



A Vision Betrayed: The Jesuits in Japan and China 1542-1742

By Andrew C. Ross



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Francis Xavier's arrival in Japan in 1549 initiated a radically different approach to the spread of Christianity which was to distinguish the Jesuits from all other Europeans for the next 200 years - he insisted that his missionaries should respect and understand Japanese culture. His work was continued by Alessandro Valignano, both in Japan and China, where Jesuits gained Confucian scholar status as an introduction to their missionary life, and even became key figures in the Chinese civil service. This book recounts the story of the Jesuit missions in both civilizations. It shows how the Jesuits' sensitivity to Japanese and Chinese culture directly and consciously contradicted the imperialism of the Spanish and the Portuguese, and allowed the possibility of dialogue between East and West which other European stances denied.

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