminent new discoveries.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, the fact that these remarks were promoted by the head of a body intent on devising tangible tools for a government with global reach elevates them beyond mere rhetoric, necessitating careful scrutiny by the historian of political thought. Since Amerigo Vespucci's initial letters dramatically influenced Italian culture and political thought, "knowledge and the very concept of the earth changed profoundly; thanks to explorers, missionaries, and geographers, the world became visible and, for the first time, apprehensible in its entirety. But the novelty of this understanding, as presented by Ingoli, is not so much epistemological as political: it has now become possible to attribute to a single institution, and to the few people

who run it, a mission whose extension coincides with that of the Earth".<sup>19</sup> Compared to the 'competing' political forms, which aspired to varying degrees of global governance, the Counter-Reformation Church exhibited notable specificities. Indeed, the Petrine universalism that had been conceptually forged through theological and juridical treatises during the Middle Ages found a peculiar testing ground in the age of the great discoveries. Texts such as Ingoli's are therefore fundamental to understanding the specificities of the Roman model, which in many ways was more attentive to the ethnic and anthropological specificities of the new peoples and even incorporated them into its governance structures more effectively than other nation-states. From a political philosophical standpoint, it will be interesting to contrast Ingoli's concept of 'cura universale' (universal care) with contemporary notions such as *potestas*, *imperium* and sovereignty to show that many of the concepts deployed in the *Relazione* contrast with those elaborated by theorists of sovereignty (e.g. Bodin).

### 3. *Terra universalis*: New Perspectives on Early Modern Political Spatiality

The new concept of space that emerged across the 16th-17th century has been studied from several angles. Historians of science,<sup>20</sup> epistemologists, and historians of geography<sup>21</sup> analyzed the genesis of both the concept of 'universal Earth' and the emerging science of modern geography. In particular, the mutual implications between geographical and cosmological discoveries, and their influence on the elaboration of epistemological tools to conceptualize the new spatiality that has been taking shape since the 16th century, have been the focus of numerous contributions in the field of philosophy and history of science. The finding of new territories led to a reconceptualisation of spatiality, transforming the way it was described, mapped, and thought.<sup>22</sup> The encounter with a space perceived as fluid, unstructured, and in any case to be rationalized, and with cultures endowed with other paradigms (whose contribution to modern thought was strongly misunderstood until recent years) led to singular phenomena of hybridization. Among them, works such as *Les Singularitez de la France antarctique* or the *Cosmographie universelle* by the French cosmographer and explorer André Thevet (1516-1592) show the peculiar fruits of the crossbreeding of classical literature, theological sources, and scientific knowledge following contact with new lands and the culture and socio-anthropological specificities of their populations. As Lestringant argues, the chaos wrought by the crumbling of many of the hitherto valid certainties had the singular effect of making men like Thévet more receptive to the cultural diversity of the indigenous peoples with whom he came into contact. This, for example, prompted the geographer to look for aspects in the native myths that could complement classical sources and European beliefs (which, it should be noted, did not completely re-absorb the indigenous elements). This reconceptualisation underpins the approach of European thinkers to 'newly discovered' populations, which planted the seeds of what will become modern anthropology,<sup>23</sup> and laid the indispensable premises for the

forthcoming rise of capitalism.<sup>24</sup> Thus, as different disciplines have shown from distinctive perspectives, the pervasive renovation of the 16th-century *episteme* constructed a new concept of the Earth, conceived as “the universal space of human existence”.<sup>25</sup> Despite the great attention these issues have received in recent years, Ingoli’s reflection on the emergence of the new *Terra universalis* has been substantially neglected by those historians who have traced the political implications of 17th-century spatiality. In this contribution, I therefore want to point out some avenues of research to show how certain aspects inherent in his thought (in particular, what can be described as an anthropogeographical and geopolitical awareness) can provide new elements for understanding pre-modern political spatiality.

In the coeval years and immediately preceding the Secretary, especially in the Italian area, the implications between geographical knowledge and political thought had become so close that some scholars were prompted to speak of the “territorialization of power” with a consequent “politicization of space”.<sup>26</sup> Certainly, the influence of the ‘spatial turn’ resulting from disruptive scientific discoveries and the extension of the geographical horizon affected practically every aspect of thought between the end of the 15th century and throughout the 17th century. However, as several researchers have pointed out, the Italian area was particularly precocious in measuring the political consequences of a space that appeared increasingly ‘striated’ and marked by a great complexity of variables (historical, economic, cultural, etc.). Indeed, if it is true that “the link between history and politics is not an invention of the 16th century”, it must also be said that until that date “no geographical texts were written for direct political use”.<sup>27</sup> From then on, however, the undermining of many previous assumptions and the shattering emergence of knowledge that had been precluded to the Ancients made the authors of the time particularly sensitive to this ‘call to territorialization’. By this, one should not only understand the fascination for travel tales and accounts of newly discovered lands (which often lingered in the exotic and fabulous), but also the growing attention to the influence of the territory in the construction of cultures and human identities. In this regard, in addition to the frequent observations of philosophers such as Giordano Bruno on the generative influences of the country on the constitution of its inhabitants, mention should also be made of the strong relativistic charge that Montaigne derived by situating his thought at other latitudes. Moreover, the splintering of European religious and political identity and the emergence of lands with uncertain connotations but characterized by an apparent cultural (and even anthropological) irreducibility made the borders drawn on maps increasingly fragmented and porous, and the attempt to provide adequate political responses to such a fluid situation more problematic. In addition to the technical difficulties faced by cartographers such as Mercator, the new spatiality compelled those authors engaged in the construction of the concept of universal Earth<sup>28</sup> to address the social, economic, and cultural factors that intersected it. Space, in short, appeared less and less as a homogeneous extension but became charged with interactions and power relations due to the interplay of its variables. From the 16th century onwards, and with increasing insistence,

political thought was to map a chessboard where power relations and strategies were thought of as functions of space and its qualities (both in terms of resources and human geography). In other words, as the way of understanding and defining space grew more complex, this element became increasingly charged with a political character. This fact is all the more remarkable in that some of the greatest contributions to the constitution of a geography with strong political connotations came from an area that the Age of Discovery would make increasingly subordinate and peripheral. Countless factors certainly contributed to this: the risk of increasing marginalization perceived by those states, such as Venice, that had built their supremacy in a geographical space that threatened to be overturned;<sup>29</sup> the great fragmentation of the territorial realities of the Peninsula; the peculiarity of the political form assumed by the Church, especially after the Council of Trent, to name but a few of the most relevant. Therefore, in a certain sense, the Italian point of view (despite the differences between the local actors) stemmed from a reaction feeling and, faced with the ‘loss of its own space’, made new knowledge the tools with which to recover lost ground.

The figure of Francesco Ingoli must therefore be placed in this context and within the framework of the Catholic Church, which, following the Reformation and the loss of its unchallenged dominance over European spirituality and politics, attempted to radically rethink itself.<sup>30</sup> As scholarship has abundantly shown, the immense work of reshaping Catholicism involved a formalization of doctrine and an extensive restructuring of the organization of the institution. However, among the aspects on which recent research is placing increasing emphasis is the unprecedented use of knowledge and the sciences, which were at the center of an ever more ideological polarization. In this regard, the philological criticism developed by Humanism had been a key tool in the hands of Protestants to refute a certain exegesis of Scripture and counter Roman primacy. Similarly, Rome’s ability to centralize information on newly discovered land and its ability to elaborate a vision and government model with a global scope<sup>31</sup> seemed, for an author like Botero, the best tool to “repair the damage that the Church had had to suffer because of heresy in Germany and throughout the North”. In the eyes of many Counter-Reformation thinkers, the immense territorial expansion the world was witnessing therefore seemed a gift of providence to restore the losses “Religion” had suffered in Europe. To take advantage of this opportunity – and preserve the New World from the contaminations of heresy – it was necessary, however, to equip oneself with the conceptual and operational tools to subject this new scenario to Roman supremacy. Such considerations are fundamental in order to grasp the militant tone that underlies the intellectual production of Giovanni Botero, author of the *Relazioni Universali*, a work to which recent critics have recognized a resolutely geopolitical stance.<sup>32</sup> With that epitome – which the author triggered by the request of his patron, Cardinal Federico Borromeo, to report on the state of Christianity in the world – Botero inaugurated a singular genre. The *Relazioni* are, in fact, at a time, a geographical mapping of the world, an assessment of the power of states and their mutual balances, and a religious and

ethnographic profile of different populations. Works such as this, to which must be added the better-known *Della Ragion di Stato*, testify to how heated and lively the debate was around the need to explore the emerging political spatiality and the ideological status of the sciences.

Forty years later, when Ingoli put pen to paper on his *Relazione delle quattro parti del mondo*, the great epistemological armamentarium developed by the Counter-Reformation had combined with an advanced practical and administrative apparatus to transform the sophisticated geopolitical knowledge Rome now possessed into an instrument of universal government. Obviously, Catholic prominence had not failed to provoke violent reactions, and not only on the Reformed side, as evidenced by the fierce controversy over state sovereignty or the strenuous defense of the prerogatives enjoyed by the *Patronato real* opposed by the Iberian powers against Roman interference.<sup>33</sup> In the 16th century, and at least in the first part of the 17th century, in fact, the colonial possessions of Spain and Portugal stretched over an immense area, administered with wide margins of autonomy even in spiritual matters. Especially in the American continent, the two Iberian crowns were very reluctant to authorize the passage of foreign missionary personnel and imposed centralized administrative divisions that in most cases took no account of the ethnic, linguistic, and cultural specificities of the native peoples. Therefore, the objective of this contribution is to draw attention to the need to reconstruct the innovative approach of Ingoli to political space (that went through a careful examination of all the factors attributable to human geography). Such a reconstruction passes from an analysis of those concepts employed by the author that denote the 17th-c. reconceptualization of space, such as that of *nationes*, used to indicate the interconnection between territory, population, and culture (ethnos, language, religion, etc.). The use of such conceptuality shows the irreducibility of the spatiality theorized by Ingoli with that promoted by other contemporary theorists of modern statehood and produce new insights on the reconceptualisation of 17th-century space from the perspective of political philosophy. Furthermore, the Secretary's considerations on the 'fluidifying' effects of migration, cultural hybridization and mestizo offer us an innovative perspective on the way these phenomena were first theorized. Therefore, the figure and work of Ingoli offer a valuable perspective for a better understanding of the issues arising from the first globalization, shedding new light on the emergence of concepts that played such a large part in the formation of modern thought.

#### 4. De-Europeanize Christianity and Making It a Global Religion

Having mentioned the active role that Propaganda and its secretary played in promoting a conception and policy of space that was different and contrary to that implemented by the colonial states of the time (also through a singular recourse to the tools offered by scientific knowledge), it is now time to consider another aspect of Ingoli's thought worthy of interest. Indeed, it is necessary to highlight the great importance Urban College and Polyglot Press had in Ingoli's missionary strategy, in the establishment of

which he was actively involved. Next, I will conclude with some observations on the role that non-European sources and correspondents played on the *Relazione*, pointing out some compositional peculiarities of the text and hinting at future paths of research.

As the Secretary also emphasizes in the final part of his writing – the already mentioned *Quinta lettera sulle cose fatte a Roma per la Propagazione della Fede* – the establishment of the College and the Polyglot Press was crucial for the Congregation. With the creation of the Urban College in 1627, Propaganda was in fact endowed with an institution especially dedicated to the training of native students from the very countries where they would be employed as missionaries. This would have had the double advantage of having missionary personnel familiar with the contexts in which they would work but would also have emancipated the Congregation from clergy aligned with the positions of the Iberian monarchies or religious orders, which were not always in accordance with Propaganda's directives. Of course, as many have pointed out, the hostilities that projects like this found were many and "widespread resistance to the ordination of indigenous candidates to the priesthood from the mid-sixteenth century to the very end of the seventeenth (and beyond) stands as one of the more spectacular missed opportunities in the history of Roman Catholicism".<sup>34</sup> In any case, the importance of institutions such as these in fostering interactions between European culture and other milieus is considerable, and certainly not limited to a one-way transfer that reduces non-European interlocutors to mere receivers. On the contrary, figures such as the Franciscan missionary, historian, and linguist Diego de Valadés (1522-82?), of Tlaxcalteca mother but nephew of the eponymous conquistador, show how, in reality, the contribution of the natives who built a bridge between European and local cultures was extremely original and is of great importance for reconstructing the intellectual history of the Counter-Reformation. After training at a college for indigenous elites in Mexico City and contributing to the evangelization of Nahua, Tarascan, and Otomi-speaking peoples, he authored a *Rhetorica Christiana* that hybridized the argumentative tools widely used by preachers with the use of images used as a cognitive medium by Mexica culture. The work is an innovative reformulation of the *ars memoriae* parallel to other refinements that this discipline enjoyed in the same period (for instance, Giordano Bruno)<sup>35</sup>, an apologetic of the successes of evangelization in the New World, but also a valuable glimpse to shed light on ethnoanthropological aspects such as imagery and the use of cognitive support by Mesoamerican civilizations.<sup>36</sup> After editing the text in Perugia in 1579 (it was the first work published in Europe by a Native American), its author collaborated with the Roman Curia by promoting the expertise he had gained regarding the evangelization of Central American populations and fundamental aspects of their cultures (including their language, calendar and pedagogical methods). Aware of the importance of these tools for missionary work, Ingoli has always actively promoted the entry of intellectuals of indigenous extraction into ecclesiastical hierarchies.

In parallel to the College, the Polyglot Press was also dedicated to the study of the languages and cultures with which Rome was in dialogue. As has already been noted,

the missionary impetus of those years represented an unprecedented momentum for the study of linguistics and sowed the seeds for anthropological and cultural studies.

Thanks to a large number of scholars and the dense network of correspondents made possible by the development of the papal administration, the Church became the institution best able to convey its message in the largest number of idioms, including those of the Asian empires and American nations. In those years, Rome attempted to exert its cultural hegemony by publishing and translating all sorts of didactic, historical, and theological works aimed, depending on the context, at training missionaries and providing them with adequate support for evangelization, but also – as Ingoli repeatedly emphasizes – at legitimizing the Catholic faith and opposing its detractors. To this end, often having to interact with intellectually refined interlocutors (whether it was to refute the Qur'an or obtain permission from local authorities to preach) it became increasingly urgent to educate missionaries in the study of the texts and systems of thought of the various contexts. The intellectual ferment of those years was certainly not without consequences. Today, in fact, historiography increasingly claims the multipolar character of the Counter-Reformation, showing how, far from being the emanation of a doctrine imposed from the center to the periphery, it was instead the fruit of exchanges and mediations. Thanks in part to the activism of its Secretary, the Congregation became an important node in the economy of these exchanges, acting not only as an organ of emanation of the Catholic message, but also as one of the main circuits through which non-European thought became part of the European identity.

In recent years, the historiographical debate on missionary activities and the multipolar character of early globalization and Counter-Reformation has benefited from important contributions.<sup>37</sup> Among them, Simon Ditchfield<sup>38</sup> has repeatedly questioned the possibility of speaking of Tridentine Catholicism as a *world religion* enquiring the meaning to be attributed to this expression. Certainly, as he points out, in purely numerical terms, the very small increase in the percentage of the world's Christian population between 1400 and 1700 (from 15% to 23%)<sup>39</sup> means that "Christianity, let alone Roman Catholicism, was not yet a world religion at the end of the *twentieth century*".<sup>40</sup> In the same way, even the demographic growth of Europe or the territorial and economic expansion of its political entities confirm that in the same period it was mainly Central and East Asia that experienced the greatest development. It was not until the 19th century that the Old continent boomed. In any case, the greatest increase in the Christian population occurred not so much in the age of the great discoveries as in the evangelization of large parts of sub-Saharan Africa in the postcolonial era. However, what makes it possible to consider Christianity – particularly Tridentine Catholicism – as a global phenomenon well before its massive planetary spread does not lie so much in the Christianization of the new Latin American contexts nor in the alleged 'Triumph of the West over the Rest'.<sup>41</sup> On the contrary, if this sentiment arose as early as the 16th century, "this was largely the result less of the *physical* return of missionaries from the New World, sub-sarahan Africa and Asia, but of the tsunami of *written* reports that flooded from printing pres-

ses from Mexico to Madrid, and Macau to Milan".<sup>42</sup> Rather than the actual outcome of evangelization (which is certainly not to be denied), the feeling that the challenge and rebirth of Catholicism depended as much on its ability to meet the challenge of the new *terra universalis* can be seen in the great flowering of missionary literature and the emphasis placed on the reorganization of the Church's missionary apparatus.

The intellectual figure of Francesco Ingoli stands precisely at the convergence of these two occurrences: a pivotal figure in the implementation of Propaganda fide, the Secretary conceived his mandate and the dicastery he led as the point of irradiation and return of global missionary activity. Retracing the explicit and implicit sources of the *Relazione* will allow us to shed new light on the impact of extra-European contributions on Western culture, as well as on Early Modernity as a global and multipolar phenomenon, characterized by cultural hybridization and reciprocal transfer. Ingoli's attempt to build a universal Church capable of adapting to various contexts will give us the opportunity to analyze a concrete example of cultural mestizo, described by scholars such as Gruzinski. In this sense, such research can concur with the historiographical debate aimed at studying reciprocal influences during the first globalization, as it investigates the fundamental role that the contacts with extra-European populations played in shaping modernity and the idea of Europe.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The article is now available on the online portal of the Treccani Institute at the following link: [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/propaganda-fide\\_%28Enciclopedia-Italiana%29/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/propaganda-fide_%28Enciclopedia-Italiana%29/). This is also confirmed in F. Tosi's introduction to F. Ingoli, *Relazione delle quattro parti del mondo*, Urbaniana University Press, Roma, 1999, p. VIII note 7. Henceforth this text will be referred to simply as *Relazione* and English translations will be mine.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Giovanni Pizzorusso, *Governare le missioni, conoscere il mondo nel XVII secolo. La Congregazione pontificia De Propaganda Fide*, Sette Città, Viterbo, 2018. The same author contributed a very recent work that is destined to be an important reference for the study of the Congregation: *Propaganda Fide. 1. La congregazione pontificia e la giurisdizione sulle missioni*, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, Roma, 2022.

<sup>3</sup> "Ma, perchè gli avversarii delle cose sacre prendono volentieri così le parole come le cose agli usi proprii, Fare una propaganda, Far propaganda, dicesi anco di Società o impresa o azione cospirante di più pers. per fondare o distruggere checchessia, per piantare e spiantare, per affermare e negare. Sarebbe da smettere". The electronic version of the Tommaeso-Bellini is now freely available. For the cited entry see <https://www.tommaseobellini.it/#/items>

<sup>4</sup> My upcoming article *Worldwide Vigilance and Pastoral Care: A Genealogy of the Concept of 'Propaganda'* delves into a detailed genealogical analysis of the concept of propaganda, specifically within the context of the Reformed Church and the Congregatio de Propaganda Fide.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Romain Descendre, "Dall'occhio della storia all'occhio della politica. Sulla nascita della geografia politica nel Cinquecento" in E. Mattioli (ed.), *Nascita della storiografia e organizzazione dei saperi*, Olshki, Firenze, 2010, p. 155-179 where the author states that "until the 16th century no geographical texts were written for direct political use" (p. 157).

<sup>6</sup> J. Amsler, *La Renaissance (1415-1600)*, in *Histoire Universelle des Explorations*, Paris 1959, II, p. 405.

<sup>7</sup> For a biographical profile of Ingoli, see G. Pizzorusso, "Ingoli, Francesco", in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, available online ([https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/francesco-ingoli\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/francesco-ingoli_(Dizionario-Biografico))) and F. Tosi's introduction to F. Ingoli, *Relazione*, (op. cit), which also contains the Italian translation of the contribution "Francesco Ingoli, der erste Sekretär der Kongregation" published by J. Metzler in *Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide memoria rerum*. 1622-1972, Roma-Friburg-Wien, 1971-1976, vol. I/1, pp. 197-243. For further



contributions, see footnote 9 in F. Ingoli, *Relazione*, (op. cit.), p. X.

<sup>8</sup> On this point, see Girolamo Fabbri's account reported by F. Tosi, op. cit. p. XI.

<sup>9</sup> See M. Bucciattini, *Contro Galileo. Alle origini dell'affaire*, Olschki, Firenze, 1995, p. 90, and G. Pizzorusso, "Ingoli, Francesco", op. cit.

<sup>10</sup> On the satellite institutions of Propaganda Fide, see Giovanni Pizzorusso, "I satelliti di Propaganda Fide: il Collegio Urbano e la Tipografia poliglotta. Note di ricerca su due istituzioni culturali romane nel XVII secolo", *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome*, 2004/ 116-2, pp. 471-498.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *Relazione*, p. XVII sg.

<sup>12</sup> Ayesha Ramachandran, *The Worldmakers. Global Imagining in Early Modern Europe*, Chicago University Press, Chicago and London, 2015.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Metzler "Francesco Ingoli, der erste Sekretär der Kongregation" now available in *Relazione*, p. 293.

<sup>14</sup> On this subject, see R. Descendre, "Une géopolitique pour la Contre-Réforme: les *Relazioni universali* de Giovanni Botero (1544-1617)". Bruno Toppan and Denis Fachard (eds.), *Esprit, lettre(s) et expression de la Contre-Réforme en Italie à l'aube d'un monde nouveau*, Nancy, CSLI, 2005, p. 47-59; "Dall'occhio della storia all'occhio della politica. Sulla nascita della geografia politica nel Cinquecento", in E. Mattioda (ed.), *Nascita della storiografia e organizzazione dei saperi*, Olschki, Firenze, 2010, p. 155-179 and the introduction to *L'état du monde. Giovanni Botero entre raison d'état et géopolitique*, Droz, Geneva, 2009.

<sup>15</sup> See S. Gruzinski, *La colonisation de l'imaginaire : Sociétés indigènes et occidentalisation dans le Mexique espagnol (XVI-XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, Gallimard, Paris, 1988; *The Mestizo Mind: The Intellectual Dynamics of Colonization and Globalization*, Routledge, London, 2002; *La machine à remonter le temps. Quand l'Europe s'est mise à écrire l'histoire du monde*, Fayard, Paris, 2017.

<sup>16</sup> This definition appears in Quaderno VIII, "For a History of Italian Intellectuals. Miscellaneous and Notes on Philosophy III", 1269.

<sup>17</sup> *Relazione*, p. 12. Original text: "Abbraccia la vigilanza e la cura pastorale della Congregazione tutto il mondo, e sempre più alle parti di esso, sin' hora incognite, o non praticate si andrà estendendo. Né per certo, da poi che il mondo istesso è creato, alcuna cura così spetiale, e diligente d'un capo solo, e di un piccolo numero di membra, com'è quella della nostra Congregazione si è per tutto il mondo nel medesimo tempo distesa." Translation by the author.

<sup>18</sup> In this respect, to define the universal spiritual jurisdiction of Propaganda, the formula of Carta and Descendre, who spoke of "the staethood of the government of souls", seems very pertinent. Cf. Paolo Carta and Romain Descendre, « Présentation », *Laboratoire italien* [online], 8 | 2008, p. 4.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> See A. Koyré, *From the closed World to the infinite Universe*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1957; E. Grant, *Much Ado about Nothing: Theories of Space and Vacuum from the Middle Ages to the Scientific Revolution*, Cambridge University Press, 1981; M. Jammer, *Concepts of Space: The History of Theories of Space in Physics*, Courier Corporation, Dover, 1954; M.A. Granada, "New visions of the Cosmos," in J. Hankins (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, 2007, 270-86; K. Vermeer and J. Regier (eds.), *Boundaries, Extents and Circulations: Space and Spatiality in Early Modern Natural Philosophy*, Springer, Cham, 2016.

<sup>21</sup> See J.-M. Besse, *Les grandeurs de la terre: Aspects du savoir géographique à la Renaissance*, ENS Editions, Lyon, 2003; J. Short, *Making Space. Revisioning the World (1475-1600)*, Syracuse University Press, Syracuse, 2003.

<sup>22</sup> See F. Lestringant, *L'atelier du cosmographe ou l'image du monde à la Renaissance*, Albin Michel, Paris, 1991; D. Buisseret, *Monarchs, Ministers, and Maps: The Emergence of Cartography as a Tool of Government in Early Modern Europe*, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1992; J.B. Harley, *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2002. See also A. Ramachandran, op. cit. About the new spatiality's impact on political thought, see: C. Galli, *Spazi politici: l'età moderna e l'età globale*, il Mulino, Bologna, 2011. See also, more broadly, works by R. Descendre, J.-L. Fournel, J.-C. Zancanini.

<sup>23</sup> G. Gliozzi, *La scoperta dei selvaggi. Antropologia e colonialismo da Colombo a Diderot*, Principato editore, Milano, 1971; *Le teorie della razza nell'età moderna*, Loescher editore, Torino, 1975; *Adamo e il Nuovo mondo: la nascita dell'antropologia come ideologia coloniale: dalle genealogie bibliche alle teorie razziali (1500-1700)*, Franco Angeli, Milano, 1977.

<sup>24</sup> I. Wallerstein, *The modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, vol. I, Academic Press, New York-London, 1974; I. Wallerstein, *Histo-*

*rical Capitalism*, Verso, London, 2011; P. Linebaugh, M. Rediker, *The many-headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*, Beacon Press, Boston, 2002; S. Gruzinski, *Les quatre parties du monde: histoire d'une mondialisation*, Editions de La Martinière, Paris, 2004; S. Federici, *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*, Autonomedia, New York, 2004; G. Maifreda, *From Oikonomia to political Economy: Constructing Economic Knowledge from the Renaissance to the Scientific Revolution*, Ashgate, Farnham, 2012.

<sup>25</sup> J.-M. Besse, *Ibid.*, 378.

<sup>26</sup> Carta and Descendre, op. cit.

<sup>27</sup> R. Descendre, *Dall'occhio della storia all'occhio della politica*, op. cit., p. 157.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. J.-M. Besse, *Les grandeurs de la terre*, op. cit. In this study, Besse analyses the emergence of a geographical rationality during the 16th century and studies the construction of a new object – the universal Earth – as a consequence of the evolution of geography as an autonomous discipline.

<sup>29</sup> For a close examination of the Venetian context (and Ramusio's thinking in particular), see the works of Fiona Lejosne: *Écrire le monde depuis Venise au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle. Giovanni Battista Ramusio et les Navigazioni et viaggi*, Genève, Droz, 2021; « Les compilations géographiques vénitiennes du début de l'époque moderne : savoirs politiques et politique des savoirs », *Études Épistémè* : revue de littérature et de civilisation (XVI<sup>e</sup> - XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles), n°39, 2021; « Se substituer à Ptolémée ? Modèles, sources et mise en forme de la géographie dans les Navigazioni et viaggi de Giovanni Battista Ramusio », *Revue de géographie historique*, n°17-18, novembre 2020-mai 2021; « Penser les savoirs géographiques à l'époque moderne (XV<sup>e</sup>-XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle) »; « Production du savoir géographique à Venise au début de l'âge moderne : entre centralité vénitienne et spatialisation européenne », *Cahiers d'études italiennes*, 31 | 2020.

<sup>30</sup> For a general profile of the age of the Counter-Reformation, see Mario Bendiscioli, Massimo Marcocchi, *Riforma Cattolica. Antologia di documenti*, Studium, Roma, 1963; Marvin O'Connell, *Counter-reformation, 1550-1610*, Joanna Cotler Book, 1974; Hubert Jedin, "Riforma e controriforma: crisi, consolidamento, diffusione missionaria (XVI - XVII sec.)", in Elio Guerriero (ed.), *Storia della Chiesa*, vol. 6, Jaca Book, Milano, 1993; Martin D. W. Jones, *The Counter Reformation: Religion and Society in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1995; Robert Bireley, *The Refashioning of Catholicism, 1450-1700: A Reassessment of the Counter Reformation*, Catholic University of America Press, Washington, 1999; Michael A. Mullett, *The Catholic Reformation*, Routledge, London, 1999; John W. O'Malley, *Trent and All That: Renaming Catholicism in the Early Modern Era*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2000; Elena Bonora, *La Controriforma*, Laterza, Roma, 2001; Anthony D. Wright, *The Counter-reformation: Catholic Europe and the Non-Christian World*, Routledge, London, 2005; Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin, *Catholic Europe, 1592-1648: Centre and Peripheries*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2015.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Giovanni Pizzorusso, "La Sede apostolica tra chiesa tridentina e chiesa missionaria: circolazione delle conoscenze e giurisdizione pontificia in una prospettiva globale durante l'età moderna", *Rechtsgeschichte - Legal History*, 2012(20), pp. 382-385.

<sup>32</sup> See in this regard Blythe Alice Raviola's introduction to Giovanni Botero, *Le Relazioni universali*, Aragno, Torino, 2015 as well as Romain Descendre, "Une géopolitique pour la Contre-Réforme", op. cit.; "Une monarchie 'presque universelle'. Géopolitique de l'Empire dans les *Relazioni universali* de Giovanni Botero", in F. Crémoux and J.-L. Fournel (éd.), *Idées d'Empire en Italie et en Espagne : XVI<sup>e</sup>-XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Publications des universités de Rouen et du Havre, 2010, p. 217-232 and *L'état du monde*, op. cit.

<sup>33</sup> On the Patronato real system, see Giovanni Pizzorusso, "Problematicando el Patronato Regio. Nuevos acercamientos al gobierno de la Iglesia Ibero-Americana desde la perspectiva de la Santa Sede", in Thomas Duvé (ed.), *Actas del XIX Congreso del Instituto Internacional de Historia del Derecho Indiano* (Berlín 2016), Instituto Internacional de Historia del Derecho Indiano, Madrid 2017; "Il padroado régio portoghese nella dimensione "globale" della Chiesa romana", in Giovanni Pizzorusso, Gaetano Platania, Matteo Sanfilippo (eds.), *Gli archivi della Santa sede come fonte per la storia del Portogallo in età moderna*, Sette Città, Viterbo, 2012, pp. 177-220. See also the Max Planck Joint Project coordinated by Benedetta Albani "A new look at the Patronato Regio. The Roman Curia and the Government of the Ibero-American Church in the Early Modern Period": <https://www.lhlt.mpg.de/1864608/02-albani-patronata?c=1863727>

<sup>34</sup> Simon Ditchfield, "The 'Making' of Roman Catholicism as a 'World Religion'", in Jan Stievermann and Randall C. Zachman (eds.), *Multiple*



*Reformations? The Many Faces and Legacies of the Reformation*, Colloquia historica et theologica, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, p. 194.

<sup>35</sup> Just like the philosopher from Nola, Valdés carefully edited the engravings that accompany his work, insisting on the great value of images as a memorative medium capable of promoting a true mens artificata.

<sup>36</sup> Don Paul Abbott, “Diego Valdés and the Origins of Humanistic Rhetoric in the Americas”, in Winifred Bryan Horner; Michael Leff (eds.), *Rhetoric and Pedagogy: Its History, Philosophy, and Practice*, Routledge, London, 1995; Diego Valdés, *Rhetorica Christiana*, Julio Pimentel Álvarez (ed.), Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Ciudad de México, 2019.

<sup>37</sup> See in particular: Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity: The Gospel beyond the West*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 2003; *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*, Orbis, Maryknoll, 2009; Romain Bertrand, *L'Histoire à parts égales: récits d'une rencontre Orient-Occident (XVIe-XVIIe siècle)*, Seuil, Paris, 2011; Giuseppe Marcocci, Wietse de Boer, Aliocha Maldavsky, Ilaria Pavan (eds.) *Space and Conversions in Global Perspective*, Brill, Leiden, 2015; Thomas Banchoff, José Casanova (eds.), *The Jesuits and Globalization: Historical Legacies and Contemporary Challenges*, Georgetown University Press, Washington, 2016; Alison Forrestal, Seán Alexander Smith (eds.), *The Frontiers of Mission: Perspective on Early Modern Missionary Catholicism*, Brill, Leiden, 2016; Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia, *A Companion to the Early Modern Catholic Global Missions*, Brill, Leiden, 2018.

<sup>38</sup> Cf., Simon Ditchfield, “Of Dancing Cardinals and Mestizo Madonnas: Reconfiguring the History of Early Modern Roman Catholicism in the Early Modern Period,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 8:3 (2004): 386–408; “De-centering the Catholic Reformation: Papacy and Peoples in the Early Modern World,” *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 101 (2010): 186–208; “The ‘Making’ of Roman Catholicism as a ‘World Religion’”, op. cit.

<sup>39</sup> *World Christian Trends across 22 Centuries* (Global Diagram 4) downloadable from the website of the Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary: <http://www.gordon-conwell.edu/ockenga/research/documents/gd04.pdf>. Cf. for greater contextual detail: Todd M. Johnson and Brian J. Grim, *The World's Religions in Figures: An Introduction to International Religious Demography*, Blackwell, Oxford and Malden, 2013.

<sup>40</sup> Simon Ditchfield, “The ‘Making’ of Roman Catholicism as a ‘World Religion’”, op. cit., p. 197.

<sup>41</sup> Although this view has sometimes had the merit of questioning ‘Western’ historical and political paradigms, it risks presenting an overly linear and deterministic view of historical processes. Paradoxically, even with the intention of giving back a voice ‘to the vanquished’, the danger is to reduce them to mere passive subjects of processes in which they would have played no role. On the contrary, recent studies on missionary history, early globalisation and colonialism show a more composite scenario full of grey areas. In this regard, see James Belich, John Darwin, Margret Frenz, Chris Wickham (eds.), *The Prospect of Global History*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2016.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 198.