Cosas y cartas: Scribal Production and Material Pathways in Jesuit Global Communication (1547–1573)

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Abstract

This article analyzes some of the social mechanisms and material processes involved in Jesuit global communication in the first decades of the Society’s history. The exchange of administrative correspondence, news-sheets (quadrimestres), and edifying letters from the overseas missions was coordinated by the Society’s Roman secretary, Juan Alfonso de Polanco. Communication made significant material demands on both Rome and key transmission nodes on the Jesuit network. In 1560, a decentralized system of scribal production of news and letters was established. Particular pressure was placed on Lisbon, a crucial communications hub for exchanges between Jesuits in Europe and the overseas missions. The last part of the article examines the experience of the Jesuit procurator in Lisbon, charged with managing the exchange of documents between Europe and Jesuits in Asia, Africa, and Brazil. The case of Lisbon, though exceptional, reflects many of the everyday realities of Jesuit communication during the Society’s formative period. Several documents are published in an appendix.

Keywords
Juan Alfonso de Polanco – letters – news – scribal production – communication – Jesuit colleges – missions – Rome – Lisbon – Brazil

The growth of the Society of Jesus in the early decades of its existence was dependent upon the continuous intake of personnel, the rapid proliferation of colleges, and firm direction from Rome. Clear channels of written communication were key to the early Jesuit endeavor. At the same time, managing the flow
of documents proved a challenge for the growing, increasingly far-flung organization. The scale of expansion within the early Society was significant: only a handful of colleges existed in the mid-1540s, but by the time of Ignatius’s death in 1556, there were more than forty colleges and some 1,000 Jesuits. Over the next twenty years, a further hundred colleges and numerous other establishments (professed houses and houses for novices) were founded. In regions such as northern Italy and Castile, colleges were concentrated in relatively close proximity to one another. In many instances, however, the geographic dispersal of Jesuit establishments taxed the limits of communication in the early modern world. Jesuits in Paris (from 1540), Coimbra (1542), Goa (1542), Valencia (1544), Sicily (1548), Brazil (1549), Vienna (1551), and Prague (1556) were all in regular communication with Rome and with one another.

The purpose and function of Jesuit communication has received increased attention in recent years. Nonetheless little is known of the social mechanisms and material processes that facilitated the flow of information within the early Society. In reality, the Jesuit system of communication fluctuated greatly in its formative period. Change was spurred by two factors. The first concerned the volume of material in transit. Paper was in constant flux within the Society: personnel catalogues, financial records, legal documents, papal bulls and briefs, letters and news-sheets, instructions, rules, memoranda, and letters patent routinely moved through Jesuit establishments. As the Society expanded, the volume of communication placed ever-increasing pressure on the central Jesuit institutional hub in Rome. Expansion also affected the Jesuit network as a whole, particularly at key transmission nodes such as Lisbon and Seville. The second factor was distance and the related problem of time. The

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1 See Markus Friedrich, “Government and Information-Management in Early Modern Europe. The Case of the Society of Jesus (1540–1773),” *Journal of Early Modern History* 12 (2008): 539–63; Friedrich, *Der lange Arm Roms? Globale Verwaltung und Kommunikation im Jesuitenorden 1540–1773* (Frankfurt-New York: Campus, 2011); Luke Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

2 As a broader issue in the history of communication, see Wolfgang Behringer, “Introduction: Communication in Historiography,” *German History* 24 (2006): 325–32. For work on the Jesuits, see Mario Scaduto, “La corrispondenza dei primi gesuiti e le poste italiane,” *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* [hereafter *AHSI*] 19 (1950): 237–53; Raimondo Turtas, “Alcuni rilievi sulle comunicazioni della Sardegna col mondo esterno durante la seconda metà del cinquecento,” in Turtas, *Studiare, istruire, governare. La formazione dei letrados nella Sardegna spagnola* (Sassari: Edes, 2001), 11–40; Markus Friedrich, “Circulating and Compiling the *Litterae Annuae*: Towards a History of the Jesuit System of Communication,” *AHSI* 77 (2008): 3–40; Paul Nelles, “Chancillería en colegio: la producción y circulación de papeles jesuitas en el siglo xvi,” *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna. Anéjos* 13 (2014): 49–70.
frequency of communication followed a sliding scale, with colleges in closer proximity to Rome reporting more frequently than those further afield. The high frequencies of exchange initially established within the Society would further tax the Jesuit network.

This article explores the material environment of Jesuit communication in the period 1547–1573. These years span the rule of the first three Jesuit superiors general: Ignatius of Loyola (1541–1556), Diego Laínez (1558–1565), and Francisco Borja (1565–1573). They also coincide with the tenure of the indefatigable long-term secretary of the order, Juan Alfonso de Polanco (1517–1576).³ It was Polanco who established norms for reporting to Rome and who managed the rising tide of documentation that flowed through the Society. Though the order was unambiguously centralized, communication depended upon channels of connectivity across the Jesuit network that not only linked the Roman center with peripheries, but brought together Jesuits across Europe and across the globe. As it was put in the Constitutions, the regular exchange of letters facilitated “the union of souls” and provided “mutual consolation and edification.” Letters united the disparate parts of the Jesuit corporate body both with one another and with the Roman “head.”⁴ The corporeal metaphor employed in the Constitutions serves as a reminder that communication is never a disembodied process. A variety of social actors and the configuration of the physical topology of the Jesuit network shaped the manner in which Jesuit written instruments were produced, transmitted, and received.

Much activity crucial to the workings of Jesuit communication in fact occurred far from Rome. The documents published as an appendix to the present article illuminate the material demands maintaining information flows placed upon the Jesuit network. In particular, several documents highlight the important role played by Lisbon in the Society’s global communications. In 1554, a procurator was appointed in Lisbon to coordinate activities between Rome, Portugal, and the overseas missions in Asia, Africa, and Brazil. When the missions to Spanish America began in earnest in the late 1560s, the Portuguese experience informed practice in Seville, the hub for Spanish (and Jesuit) contact with the New World. It is from this episode that the words quoted in the title of this article have been taken. From Rome came the suggestion that a

³ On Polanco and for further bibliography see now José García de Castro, Polanco. El humanismo de los jesuitas (1516–1576) (Bilbao-Santander-Madrid: Sal Terrae, 2012); Javier Burrieta Sánchez, “Polanco, Juan Alfonso,” in Diccionario Biográfico Español (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 2011–13), 41:861–63.

⁴ Constituciones Societatis Jesu, 4 vols. (Rome: Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu, 1934–48), 2:618–20.
procurator be appointed in Seville to oversee “las cosas y cartas que van y vienen” (“the things and letters that go and come”). Procurators provisioned the missions with personnel, material goods, and funds. They prepared embarking missionaries for the voyage and equipped Jesuits overseas with everything from clothing and tools to books, images, and relics. They also managed the exchange of letters, instructions, and other documents. The formulation cosas y cartas invites us to view Jesuit instruments of communication not only as tools of governance, administration, and spiritual consolation, but also as material objects located in space and time. As we shall see, the exchange of information within the Society operated within an organized system of scribal production. It also required coordinated mechanisms for the transmission and dissemination of hand-written letters, news-sheets, and other documents along designated material pathways. It is these processes and practices that are examined in the following pages.

The rhythm of Jesuit communication was regulated by a battery of instructions, memoranda, and written rules. The increased reliance upon paper instruments as tools of long-distance administration and governance is a well-known feature of the early modern world. Jesuit protocols for writing and
communication occupied a special status among the arsenal of rules and instructions employed within the Society: they were the foundation upon which the rest of the edifice rested. The first comprehensive guidelines were drafted by Polanco within months of assuming the position of secretary in 1547, the “Reglas que deven observar acerca del escribir” [Rules that must be observed concerning writing]. The “Reglas” detailed the contours of Jesuit communication with Rome and grounded routine communication in the need to unify the far-flung members of the order. Some of what was contained in the 1547 instruction was new, but for the most part Polanco sought to normalize established practice. The “Reglas” were subsequently enshrined in the Constitutions of 1558, a convenient vantage point from which to survey Jesuit communication pathways.9

The principal offices within the Society communicated in specific ways. In principle, communication exchange within the Jesuit organizational structure was unequal. College rectors, other local superiors, and Jesuits on mission wrote to their provincial superiors once a week. Rectors, Jesuits on mission, and provincial superiors in Italy and Sicily also reported weekly to Rome. Elsewhere in Europe Jesuits wrote to Rome once a month. By contrast, the Constitutions stipulated that Rome and provincial superiors need only reply to local superiors and Jesuits on mission, whether in Italy or elsewhere in Europe, once a month. In reality, the frequency of exchange could be much greater. The registers of correspondence in this period reveal that Rome normally wrote at least once a week to many Italian colleges (at Naples, Florence, and Genoa, for example).10 Under optimal conditions the travel time for letters between Rome and many colleges in Italy was well under one week, meaning that the normal scale of exchange was in fact reciprocal.11 While communication with colleges elsewhere in Europe was less stable, monthly frequencies of communication on both sides meant that here too exchange was typically reciprocal. Communication between Rome and the overseas missions followed a much more extended pattern of exchange, as we shall see presently.

Other types of documents flowed through the Jesuit network at lower frequencies. News-sheets were the most materially significant. The regular exchange of news had been one of the central innovations introduced by Polanco in 1547.
Intended first as summaries of news items included in routine correspondence, news reporting soon took on a life of its own. Written by every Jesuit college with the exception of a handful of smaller establishments, the letters were meant to contain only significant, edifying material. They were sent out at the beginning of January, May, and September each year and were commonly referred to as nuevas or nuove. They were sometimes called lettere di edificazione or cartas de edificación, at other times letras de cuatro mese. The Latinized sobriquet quadrimestres was the more usual form.12 Jesuits from the overseas missions wrote annual, and typically longer, letters due to the schedule of the Portuguese fleet. In principle the letters from overseas included material similar to that found in the quadrimestres, though their exoticism meant they rapidly acquired a certain caché both within the Society and among a broader public.13 Edifying letters from overseas were commonly referred to as “news from the Indies” (las nuevas de las Indias, nuove dell’India) or simply annuas. Whether from Europe or overseas Jesuit news-sheets included material on pastoral activities (preaching, confessions, conversions, peace-making initiatives, and the like) and the academic life of the colleges. Unlike most other forms of correspondence and reporting, they circulated throughout the Society as a whole. The idea was that each Jesuit house and college receive news from every other Jesuit establishment. Though Jesuit news had little direct bearing upon governance or administration, the scale and manner in which they were produced and circulated had a disproportionate impact upon the operations of the Jesuit network.

12 On the genesis of the quadrimestres see Nelles, “Chancillería en colegio,” 55–58. On the pastoral functions of edifying letters, see Federico Palomo, “Corregir letras para unir espíritus. Los jesuitas y las cartas edificantes en el Portugal del siglo XVI,” Cuadernos de Historia Moderna. Anejos 4 (2005): 57–81; Palomo, “De algunas cosas que sucedieron estando en misión. Espiritualidad jesuita y escritura misionera en la península Ibérica (siglos XVI–XVII),” in A companhia de Jesus na Península Ibérica no séculos XVI e XVII: espiritualidade e cultura, 2 vols. (Porto: Instituto de Cultura Portuguesa da Faculdade de Letras; Centro Inter-universitário de História de Espiritualidade, Universidade do Porto, 2004), 1119–50. The bulk of quadrimestres from the European colleges for the period 1546–62 have been published; see Litterae quadrimestres ex universis praeter Indiam et Brasilium in quibus aliqui de societate Jesu versabantur Romam missae, 7 vols. (Madrid-Rome: A. Avrial-Monumenta Historica Societatis Isus, 1894–1932).

13 In addition to the classic study of John Correia-Afonso, Jesuit Letters and Indian History 1542–1773 (Bombay-Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), see also João Pedro Ferro, “A epistolografia no quotidiano dos missionários jesuítas nos séculos XVI e XVII,” Lusitania sacra, 2ª ser., 5 (1993): 137–58; Jean-Claude Laborie, Mangeurs d’homme et mangeurs d’âme. Une correspondance missionnaire au XVIe, la lettre jésuite du Brésil, 1549–1568 (Paris: H. Champion, 2003); Florence Hsia, Sojourners in a Strange Land: Jesuits and their Scientific Missions in Late Imperial China (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 13–29.
A variety of social actors were involved in the physical transfer of written instruments. Travelling Jesuits, church officials, merchants, and other mobile agents were frequently entrusted with correspondence. Documents were also carried by *ordinari*, commercial couriers departing from major centers at regular intervals. The early modern postal system connected important political centers within Europe, structured along a north-south axis linking Rome and Brussels and an east-west axis connecting Madrid and Vienna. In Italy, a highly efficient network of postal couriers connected Milan, Genoa, and Venice in the north with Rome and Naples. Jesuits tended to use the post at the regional rather than the transnational level. The case of Lisbon is no doubt typical. Commercial couriers were avoided whenever possible. The bulk of correspondence was sent either through royal or ambassadorial dispatches or via trusted intermediaries (“otros amigos”). This was not only more secure, it was claimed, but reduced costs. Use of the commercial post was limited to communication with Castile.

Letters and bundles of documents (*plichi, emboltorio*) were transferred between colleges located strategically across the Jesuit network. Thus, for example, documents from Rome bound for Spain were first sent to the college at Genoa, either by sea via Civitavecchia or overland transiting through colleges at Florence, Bologna, and Modena. In Genoa, sea passage was secured to Barcelona. The rector of the Barcelona college then dispatched materials to colleges elsewhere in Spain, where they were either copied or simply read and relayed to the next college.

Lisbon served as a crucial node in connecting Rome with the Jesuit missions in Asia, Africa, and Brazil. Communication depended upon the annual sailings...
of the Portuguese fleet. In the case of Asia, ships normally departed Lisbon in March or April and arrived in Goa in September. Jesuits travelling further east could expect to reach Macao the following July, and Japan almost a year later. Ships returning to Portugal normally sailed from India in late December or early January, arriving in Lisbon sometime between June and September. Nor was communication within Europe always easy. It could take anywhere from two weeks to two months for documents to travel between Rome and Lisbon. In Rome, dispatches destined for Asia were normally sent in January in order to make the sailing of the Portuguese fleet. In practice this meant that a response could not be expected until the summer or fall of the following year, and frequently later. In the case of Japan, the process took over four years.18

Unsurprisingly, maritime routes dominated in linking Lisbon with Jesuits elsewhere in Europe. Letters bound for Sicily and Naples were sent directly to Messina, Palermo, or Naples. Those for France were sent to Toulouse (likely first travelling by sea to Bordeaux) or Paris. Didaco Páez, a Jesuit resident in Antwerp, served as an intermediary for letters bound for Lower Germany. Letters for the Italian provinces were to be sent through Genoa. For Upper Germany and Austria letters could either be routed through Rome or sent directly via the imperial court at Vienna. It was clearly expected that in the latter case, diplomatic channels would be used (doc. 4.3). While these mechanisms were not failsafe, they worked well enough to provide a normally reliable method for the exchange of letters and documents within the Society.19

Adjustments to the communications system came in 1560. Polanco described the changes in a lengthy memorandum that circulated in manuscript, known as the Ratio scribendi.20 Vernacular instructions summarized its implications.
(docs. 1 and 2). For the most part the *Ratio scribendi* clarified the structure of communication sketched in the *Constitutions*. Yet there are also signs that the intensity of communication within the Society increased. New instructions for consultors illustrate the complex manner in which communication pathways were organized. Consultors were advisors who provided non-binding counsel to college rectors, provincials, and regional commissaries. Though they had no defined authority, they nonetheless functioned autonomously; they were appointed from above and reported centrally. Each rector was assigned four consultors, each of whom reported to their provincial three times a year in monthly rotation. A report was thus received every month. Each consultor also reported annually to Rome, again in rotation, fixing a pattern of quarterly reporting. A similar system was established at the provincial level. Each of four provincial consultors reported to Rome in rotation three times a year, establishing a rhythm of monthly reporting. The sense of an increased volume of communication within the Society is amplified by additional instructions sent in 1562 which advised provincials to write to one another every four months. Rectors within the same province were to do the same. Some within the Society thought that the frequency of such exchange should be once a month.

The most significant change made in 1560 concerned the production and circulation of *quadrimestres*. As we have seen, the news-sheets were sent out every four months. Originally, among colleges in the same province or region (so, in the case of Sicily and Naples for example, or the Iberian provinces), they were copied and circulated locally. For more distant provinces a copy was sent to Rome, where additional copies were made for circulation through the rest of the Society. In 1560, it was announced that Rome would no longer copy *quadrimestres*.

Polanco described the new procedure. Writing to Antonio de Araoz (1515–1573), the provincial of Castile, he explained how until now the Roman curia...
had taken it upon itself to relieve the provinces of the labor of copying *quadrimestres* (doc. 1). Copies made in Rome had been sent to the provinces in conformity with the procedures set out in the *Constitutions*. With the continued expansion of the Society, however, the undertaking had become too much, despite all best efforts. The decision had therefore been taken to share the labor of copying, with each college now responsible for producing the required number of copies (1,1).

While the burden of scribal production was now shifted away from Rome, it did not reduce the overall volume of newsletters flowing through the system. In total, thirteen copies were needed from each college in Castile, five in Spanish and eight in Latin (1,1). Araoz was provided with detailed instructions on how to manage circulation. Rome would receive both a Latin and Spanish copy of each *quadrimestre*. The remaining Spanish-language copies would circulate within Castile and the other Iberian provinces (Aragon, Andalusia, and Portugal). Spanish provincials were to send Araoz two Latin copies for transmission to Jesuits in Paris, whence one would be forwarded to Louvain. The five remaining Latin copies were distributed among the three Italian provinces, Sicily, and the Upper German province (1,3). Polanco advised Araoz to select an apt location from which to manage everything. The secretary suggested either Medina del Campo or Valladolid, likely because the colleges there were larger and the best positioned geographically (1,4). (Medina del Campo was eventually chosen.)

Polanco informed Araoz that if any of this seemed onerous, he should consider how much more difficult it was to produce the requisite number of copies in Rome, where every four months thirteen copies of every *quadrimestre* from each college were made. He then urged that the letters should be neither too long (“no need to write lengthy histories”) nor so short as to descend into generalities. Better, he wrote, to touch briefly on both the general and the particular of matters of note. “And for the love of God,” he continued, “be careful that what has been written has been carefully reviewed. Do not imagine that they will be corrected here as they have been until now.” After review, copies were to be made and collated against the original (1,4). Araoz was further instructed to make copies of the *Ratio scribendi* describing the new procedures for each house and college in the Castilian province (1,5).

The change was abrupt and a certain amount of confusion ensued in routing the news-sheets. Basic procedures were soon established for clearly flagging circulation patterns. Polanco instructed that after being folded and addressed each *quadrimestre* should be clearly labeled with the college’s name and the date. Provinces to which copies had been sent directly should be identified, so that the remaining copies delivered to Rome could be forwarded
appropriately (3,1). There were additional problems with content and style. Previously, Polanco and his assistants had wielded a certain amount of editorial control when copying quadrimestres in Rome. This too now needed to be exercised locally. Polanco emphasized that discretion was to be used when reporting news so as not to offend anyone who might read the news-sheet in the same town or region. Circumspection was particularly required in reporting anything gleaned from confessions. In many places this had not been done. Letters had been written by individuals lacking judgment, and had not been reviewed properly. Either the provincial himself or a trusted deputy should review and revise each quadrimestre. In composition, needless amplification was to be avoided; the trick was to fully edify without exceeding the bounds of truth. After being transcribed, copies were to be collated against the emended original and dispatched according to instructions (4,1). Polanco bluntly summarized what was expected: the letters were to be reviewed with an eye “to things, words, and script” (3,3).

The measures of 1560 sought to redistribute the labor of scribal production while maintaining established frequencies. Though Rome no longer copied quadrimestres, the continued expansion of the Society led to ever-increasing volumes of communication. Further changes soon followed. In 1564, Polanco explained that the frequent exchange of letters within the Society had served its purpose. Though initially sustainable, with the growth of the Society it had now become intolerable, particularly in Rome. To continue on the same path would impede the Jesuit pastoral mission and be detrimental to the good of the Society. All benefit gained by communication would be lost. Frequencies of exchange would therefore need to be curtailed. Further reductions in frequency followed in 1565.

26 Polanco to provincial superiors, ca. 30.11.1564, ARSI, Ital. 65, 247v–49r; see also Beati Petri Canisii Societatis Iesu epistolae et acta [hereafter Canisius Epp.], ed. Otto Braunsberger, 8 vols. (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1896–1923), 4:750: “Se ben l’usanza dello scrivere, che secondo le Declarationi dell’octava parte sé fin hora tenuta nella Compagnia sia utilissima per il ben spirituale: et nel suo principio (se si guarda la fatica) sia stata tolerabile, tutta via con l’aumento che hà piacuto à Dio Nostro Signor dare alla Compagnia, la esperienza ci mostra specialmente in Roma, che da qui innanzi moltiplicandosi tanto li negotii, et le materie, sarebbe quasi intollerabile cotal uso (se non si moderasse) et bastante ad impedir il maggior servitio divino, et bene della Compagnia onde per evitare ogni inconveniente, et per conservar il frutto che si pretende del uso dello scrivere, sè giudicato di farvi la moderatione seguente.”

27 “Ratio scribendi” (1565), ARSI, Instit. 110, 216v–18v; a copy is to be found in Rom. 2, 89v–90v. An abbreviated version is printed in Institutum Societatis Iesu, 3 vols. (Florence: Ex Typographia a ss. Conceptione, 1892–93), 2:205–6.
Communication between college rector and Rome was initially reduced to once a month in Italy and once every two months for Jesuits elsewhere in Europe. In 1565 the frequency of response was further diminished to every three months for Jesuits everywhere. As for routine administrative communication sent from Rome, in 1564 it was explained that Rome would respond to Jesuits in Italy every two months, and every three months to Jesuits elsewhere. The following year this was reduced to every six months, regardless of location. Provincial superiors, including those in Italy, now reported to Rome once a month.28 The frequencies established in 1565 would remain in place until the suppression of the Society in 1773.29

Even more dramatic were modifications to the system of writing and circulating quadrimestres. Ultimately in 1565 the circulation of news-sheets was reduced to an annual basis, though not before a period of deliberation and experimentation. One preliminary set of instructions, while never implemented, underscores the preoccupation in Rome with the material demands of news circulation (doc. 6). The document makes plain the strain placed upon both those writing and reading quadrimestres. The cost of postage was also a consideration. At the same time, concern was expressed with losing the fruit of “the continual communication of letters” and there were reservations about modifying the Constitutions. It was suggested that each college continue to write its own quadrimestre every four months, and that this be sent to the local provincial. The provincial would then draw up a single letter for the entire province. It was this provincial news-sheet, rather than individual quadrimestres from each college, that would circulate through the Society. The labor of copying the “carefully collated” letters would be shared among the colleges, or colleges might offset the cost of copying at a centralized location (6,3). Nonetheless the idea of a separate newsletter from each college was not abandoned. Every January an annual letter was to be written and copied for each province. Duplicates would be sent to Portugal for circulation to Brazil and India (6,4). For brevity’s sake, minor matters already reported upon need not be included. Letters should focus upon edifying material, and avoid prolixity and extraneous detail (6,6). The plan’s appeal no doubt lay in its adherence to constitutional requirements to report news every four months, while at the same time reducing the number of quadrimestres in circulation.

28 ARSI Ital. 65, 247v–48r; Canisius Epp. 4:750–52; Institutum Societatis Iesu 2:205–6.

29 In 1573 two further minor adjustments were made. Consultors at the college level were now to write to provincial superiors twice rather than three times a year, and the same applied for communication between provincial consultors and Rome. See “Formula scribendi” (1573), in Documenta indica [hereafter DI], ed. Josef Wicki, 18 vols. (Rome: Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, 1948–88), 9:720.
Further experiments followed. In 1564, the decision was made to reduce the frequency of *quadrimestres* to twice a year. In addition, rather than individual letters from the various colleges, a single newsletter for each province would be compiled under the direction of the superior provincial, with each college or house within the province accorded a separate chapter or section.\(^{30}\) And finally, in the wake of discussions held during the second General Congregation of the Society in 1565, frequency was reduced to an annual basis. Nonetheless the 1564 plan to compile provincial letters was discarded. Instead, each college would continue to compile and circulate its own *annua*, as the letters were now known. Polanco compensated by staggering the release of news on a quarterly basis. Portugal and the Spanish provinces were instructed to dispatch their letters between January and March, other provinces between April and July, and so on.\(^{31}\) In order to relieve the strain of copying, it was also decided to share one copy between two provinces. Delays in circulation must have been considerable, as within a few years a separate copy for each province was again mandated, together with the habitual exhortation to brevity.\(^{32}\) In 1571, the scale of news circulation was reduced even further when the congregation of Jesuit procurators reprised the 1564 plan to circulate a single letter from each province.\(^{33}\) The new schedule was soon implemented.\(^{34}\)

\(^{30}\) ARSI, *Ital.* 65, 248r; Canisius Epp. 4755.

\(^{31}\) “Ratio scribendi” (1565), ARSI, *Instit.* 110, 218r: “De tempore quo Annuae litterae scribendae sunt.”

\(^{32}\) “Ordini diversi dati da N.P. Francisco Borgia Santa memoria sopra la segretaria, et modo da scriver” (1571), ARSI, *Instit.* 117-11, 326v: “et perche si vede, che tardano molto in venir’ alle mani de’i Nostri scrivendo una per due Provincie. Pare conveniente tornare all’usanza di farne una per Provincia con brevità ... che non sia grande la fatica di scrivere.”

\(^{33}\) “De Actis in Congregatione Provinciali Societatis Jesu Provinciae Bethicae” (1571), ARSI, *Congr.* 41, 70r: “Propusose de las Annuas de los Collegios lo poco que ya se estiman por escribirse en ellas quasi unas mismas casas y ya escritas y porvenir en ellas cosas algunas vezes no tan edificativas ni tan limadas como convendría. Ultra desto hazen mucha costa de portes. Pareció bien a todos se propusiese a nuestro Padre si le pareciese buen medio uno que acá a todos pareció. Que cada año escrivan los Rectores al Provincial las cosas de edificación de su Collegio y el Provincial haga una Annua de toda la Provincia de las cosas de más momento, y destas se hagan los tres lados conforme a las Nacciones señaladas en el orden dado.”

\(^{34}\) See “Provinciae Siciliae Annuae,” December 1571, ARSI Sic. 182, 216r, “Habbiamo ricevuto il nuovo ordine mandato da V.P. circa il modo di scrivere la lettra annuale cioè che il Provinciale di ciascuna provincia la debbia scrivere comprendendo in una sola lettra tutte le cose d'edificazione di tutti li collegii di sua Provincia.” See provincial *annuas* for 1572 in e.g. ARSI, *Germ.* 141, 1r ff. (Louvain); *Med.* 75, 91r ff. (Milan). The new procedure was affirmed in the 1573 "Formula scribendi," *DI* 9:720–21. In 1581, the scale would be even
Up to this point we have traced the complex changes made to the Jesuit network in the 1560s. While Rome dictated the rhythm of information flows, the production and circulation of news-sheets, letters, and other documents occurred at multiple nodes across the Jesuit network. By way of example, we can now turn to the role of Lisbon, the single most important Jesuit communications hub outside Rome in this period. All exchange between Jesuits in Europe and the missions in Asia, Africa, and Brazil moved through the city. Due to the perils of sea travel, documents were normally sent in at least three or four copies using different ships or vías. Through the 1540s and early 1550s, the college at Coimbra copied letters, instructions, and quadrimestres for Jesuits overseas. This meant several copies for each of the overseas missions. In addition, letters from the missions written in Portuguese were translated into Spanish and copied for circulation to colleges in the Iberian peninsula. Spanish and sometimes Latin copies were normally also sent to Rome.

As we saw earlier, a procurator had been appointed in Lisbon in 1554. Housed in the Jesuit casa profesa of São Roque, the procurator coordinated relations with the Portuguese crown and provisioned Jesuit establishments in Portugal and the overseas missions.35 He also managed the flow of documents between Rome, Lisbon, and the missions. The changes to Jesuit communications that are the subject of the present article created tensions in Lisbon that led to a protracted exchange involving the Lisbon procurator, the Portuguese provincial, and Rome. This fissure in the operations of the Jesuit network affords a close-up view of some of the social mechanisms and material practices of Jesuit communication normally hidden from view.

Changes to the distribution of quadrimestres in 1560 required each college to send a single copy of its letter to Portugal. In the Ratio scribendi, Polanco had recommended that one or two Jesuit brothers in Portugal be assigned to copy quadrimestres destined for India, Brazil, and Africa.36 The new instructions had been received in Lisbon by July of 1560.37 By early 1561, concerns were further reduced, with a single omnibus letter produced in Rome each year. For the later fortune of the annuae in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Friedrich, “Litterae Annuae,” 20 ff.

35 Wicki, “Die Anfänge der Missionsprokur,” 248–54.
36 Polanco, “Ratio scribendi” (1560), ARSI Inst. 117-1, 179v: “Provincialis autem Portugalliae, fratrum unum, vel si non sit satis, duos designabit, cuius sit cura rescribere literas Quadrimestres, toties quot loca deputabuntur transmarina ad eas mittendas, hoc vero tempore tria erunt India, Brasilia et Ethiopia, in quibus distribuuntur per varia loca illarum nationum quemadmodum illi censebunt ad quos distribuendae mittentur.” See also Canisius Epp. 410.
37 L. Torres (Lisbon) to Polanco, 31.7.1560, ARSI, Lus. 60, 209v: “Recibi las de V.P. de 21, 23, 25. de Março y 30. de Abril passados y las reglas y modo que se deve observar en el scrivir.”
voiced about the amount of copying required, particularly in producing quadrimestres for the overseas missions.38 Later that year, the Lisbon procurator, Francisco Henriques, sent a lengthy description of his duties to Rome, most likely in order to petition for the assistants recommended by Polanco. Henriques protested that his assistants fell under the jurisdiction of the local superior and were habitually assigned other tasks. As a result, they were unable to devote themselves full-time to their copying duties, to the considerable detriment of both business and writing.39 He made it clear that he simply did not have the resources to fulfill his duties as both procurador general (his term) and secretary to the Portuguese provincial.

To make his point, Henriques described the range of his duties. He handled the Society’s legal affairs, including litigation and official transactions with the crown, the Cardinal-Infante, the papal nuncio, and civil authorities. Provisioning Jesuit establishments involved arranging transactions and purchases not only in Lisbon, but also in the Low Countries, France, Spain, Africa, the Algarve, and elsewhere. He collected and disbursed funds granted to the Society by the king and donations in kind such as sugar and spices. He kept registers of accounts and copybooks of important documents issued by crown and other officials. As secretary, he handled both the provincial’s internal and external correspondence. He composed summaries of letters received and kept copybooks of letters sent. Henriques read aloud to the provincial any correspondence addressed to him, common secretarial practice in the period. He distributed all other incoming post and arranged for outgoing letters to be dispatched. Careful to display conformity to Polanco’s instructions of 1560, Henriques explained that he reviewed all quadrimestres, cartas de nuevas, and routine correspondence, adding and subtracting whatever was necessary before copies were made for distribution throughout the Society. Letters to Rome were sent by at least one vía, additional copies were made for each of the European provinces, three or four copies were sent to India, as many again to

38 L. Torres to Polanco, 22.3.1561, ARSt, Lus. 61, 7r: “De las primeras assí de nuevas como las más se hizieron copias treplicadas como hizimos los años passados por segurar que llegen allá, y aun assí algunas vezes no llegan aun que es raro, lo mismo hizimos de las reglas (embiando a demás las impressas) y de modo de scrivir, y de todas las otras cosas comunes que tenemos de Roma se embiaron agora y se embián siempre a la India y al Brasil y a Angola copias duplicadas y treplicadas hasta que entendamos que van a sus manos, excepto de algunas de las quadrimestres porque como son muchas no se pueden copiar tantas.”

39 “Informação dos ofícios do P. Francisco Henriques,” 8.1.1561, M Bras. 3:385: “por no poderse continuar siempre el escribir […] con notable y ordinario detrimento de los negocios y escritura.”
Brazil, and two to Angola. He also drew up instructions and letters patent for Jesuits sent on mission. In addition, everything was transcribed into copybooks.\(^{40}\) Henriques’s detailed enumeration of his day-to-day activities conveys the complex manner in which material goods, money, and documents passed through the procurator’s hands. He painted an image of a bustling chancery and an ever-expanding archive.

Evidently Henriques’s pleas did not go unheard, as the following year Polanco attempted to alleviate some of the pressures on Lisbon (doc. 3). Two additional copies of all *quadrimestres*, Polanco decreed, were to be sent to Lisbon by the European colleges. To obtain the extra copies, Naples and Sicily would share a single copy between them, while Rome would receive a vernacular version alone (“we read Spanish here,” Polanco commented dryly). “And thus without increasing the number of copies,” the secretary explained, “consolation will be given to our brothers in India and Brazil” (3,2). Jesuits in Sicily soon complained. The delay of news was blamed on the bottleneck at Naples, and they requested that they be sent *quadrimestres* directly.\(^{41}\) Polanco responded by increasing the number of copies produced at the local level (doc. 4). In instructions sent to the Portuguese provincial in 1563, it was made clear that every college would now be responsible for producing *quadrimestres* for each of the Society’s fourteen European provinces (4,4), an additional two or three copies for India, and the same again for Brazil (4,5). Taking the annual rhythm of communication with the missions into account, colleges had the option to send either a single annual newsletter or multiple *quadrimestres* to Jesuits overseas (4,2 and 4,5). It was thus not only in Lisbon that Jesuits were put to work. At this point each college was expected to produce some twenty copies of each *quadrimestre*, some in the vernacular, others in Latin.

Despite these adjustments, the situation in Lisbon appears not to have improved. A 1563 memorandum (doc. 5) from the Portuguese province, no doubt the work of Henriques, once again reminded Rome of the labor Jesuits in Lisbon expended in scribal production:

- copies of *quadrimestres* from every Jesuit establishment outside Portugal; three or four copies for Asia, further copies for Brazil, and at least two for Africa;
– copies of rules and other documents for the overseas missions sent from Rome and the Iberian commissary;
– copies of routine administrative correspondence between Rome and the overseas missions, copied on the same scale as *quadrimestres*;
– the same letters copied into the register in Lisbon;
– letters from the Portuguese provincial to Jesuits overseas, copied both into the register and for transit overseas according to the requisite number of vías;
– thirteen copies of all edifying letters from Asia, Brazil, and Africa for distribution to the European provinces;
– all overseas mission letters also copied into the registers;
– presentation copies (“de buena letra”) of the mission letters for the queen and the Cardinal-Infante;
– copies of the *quadrimestres* of the Lisbon college itself;
– copies of newsletters (cartas de nuevas) from European colleges for overseas.

Henriques’s intention was to underscore the sheer volume of documentation produced in Lisbon. He vividly conveys the degree to which communication within the Society depended upon the coordinated replication of material practices of writing far from the Roman center. Though Rome was well-aware of the situation, earlier efforts to alleviate the amount of copying undertaken in Lisbon fell by the wayside with the shift to annual news-sheets in 1565. Rome may well have judged that the reduced volume of letters in circulation offered adequate compensation: Portugal would now receive only two copies of each annua, one copy for Brazil, the other for India.42 The abrupt change in the distribution of scribal labor triggered a minor crisis in Lisbon. In early 1566 the Portuguese provincial, Leão Henriques (1522–1589), suggested that Rome order each college to send five or six copies of its annual letter. Rome flatly refused, pointing out that the two copies sent to Portugal could first circulate within the province before being sent to India and Brazil.43 The provincial persevered, explaining that Jesuits in India had requested letters to be sent on four or five different ships, as even when sent in triplicate occasionally none arrived. What with the numerous copies of other documents Jesuits in Lisbon were required to make, he continued, it was a

42 “Ratio scribendi” (1565), ARS1, *Instit.* 110, 217*: “Duo exempla pro Indiae et Brasiliae provintiis quae mittantur in Portugalialia.”
43 L. Henriques (Lisbon) to F. Borja, 15.2.1566, *M Bras.* 4:306; F. Borja to L. Henriques, 1.5.1566, *DI* 735.
struggle to produce even the usual three copies. The provincial urged that despite the cost, as many copies as possible should be sent overseas. As for the two copies now sent by the European colleges, those not lost in circulation within Portugal arrived in Lisbon worn and in poor shape. “To then copy them here would be impossible due to the number of copies needed.”44 The reply from Rome was unambiguous. Though it would be ideal to have more copies sent to India and Brazil, it was simply too much work. It was recommended that when making copies in Lisbon, only the most salient parts of the *annuas* from the European colleges be copied. It was further suggested that letters from different provinces be dispersed among separate ships so that even if some were lost others would arrive safely.45

The dissemination within Europe of letters from overseas could also be problematic. In 1569, a plea came from the college at Évora to designate someone “capable and diligent” to copy letters at São Roque, complaining that due to delays in copying it took five months for letters to reach Évora from neighboring Lisbon. The following year the Portuguese provincial suggested that Jesuits in India and Brazil make copies of their own letters for circulation in Europe.46

In response to these and other challenges, the position of *procurador de la India y Brasil* was created in 1573.47 The new procurator was responsible for the missions alone. Much as before, the procurator was instructed to secure material provisions for the overseas missions and “with diligence and faithfulness dispatch the letters and other things that are sent from Rome or elsewhere.”48 He was additionally responsible for copying (“in a good clear letter”) *annuas* from overseas for distribution to the European provinces and letters from the European provinces destined for the missions.49 The first Jesuit to hold the position, Alessandro de Valla (c. 1529–1580), had spent several years in the missions in India and Japan. Though ill-mannered, unpopular, and chronically unwell, he was well-aware of the value of news and took the work of copying seriously. In 1574, he found the time to complain to Rome that he had received no letters from the European provinces to send overseas. The following year, he

44 L. Henriques to F. Borja, 26.6.1566 and 30.7.1566, *M Bras*. 4:348, 353. See DI 7:735.
45 F. Borja to L. Henriques, 15.10.1566, *M Bras*. 4:361; Borja to Henriques, 6.6.1567, *DI* 7:250.
46 F. Serpe (Évora) to F. Borja, 21.1.1569, *DI* 7:656; L. Henriques to Borja, 8.5.1570, *DI* 8:47*.
47 Wicki, “Die Anfänge der Missionsprokur,” 258–60.
48 A. Valignano to A. Valla, February 1574, *DI* 9:189.
49 “Instrucción para el Procurador de las India y Brasil,” 6.3.1575, in *DI* 9:619: “en buena letra clara.” See “Última instrucción para el Procurador de las Indias Occidentales,” ca. 1577, in Zubillaga, “El Procurador de las Indias Occidentales,” 401. Instructions for the mission procurator in Seville were clearly modelled on the example of Lisbon.
made copies of ten separate *annuas* for India, Brazil, Zimbabwe, and Angola, all in triplicate for each location. At one point he produced sixteen copies in three days in the shadow of the imminent departure of the Portuguese fleet. Valla nonetheless lamented that some letters had not arrived in time.⁵⁰

The example of Lisbon illustrates the manner in which the scribal production of letters and documents was organized across the Jesuit network. While letters from the overseas missions were occasionally printed, print complemented rather than replaced the dissemination of hand-written news. A handful of letters were printed at Coimbra in the early 1550s, and sporadic use of the printing press was made thereafter.⁵¹ Nonetheless it was the very effectiveness of Jesuit scribal publication that necessitated the turn to print. Even after the appointment of a procurator in Lisbon, the college at Coimbra continued to be involved in translating and copying letters from the missions.⁵² In 1554, the Portuguese provincial informed Rome that letters were being prepared for the press “to relieve us of the great labor of copying.”⁵³ In a similar vein, Manuel Alvarez, rector of the college at Coimbra, explained to readers of the *Copia de algunas cartas* in 1562:

This province of Portugal is required to send to all the colleges and houses of our Society the letters from India, Japan, China, and other places in the east written each year by our fathers and brothers occupied there in the conversion of the pagans. As we would not be able to satisfy the wishes of all were they to be copied by hand due to the great number required and our other habitual duties, it seemed fitting to print some of the many that have arrived since the last printing.⁵⁴

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⁵⁰See A. Valla to E. Murcurian, 25.8.1574, in Wicki, “Die Anfänge der Missionsprokur,” 301; A. Valla to E. Mercurian, 26.4.1575, DI 9:634–35.

⁵¹For an overview, see José Manuel Garcia, “A epistolografia ultra-marina dos jesuitas impressa em Portugal no século XVI,” in Missionaço portugueza e encontro de culturas. Actas, 4 vols. (Braga: Universidade Católica Portuguesa, 1993), 3123–33.

⁵²ARSI, Lus. 60, G. Vaz (Lisbon) to Polanco, 3.12.1557, 4r: “aora van aquí los originales, dos solas que dan que a Coymbra se trasladan.”

⁵³D. Mirón (Lisbon) to Ignatius, 17.3.1554, in Epistolae mixtæ ex variis Europæ locis ab anno 1537 ad 1556 scriptæ, 5 vols. (Madrid: A. Avrial-R. Fortanet, 1898–1901), 4310: “por quitarnos del trabaio de copiarlas para muchas partes, que es muy grande.”

⁵⁴*Copia de algunas cartas que los padres y hermanos de la compañía de Jesus, que andan en la India, y otras partes orientales, escrivieron a los de la misma compañía de Portugal* (Coimbra: Joan de Barrera, 1562), [2]: “Como desta provincia de Portugal se ayan de embiar por todos los colegios y casas de nuestra compañía, las cartas que de la India, Japón, China, y otras partes orientales nos escrivien cada año nuestros padres y hermanos.
It is undeniable that print allowed Jesuit mission letters to reach a broad European reading public. Nonetheless print was suspended within disciplined, if occasionally creaky, processes for the production and circulation of handwritten documents.

Though the Society of Jesus was centralized and hierarchical, the transmission of written instruments between Jesuit establishments relied upon the operation of social mechanisms and material processes far from Rome. The colleges had been actively involved in the mechanics of Jesuit communication from the beginning, particularly in the exchange of news-sheets and edifying letters. The production, transmission, and dissemination of hand-written letters and other documents necessitated the standardization of material practices of writing throughout the Society. Routine communication also required coordinating activities with the commercial postal service and with a number of other social actors. Diplomatic, mercantile, and maritime networks all intersected with Jesuit communication at key points. The adjustments made to mechanisms of production and transmission studied here reveal the complex material organization of the Jesuit network. The experience of Lisbon, though exceptional, nonetheless reflects many of the everyday realities of Jesuit communication during the Society’s formative period.

que allá andan ocupados en la conversión de la gentilidad. Y no se pueda satisfazer a los desseos de todos si se oviessen de tresladar de mano, por el número ser grande, y por otras ordinarias ocupaciones, pareció en el señor ser conveniente imprimir algunas de las muchas que han venido después de la postrera impresión."
Appendix

Document 1. Juan de Polanco (Rome) to Antonio de Araoz, Provincial of Castile. March 25, 1560. ARSI, Hisp. 66, 67v. Margin: Provincial de Castella. Araoz.

1. Change of procedure for copying quadrimestres. Five Spanish and eight Latin copies needed. 2. Circulation instructions for the Iberian provinces. 3. Circulation instructions for elsewhere. 4. A central hub to be chosen. Advice on style and content. Editorial instructions. Coordination and cooperation required. Shared postage costs. 5. The Ratio scribendi.

Iesus. Pax Xi

[1] Hasta aquí se ha procurado en Roma de alivar a todos las Provincias del trabajo de screvir todas las letras Quadrimestres que eran necessarias para los collegios y casas de la Compañía, haziendo las copias para unas partes y otras como se apunta en las Constitutiones. Más viendo por el aumento que ha dios nuestro Señor dado a la Compañía que aya esta ocupación se hazía tan grande que no se podía cumplir con mucha parte de las Provincias, aunque algunos harto trabajaban en screvirlas. Ha nuestro P.º determinado en su consulta que se reparta este trabajo, scriverendo cada collegio, y Provincial tantas copias quantos son necessarias como en la forma latina que se inbía aquí se verá. V. R. tenga cuidado así del número de las que se han de screvir, como del modo de enderezarlas. El número de las que se han de screvir en lengua spagnola en esta Provincia son cinco, una para el General, y otra para comunicarse a los de la mesma Provincia, y tres otros para las tres Provincias donde se usa la mesma lengua que son Portugal, Aragón y Andalucía. Latinas 8. una para el General y 7 para los Provincias de Francia, Flandes, Alemagna, Lombardia, Italia cita Romam, Nápoles y Sicilia. Y será de V. R. determinar qual casa ó collegio aya de screvir las letras, y qual no, sino enbiar lo que ay de aedificatión, a algún collegio ó casa vizina para que lo scriba junto con lo suyo. Ó V. R. en su letra podrá tocar lo que haze al propósito.

[2] Quanto al modo de embiar estas cartas allá V. R. podrá poner concierto, mas esto ocurriría convenir que cada casa ó colegio que ha de screvir

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* Accents have been added, punctuation adjusted, and abbreviations expanded with the exception of forms of address typically employed in abbreviated form within the Society.
enbiase la letra para su Provincia a V.R. ó adonde por él le fuese ordenado, para que de allí passe a otro lugar, no se deteniendo demasíao en uno, sino pocos días para que llegue a los otros, menos vieja, las otras 3 spagnolas se enderezen a los Provinciales de las 3 otras Provincias, ó adonde ellos ordenassen. Y esto lo hazan de por sí de cada collegio, si V.R. se lo ordenaze, ó le enbiarán las letras para que las enbié V.R.

[3] Al general se inbié una spagnola, y seis latinas, para la Provincia de Roma, y las 3. otras de Italia, y una de Sicilia, y otra de Alemagna, porque de aquí se las enbiaremos. La que va para Francia se podrá enderezar desde ay a Paris, y así mismo la que va para Flandes a Lovanio, ó entrambas a Flandes para que de allí se enbié la una a Francia. Si esto no succediesse bien se podrá tomar otra vía para los de Francia y Flandes.

[4] Para la essecución desto convendría que V.R. shogiese algún buen puesto como sería Medina, ó Valladolid, ó donde le pareciesse dando orden como allí se enbiassen las letras de todas Partes de su Provincia, y de allí a los lugares ya dichos fuera dessos Reynos. Y si esto parece difícil de esecutar en cada parte, mire V.R. lo que sería si en Roma se huviessen de hazer todas estas copias, porque de cada collegio dessos se menester treze, mas haziéndose cada 4. meses estas copias biense podrá sufrir el trabajo en cada uno. Y no es menester que se hagan Historias muy luen-gas, ni tan poco que se pase con generalidades si no que con brevedad se toque lo general y lo particular mas digno de ser sabido. Y por amor de Dios que se tenga cuidado que sean muy bien revistas las cosas que se scriven, porque no se ha de pensar que se emendarán acá como hasta aquí las que se enbían de cada parte, pues se han de enbiar las mismas que de allí vinieren, y después de bien revisto el original se saquen allá y se colacionen las copias. Con los de fuera de essa Provincia y los della es bien se tome concierto en los partes porque no sean gravados los unos por las letras que van para las otros, aunque se use la charidad en el reze-bir y enderezar las letras, así las que vienen de allá para acá, como las que de fuera dessos Reynos se enbían para ellos. Y teniendo alguno cuenta con los portes, de tiempo en tiempo pagará qui en deve.

[5] De la formula latina que aquí va mandé V.R. que se hagan tantas copias, quantas son necessarias para su Provincia, y que en cada casa o collegio se podrá copiar, y V.R. [67v] se tendrá una copia para sí, y a cada parte dé orden de lo que han de observar no solamente en lo que toca a las Quadrimestres pero aun en las demás. Specialmente donde dize que aya de dar algun orden el Provincial, a los suyos, y haga poner en Pratica lo que va en dicha formula, para que se vea como sucede. De Roma. 25. de Marzo 1560.
Document 2. Summary of writing instructions from Rome. (1562)\textsuperscript{55} ARSI, \textit{Instit.}
206, 230rv.

1. Rectors write to the provincial weekly. 2. Jesuits on interior missions to their superior weekly. 3. Rectors’ consultors to the provincial quarterly, in monthly rotation. 4. Rectors to the general monthly. 5. Rectors’ consultors to the general annually, in quarterly rotation. 6. Colleges in the same province to one another quarterly. 7. Provincial to rectors monthly. 8. Provincials to Jesuits on interior mission monthly. 9. Provincial to commissaries monthly. 10. Provincial’s consultors to the general quarterly, in monthly rotation. 11. Provincial to one another quarterly. 12. Vernacular copies. 13. Latin copies. 14. Interior missions. 15. \textit{Quadrimestres} also required of provincials. 16. Provincial circulation of \textit{quadrimestres}.

\begin{quote}
Ihs

Sumario de lo que se contiene en la carta de escribir que vino de Roma
\end{quote}

\begin{itemize}
\item[1] Los rectores cada semana an de escribir al Provincial.
\item[2] Los que son embiados ha predicar por la provincia cada semana han de escribir al Superior que los embió.
\item[3] Los consultores de los rectores an de escribir al provincial de 4. a 4. meses escriviéndolos 4.° cada uno su mes.
\item[4] Los rectores an de escribir al General cada mes.
\item[5] Los consultores de los rectores al General cada anno, de los 4. uno cada tres meses.
\item[6] Los colleges de una misma provincia por sí cada 4. meses si otro no pareciere al superior. Pareció que cada mes.
\item[7] Los provinciales a los rectores cada mes.
\item[8] Los provinciales a los embiados a predicar por la provincia, cada mes.
\item[9] Los provinciales a los comissarios cada mes.
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{55} Undated. The date of 1562 is inferred from the mention of the seven Spanish versions of the \textit{quadrimestres} required “acá en españa.” Three Spanish provinces are mentioned by name (Castile, Andalusia, and Aragon) and a fourth referred to as “la misma provincia,” a reference to the Province of Toledo, created when the Castilian province was divided in 1562. The document was likely intended to furnish communication guidelines for the new province.
Los consultores de los provinciales al General cada [230v] 4. meses escribiendo los 4. cada uno su mes.

Los provinciales entre sí cada 4. meses.

Cada colegio ha de escribir acá en españa siete cartes en lengua española, una para el General, otra para comunicarse a los de la misma provincia, y las otras cinco, una para Castilla, otra para el Andaluzía, otra para Aragón, otra para la India, y otra para el Brasil.

Cada colegio ha de escribir 6. quadrimestres en latin, las 4. se an de embiar a Roma: una para la provincia de Italia, otra para Alemaña, otra para Lombardia, y otra a Cicilia, y de Roma se embiarán a todas estas provincias. Las otras dos se an de embiar al Doctor Araoz a donde el dixiere, para que se encaminen a las dos provincias de Francia y Flandres.

Los que van a predicar por la provincia, escrivan las nuevas de edificación al más cercano collegio que estuviere, para que se escrivian en las quadrimestres de aquel collegio.

El provincial por sí hará quadrimestres como cada collegio.

Las cartas que vienen al provincial las haga passar por las casas de su provincia, y después que tornen, a él.

Document 3. Juan de Polanco (Rome), by commission, to Gundisalvo Vaz, provincial of Portugal. March 12, 1562. ARSI, Institut. 206, 83v.

1. Transmission of quadrimestres. 2. Additional copies for Brazil and India. Naples and Sicily to share a single copy. Rome to forego a Latin copy. 3. Rome no longer corrects quadrimestres. Style, content, and script to be carefully reviewed. Some are full of faults.

Para Provincial de Portugal.
Muy Rdo en Xo Pe
Pax X

[1] Para que las letras quadrimestres ayan mejor recado, y no se embíen por error de Roma a las partes que embían de allá de España, pongase siempre en el lugar del sobrescripto después de plegadas las tales letras desta manera poniendo ejemplo en Toledo: Literae quadrimestres collegii Toletani Calendis Maii 1561. mittenda in provinciam. Y con tener cuenta que para cada provincia aya la suya como se noto en la forma del escrivir, veremos aquí fácilmente aquel parte se han de embiar las que vienen a nuestras manos y a las otras partes haráse cuenta que se embien de allá.

[2] Para Nápoles y Sicilia por agora puede bastar una copia, más en lugar...
de la que aquí se escusasse será bien se embíe una copia a Portugal para la India y otra para el Brasil. Y podrán escusar la Latina para Roma, porque aquí se lera la Española, ó una de las Latinas que van para otras partes. Y assí sin aumentar el número de las copias se dará esta consolación a aquellos nuestros hermanos de la India y Brasil, que es razón darsela para algún alivio de los muchos trabajos que padecen. [3] Porque no se revé en Roma agora como solían estas letras quadrimestres es bien se revean alla antes de embíarse quanto a las cosas y a las palabras y escriptura porque se embían como vienen. Y todavía se nota que de alguna partes vienen hartas faltas. De otras cosas escrive de aparte. Acá tenemos salud Dios loado, y nos encomendamos mucho en las oraciones de V.R. y de toda essa provincia. 12 de Marco 1562.

De V.R. siervo en Xº
Por commisión de nuestro Pº Prepósito.
Joan de Polanco.

Document 4. Juan de Polanco, by commission, for the Portuguese province. (1563) ARSI, Instit. 208, 376v–77v.56

1. Lack of compliance in writing *quadrimestres*. Editorial responsibilities of the provincial. Advice on content and style. 2. Copies for India and Brazil. 3. Circulation of *quadrimestres* within Europe. 4. Fourteen copies required from every house or college. Circulation of vernacular and Latin copies. 5. Copies for India and Brazil. 6. Responsibilities of provincials. Dispatch instructions. 7. Local consolidation of *quadrimestres*. 8. Jesuits in India and Brazil may write in either the vernacular or Latin. Both if possible.

Capitolos de una del Pº Polanco por comisión del Pº General a la Provincia de Portugal.

[1] Aunque diversas vezes se ha dado aviso del modo di hazer las quadrimestres, especialmente de usar circunspección en las cosas que se scriven, haziendo

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56 Undated. The date of 1563 is inferred from reference to the Society’s fourteen European Provinces at 4.4. The division of the Castilian province in 1562 and the creation of the Austrian in 1563 brought the total number of European provinces to fourteen. In 1564 the French province was divided in two (France and Aquitaine), as was Lower Germany (Rhineland and Flanders), increasing the number of European provinces to sixteen. A similar version of the Latin instructions of the present document was sent to Canisius in the spring or summer of 1563; see Canisius Epp. 4278.
cuenta que aunque en la misma ciudad, ó lugar donde se scriven, ó en otro qualquiera fuessen publicadas no deve aver cosas en ellas que desedifiquen, ó den ocasion de quezarse a ninguno. Todavia esto se guarda mal en muchas partes, y la causa deve ser que se dan a hazer a personas por ventura no muy platicas y prudentes, y no se reveen con la censura diligente que convendria, y assí nuestro P. e desesando por veer en esto, ordena que para adelante todas las Quadrimestres las revea el Provincial de cada Provincia, y las aderesce en manera que no aya cosa que pueda offender. Y si por si no pudiesse el dicho Provincial verlas todas, podrá deputar una, ó más personas de cuya discrición se fie, para que las reveyen y emenden, y ansi emendadas se copien y colacionen, y se embie de la manera que últimamente se dio aviso. Esto en particular se tenga por encomendado que en escriver el fructo de las confessiones sean muy recatados. Y en qualesquier cosas de edificación, que no usen amplificaciones que excedan la verdad dellas: sino que vayan fielmente en sus relaciones, que harto edificarán aunque no excedan los terminos de la verdad.

[2] Para la India será menester que cada año, ó se haga una letra que comprehenda lo de todo el año, ó se embien las ordinarias quadrimestres, y las unas y las otras duplicadas a Portugal para que de allí las embien a la India, y de la mesma manera se embien dupplicadas para el Brasil.

[3] Las letras Quadrimestres para Nápoles y Sicilia se pueden enderezar a la mesma Nápoles, ó a Sicilia a Mecina, ó a Palermo; las que vienen para Lombardia, y Toscana, a Genova; las de Francia se enderenzen a Paris, ó a Tolosa. Quando se assenten las cosas más allí, para Flandes se enderenzen a Envers al Doctor Paez en el Monasterio de los Carmelitas. Las que van para Roma y para Alemaña, se pueden enderezar a Roma, sino uviesse corre derecho para enderezar las de Alemaña a Viena de Austria ó adonde estuviere la corte del Emperador. Y allá se miren los puestos adonde se devan enderezar de cada Provincia, y Collegio paraque ayan recaudo. [377v]

[4] Provinciae pro quibus literae quadrimestres sunt scribendae sunt 14. sci licet Sicilia, 1, Nápoles 2, Roma 3, Thuscia 4, Longobardia 5, Germania Superior 6,57 Germania Inferior 8, Gallia 9, Aragonia 10, Castella Vetus 11, Regnum Toletanum 12, Portugallia 13, Baetica 14, sunt ergo 14. quia castella divisa est in duas, et etiam Germania superior. Pro singulis quaevis Domus, vel collegium debet scribere singulas quadrimestres, et quidem

57 No seventh province is named in this sequence, though it can be inferred from an implicit reference to the creation of the Austrian Province ("divisa est in duas, et etiam Germania superior").
pro sua Provincia, in lingua vernacula unam, reliquas in latinam, nisi eiusdem idiomatis essent plures, tunc enim et in vernacula lingua totidem possent scribi, si vellent.

[5] Praeter has pro Indiae Provincia, vel erunt scribendae literae annuae, vel ternae quadrimestres, et quidem sive annae sint, sive quadrimestres, binis, vel ternis exemplis, mittantur in Portugalliam: ut per varias manus mittuntur in India. Tantundem fiat pro Brasilia Provincia.

[6] Prius autem quam exempla praedicta scribantur, Provincialis, vel qui, ab eo ad id constitutus est emendet illa et postquam scripta fuerint, et collata exempla cum prototypo singulae complicatae inscribantur ad hunc modum Quadrimestres collegii, vel domus. N. mensis Januarii, Maii vel Settembris. Anni N. Et paulo inferius, ad Provenciam Siciliae, vel Romae etc. De modo mittendi [378r] huius modi quadrimestres, iam scriptum est Provincialibus.

[7] Quando in eadem Urbe, Domus et Collegium fuerit ut Romae, ut Ulissiponae vel duo collegio ut Conimbricam, satis est si unas faciant quadrimestres, que complotant et quae pertinent ad utroque.

[8] His qui sunt in India, et Brasilia propter eorum occupationes non inungitur, ut totidem faciant exemplaria sed facient, quae potuerint commodo, latine vel vernacula lingua, vel utraque ut poterunt.

Document 5. Enumeration of documents routinely copied in Lisbon (1563).58

1. Quadrimestres for the overseas missions. 2. Other Jesuit documents for the missions. 3. Letters from Rome. 4. Copy-books. 5. Letters from the Portuguese provincial. 6. Edifying letters from the overseas missions for Europe. 7. Exchange of letters between the missions. 8. Copy-books. 9. Presentation copies for court. 10. Lisbon quadrimestres and newsletters for the missions.

Ihs

Copias que ordinariamente ay de obligación hazerse, por orden de Roma y consuetud desta provincia de Portugal.

58 Undated. The memorandum is dated to 1563 as it states that 13 copies of the quadrimestre from overseas missions are to be made, one for each province in Europe outside of Portugal. See above, note 57.
De todas las quadrimestres que vienen de cada uno de los Collegios y casas de la Compañía que ay fuera de Portugal se han de hazer tres ó quatro vías para la India, y otras tantas para el Brasil, y lo menos dos para Angola.

Otras tantas copias se han de hazer para las mismas partes de todas las reglas y cosas otras que nostro P[aso] general y commissarios ordenan comunes para toda la Compañía ó particulares para las dichas partes.

Las cartas que vienen de Roma de nostro P[aso] general, ó por su commisión para las mismas partes se an de copiar de manera que a cada una dellas se embián otras tantas vías como de las quadrimestres.

Las mismas cartas se an de trelsladar en los libros que ay aquí para tener las copias dellas.

Hanse de scrivir en los mismos libros todas las cartas que el padre provincial escreve a las mismas partes, ó manda escrivir, copiandolas allende desto otras tantas vezes quantas son las vías que se embián.

Hanse de hazer treze copias de todas las cartas de edificación que vienen de las partes de la India, Brasil y Angola para embiar a las provincias de Europa.\textsuperscript{59}

De las mismas se hazen las vías ordinarias para las dichas partes transmarinas donde no vienen las de la India al Brasil y Angola, y las de Brasil y Angola para la India.

Las mismas se an de copiar en los libros que para ello ay.

Y más una ó dos copias de buena letra para la Reyna y Cardenal.

Esto sin las quadrimestres desta casa y Collegio de Lixboa y las cartas de nuevas que se escriven a las partes transmarinas.\textsuperscript{60}

Document 6. Memorandum of proposed changes to frequencies and patterns of communication within the Society (c. 1564) ARSI, \textit{Instit.} 121, 5\textsuperscript{r}-v.

1*. Necessity of regulating communication more carefully. 1. Matters of direct concern to Rome to be communicated only at prescribed intervals. 2. Provincials to review other correspondence and forward only what is necessary to Rome. Other matters to be summarized. 3. \textit{Quadrimestres} to be sent to the provincial. A single provincial \textit{quadrimestre} to be composed and circulated. 4. An annual edifying letter from each college to be circulated. 5. Local consolidation of letter-writing. 6. The need for brevity. 7. A vernacular copy no

\textsuperscript{59} In the ms. “fuera de Portugal” has been canceled, and “de Europa” added.

\textsuperscript{60} Contemporary note, 565*: “Memoria de las copias de cartas que ordinariamente se an de hazer. De litteris e Lusitania mittendis in Indiam, Americam, et Africam. Quot exempla, quo tempore mittenda, &c.”
longer required in Rome. Vernacular copies alone need circulate locally. 8. Only new information to be included in personnel catalogues through the year. The January catalogue to be more complete.

Ihus
Del screvir entre los de la Compañía

[1*] Porque se evite la molestia, y trabajo de los que escriben, y tambien de los que leen tantas cartas hechas de una manera, y se modere el coste de los portes, y por otra parte porque no se pierda el fructo de la comunicación continua de letras, ni se muden las Constitutiones, ó se dispensen en esta parte universalmente, que es como quitarlas; parece se podría tener la forma siguiente.

1. Primeramente los Rectores, y los que andan en varias missions vecinas a Roma, como son las de Italia, y Sicilia, quando tienen negocios ó cosas que se ayan de screvir inmediatamente al General, ó donde importe que el General sea brevemente informado, guarden la Regla comun de screvir cada ocho dias, y así los que estan lejos de Roma en Francia, Alemania etc. de escrivir cada mes, ó más a menudo segun las cosas lo pidieren, y los tales cartas vengan cerradas sin que las vea el Provincial, ni otro.

2. Si no tienen los sobre dichos que escriver cosas de tal qualidad, escrivan las letras a los tiempos ordinarios para el General, y embíenlas abiertas cada una a su Provincial, porque sirvan poca él, y escusarse han de escrivirle lo mismo, y el Provincial scrivirá a los tiempos ordinarios al General. Y no le embíen las letras que le parecerán escusadas, más en su letra pondrá la summa de lo que conviene, aora sea de negocios, aora de nuevas del estado de los Collegios, y así tambien se escusará el responder a tantos particulares, y la subordinación de superiores se observará mejor que acudiendo con cada cosilla a Roma etc.

3. Quanto a las letras de nuevas de cada quatro meses escriva cada Collegio a sus tiempos los puntos que ay de edificación brevemente haziendo una sola copia, y revista por el Rector, embíese antes del principio de Enero, Mayo, y Setiembre al Provincial, y él por sí, ó por otro de cuyo juizio, y diligencia pueda fiarse, vea lo que escriven los de su Provincia, y haga de los que le pareciere digno de escrivrise en todos los Collegios una sola letra bien revista y emendada, y luego la haga escrivrir tantas vezes, quantas Provincias ay en latin, repartiendo el trabajo por los Collegios

61 = consejo.
suyos, ó haciendo las copiar por alguno que se sustente a costa de todos, bien collacionadas, y embiélas como otras vezes se ha dicho pagando allá el porte, ó haciendo que vengan sin porte. [5v]

4. Cada año al principio de Enero haga cada Collegio su letra que contenga toda la substancia de lo que ay de edificación, desde el año passado conforme a lo que se dize en la formula del escrevir, y esta vista por el Rector, y Provincial, y emendada por ellos, ó por los que ellos diputacen de quienes se puedan confiar se copie, y embié en latin al General, y a todos los Provinciales, y aun se duplique para los Provincias de la India, y Brasil.

5. Por más brevedad, donde ubiese casa y Collegio, como en Roma, y Lisboa, y tambien casa de probacion, y algunos imperfectos Collegios que son como miembros ó partes de otros mayores, como Tivuli, Frascata, y Amelia de Roma y de todos ellos se podrá hazer juntamente una Quadrimestre, y annua y aun si ay missions vezinas se puede juntar lo que ay de edificación de los que así son embiados con las de los Collegios que los embían.

6. En cosas comunes, y otras vezes scriptos, si no ay algo notable pudiese passar, aun en los annuas con mucha brevedad, diciendo las que son nuevas, y notables más en particular como conviene ad aedificationem, aunque en todas se evite la prolixidad, y el descender tanto a los particulares, que pudiese ofenderse nadie con razon.

7. Las letras en la lengua vulgar para el General se pueden escusar, pues bastan las latinas que vienen para la Provincia de Roma. Para los que son de la mesma lengua en su Provintia, y las vezinas, si quieren embiar las letras en vulgar, no es menester embiar allí las latinas.

8. En las informaciones de los subiectos que se embían de cada collegio, ó casa a los Provinciales, y ellos al General, entre año bastará que se escriva de las cosas mudadas. Al Enero sea mas entera la información, aunque donde no ay en la persona en quien no ay que dezir nada de nuevo, basta remitir se a lo dicho.62

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