

**“Polemics and Presidios: Juan de Albizuri and the History of the Sinaloa Missions,”  
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Jesuits worked closely with soldiers to convert indigenous peoples to the Christian faith in the province of Sinaloa. There was an intimate relationship between their missions and presidios, especially after the martyrdom of Gonzalo de Tapia in 1594 and subsequent indigenous revolts in the early decades of the seventeenth century. But while historians have closely analyzed some of the changing missionary strategies as a result of these violent uprisings, events in the Spanish Pacific have largely been absent from their discussion of the northern frontier. In this paper, I highlight some of the connections between Jesuit activity in Sinaloa and the Philippines through an analysis of Juan de Albizuri’s (1601–1651) *Historia de las misiones apostólicas* (1633). Albizuri was a Spanish Jesuit, missionary, and sacred historian of colonial expansion in New Spain. His *Historia*—available only in manuscript form at the Bancroft Library—is among the earliest accounts of Jesuit missions outside of central Mexico, a text that has been overshadowed by Andrés Pérez de Ribas’s more accessible and popular *Historia de los triunfos de nuestra santa fe* (1645). While both elaborately defend the role of presidios on Jesuit missions, Albizuri’s rationale is unique because he turns to the experiences of his brethren in Asia to bolster his arguments. In a marginal note he defends his order from the attacks of Antonio de Remesal, a Dominican and historian of colonial Guatemala who severely critiqued Alonso Sánchez’s idea that the Spanish crown should invade China from the Philippines. An analysis of this small and seemingly insignificant quarrel sheds important light on the interconnections in the Spanish Pacific and confirms Luke Clossey’s assertion that “China loomed . . . large in America.”